

### Sacrifices of cops hailed F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Friday said the Pakistani nation would never forget the sacrifices of its martyrs. The prime minister, in a message on Police Martyrs' Day, observed on Friday, said the whole nation paid tribute to their dutiful countrymen who rendered sacrifices to protect lives and properties of citizens.



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# PM inaugurates Aerospace Science & Technology Park

## — Pakistan's scenic beauty can be turned into a great opportunity

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif Friday inaugurated the National Aerospace Science and Technology Park (NASTP) established with the collaboration among the government, international companies and private sector.

Speaking at the inaugural ceremony, he appreciated the leadership of Pakistan Air Force for initiating the project, which augured well for activities related to the Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC). Chief Executive Officer of NASTP Air Commodore Dr Liaquatullah, in his briefing, told the participants that the PAF had achieved numerous successes in the field of aerospace technology.

He said the institution had established research and development centers for the capacity building of new generation. "This is a project of national and strategic importance and will provide ecosystems, besides providing multifaceted benefits." He said the project, which had been completed in record time, would prove to be a milestone for the country's self-reliance in aerospace technology.

He said the Pakistan Air Force was pursuing the vision of Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah to achieve self-reliance. The project comprised three campuses with the first one housing private sector companies, second one featuring cyber, AI and IT companies, and the third one was meant for aircraft, space, sensors and Expo center, he added. Liaquatullah said all of the NASTP had been declared a special zone and would

### Pakistan to continue moral, political, diplomatic support to Kashmiris

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif said Pakistan will continue to lend its unstinted moral, political and diplomatic support to the rightful and just cause of the freedom struggle of the Kashmiri people.

In a message on the Youm-e-Istehsal to be observed on August 5, 2023, he said, "It is Pakistan's abiding commitment and promise to our Kashmiri brothers and sisters that we will echo their voices, at every forum until the world takes action and urges India to end its egregious human rights violations and forcible occupation of IIOJK, undo all unilateral and illegal measures it has taken since 5 August 2019, and take necessary steps to carry out a fair and impartial plebiscite in accordance with the United Nations Security Council resolutions." "It has been four years since India unilaterally and illegally revoked the special status of Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu & Kashmir (IIOJK) on 5 August 2019. Since then, India has resorted to use of brutal force and violence to suppress the Kashmiri people. It has also undertaken a series of measures clearly aimed at altering the internationally recognized disputed status of IIOJK. In particular, India has tried to bring about demographic changes to undermine the right to self-determination of the Kashmiris."

enjoy several key benefits including subsidies, tax/customs duty exemptions, besides acting as platform with great networking opportunities.

The Air Chief had already directed to launch the second phase to establish the facilities at city and university levels, he added. The National Aerospace Science and Technology Park (NASTP) was an integral project of the Aviation City Pakistan and would provide eco-system of essential elements required to nurture design, research, development and innovation in the aviation, space, IT and cyber domains. NASTP was a pioneer organisation in the country that was approved by the Government of Pakistan as 'a project

of strategic national importance' led by the Pakistan Air Force in creating opportunities for joint work by industry, academia and the government, turning it into a technology ecosystem.

Meanwhile, the Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif said that being rich with immense scenic beauty, particularly the Northern Areas, Pakistan could turn the resources into a great opportunity. The prime minister was addressing the launching ceremony of the "Salam Pakistan" brand and e-portal that would help promote tourist attractions across the world and guide tourists.

(Continued on Back Page)



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif addressing the launching ceremony of Pakistan's tourism brand 'Salam Pakistan.'

### Hamza Khan calls on COAS

F.P. Report

RAWALPINDI: Asim Munir, COAS met World Junior Squash Champion Mohammad Hamza Khan on Friday at GHQ.

COAS congratulated the young champion for his outstanding achievement bringing honour for the country. "Talents like you make us all proud and your great achievement also underscores the great potential that this nation has", COAS remarked.

COAS also said, "Army will continue to support the young talent in the country and promised to provide him full support in academic pursuit and sports." COAS emphasised, "our youth is the future of this country and with focus, dedication and hard work there is nothing that Pakistan cannot accomplish".

### PM summons CCI meeting today

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has summoned Council of Common Interests (CCI) meeting tomorrow (Saturday). The meeting will be headed by Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif at 12 (noon). Chief ministers of the four provinces and federal ministers will participate in the meeting. A report regarding the new digital census recently conducted in the country will be presented during the meeting. The provinces will present their stance on the digital census.

The prime minister has accepted a summary sent by Ministry of Planning and Development wherein the ministry had requested to convene a meeting for approval of digital census result. The Bureau of Statistics has compiled the results after completing the process of census in the country and the same have been sent to the CCI seeking its approval. If the CCI accords its approval to the new digital census results, the general elections may be delayed by at least three to four months.

### JIT setup to probe torture case

ISLAMABAD (INP): The Islamabad police on Friday constituted a five-member joint investigation team (JIT) to investigate into the housemaid torture case, named Rizwana – who was subjected to 'severe torture' while working at the residence of a civil judge.

Deputy Inspector-General (DIG) Operations Islamabad has been appointed as convener of the five-member joint investigation team (JIT), said that notification. The JIT would comprise the senior superintendent of police (SSP), Counter Terrorism Department (CTD); a representative each from the Intelligence Bureau (IB) and the Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI); and SSP investigations.

### Toshakhana case IHC voids sessions court's maintainability verdict

ISLAMABAD (Agencies): The Islamabad High Court (IHC) Friday declared the sessions court's maintainability verdict in the Toshakhana case against Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Chairman Imran Khan "void".

IHC Chief Justice Amir Farooq gave the court's ruling on eight petitions of the PTI chairman after arguments by both parties — which were completed yesterday while the judgment was reserved. The court, however, rejected the PTI chairman's request to transfer the case to another court and said that Additional Sessions Judge Humayun Dilawar would hear the case. The IHC on Friday also issued a notice against the court's decision to reject the list of witnesses.

Regarding the district and session judge's alleged Facebook post, the court directed the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) to probe into the issue. On October 21, 2022, the Election Commission of Pakistan maintained that the former prime minister made "false statements and incorrect declarations" about the gifts and disqualified him under Article 63(1)(p) of the Constitution. Subsequently, the election watchdog moved the sessions court to the federal capital. It sought criminal proceedings against the PTI chief for allegedly misleading the ECP regarding gifts received from foreign dignitaries while he was in office.

The PTI chairman was indicted in the case on May 10, while his petition to declare the case inadmissible was rejected by the court. On July 4, the IHC overturned the same ruling and directed the sessions court to hear the petitioner and decide the matter within seven days. On July 8, ADSJ Humayun Dilawar declared the Toshakhana case against Khan as maintainable, which was again challenged in the IHC.

Meanwhile, the trial continued at the court and was about to conclude soon. During the proceedings, Khan's lawyers also accused the presiding judge of bias on the basis of his Facebook posts and sought the transfer of the case. On August 2, the trial court also rejected the PTI chairman's witnesses, stating that he failed to prove

their "relevance" in the criminal proceedings against him. It was also challenged in the high court. Citing the repeated adjournments sought by Khan during the duration of the trial, the bench ruled that there was while the case should be reheard, there was no need for the case to be transferred to a different court.

"The order [...] shows that a number of opportunities were provided to the petitioner to address arguments but adjournments were sought, hence the matter was decided in the absence of learned counsel for the petitioner." "...so the learned counsel for the petitioner is correct in saying that he has been condemned unheard and it would be only appropriate to remand the matter back to the Trial Court for decision afresh," the order mentioned. The order mentioned that it is not essential that the matter be sent to a different judge, emphasising that remitting the matter to a different jurist can be regarded as a matter of propriety and not a principle of law.

"However, in the instant case even remanding the matter to a different court is not mandated." The Supreme Court had earlier in the day dismissed the ex-prime minister's petition against trial proceedings pertaining to the Toshakhana case following his withdrawal of the said plea. The three-member bench hearing the case, led by Justice Yahya Afridi and comprising Justice Hasan Azhar Rizvi and Justice Musarat Hilali, heard Khan's petition against the Toshakhana case. "The trial court cannot decide on the Toshakhana case until the final decision of the High Court," the bench ruled.

Earlier this week, the apex court had turned away Khan, asking him to await a verdict from the IHC. "We believe that the high court can issue a better order than us. It is possible that it will give the order to stop the trial tomorrow," he had said on Wednesday. Under the rules governing Toshakhana — a Persian word meaning "treasure house" — government officials can keep gifts if they have a low worth, while they must pay a dramatically reduced fee to the government for extravagant items.

### Khaqan, Bhootani 'among candidates' for caretaker PM

ISLAMABAD (Agencies): The names of former prime minister Shahid Khaqan Abbasi and independent lawmaker from Balochistan Aslam Bhootani among others are being considered for the caretaker prime minister, it emerged Friday. Sources confided to media that ex-finance minister Hafeez Sheikh and Fawad Hassan Fawad, ex-principal secretary to Nawaz Sharif, are also among those that will be discussed in a meeting of allied parties Friday.

According to details, as the government nears its term, coalition partners held a Zoom meeting to exchange views on the caretaker setup. Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam Fazl (JUI-F) chief Maulana Fazlur Rehman, Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) Chairman Bilawal Bhutto, and other senior leaders attended the huddle. Balochistan National Party Chairman Akhtar Mengal, Jamhoori Wattan Party (JWP) leader Shahzain Bugti, Muttahida Qaumi Movement-Pakistan (MQM) leader Khalid Maqbool Siddiqui, Bhootani, and National Democratic Movement (NDM) Chairman Mohsin Dawar were also present during the meeting.

In the meeting, various names were considered for caretaker prime minister, sources said. However, the coalition parties have decided to continue further consultation, they said, adding that the meeting of the coalition parties will be held again. The names of Abbasi, Hafeez Sheikh, and others were considered in the meeting as candidates for the interim PM slot.

The leaders of the Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM) held back-to-back meetings, but no decision has been taken so far in this regard. At a dinner reception on Thursday, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif revealed to the allied that the National Assembly will be dissolved prematurely on August 9 — three days before its term. Under the laws, if an assembly is dissolved after completing its tenure then the elections to the legislature are held within 60 days but in case it is dissolved prematurely then elections are held within 90 days.

Speaking at the dinner last night, the premier said after the formation of the coalition government on April 11 last year, he faced unprecedented challenges including economic difficulties, cumber-

some talks with International Monetary Fund (IMF), disastrous floods, hyperinflation, and political chaos. "Imran Niazi and his gang created political chaos with their baseless accusations, riots and long marches," he recalled.

"No country could make progress without political stability," he said, adding politics of the country was poisoned with the culture of baseless allegations and abuse. Shehbaz said the uphill challenge of IMF gave him sleepless nights as the lack of an IMF agreement would have burdened the economy, put pressure on foreign exchange reserves, devalued the rupee, and caused unemployment.

He said he had critical talks with the IMF Managing Director in Paris which finally led to the successful conclusion of the agreement. He thanked the coalition partners and his party leadership including Nawaz, Asif Zardari, Fazl, and others for their guidance and support and for reposing confidence in him in the National Assembly. He also lauded the National Assembly speaker and the Senate chairman for amicably running proceedings of the Parliament.

### Shehryar Afridi re-arrested

LAHORE (PPI): PTI leader Shehryar Afridi was arrested again from outside the anti-terrorism court on Friday after he was released by the court. The ATC heard the case registered against Afridi at the New Town police station. Police produced him before the court. However, during the hearing, court discharged Afridi and set him free. But as soon as he went out of the courtroom, the Rawalpindi police arrested him again and took him to Adiala Jail.

### Imran skips ECP date

ISLAMABAD (PPI): Former prime minister and PTI Chairman Imran Khan did not appear before the Election Commission in connection with the intra-party election case despite a summons, according to a report on Friday.

No progress could be made in the intra-party election case of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf. Despite the summons, the PTI chairman did not appear and on the request of the lawyer, the Election Commission postponed the hearing till Tuesday.

The Election Commission headed by Chief Election Commissioner Sikandar Sultan Raja on Friday held a hearing on the PTI intra-party election notice, in which PTI's lawyer Barrister Gohar Ali appeared and requested to submit some documents to the Election Commission.

Taking a plea that he was not provided the record of the case, the lawyer said that the PTI conducted the intra-party elections before the amendment of the party constitution, the PTI itself submitted the amendment of the constitution to the Election Commission. The Member Election Commission noted that the PTI chairman wrote that the constitution was amended on June 8, 2022, intra-party elections should be held on June 10, 2022. Barrister Gohar Ali requested the commission to adjourn the hearing.

On this, the CEC remarked that it was said in the media that the Election Commission should give you the notice, then the PTI would give an answer. But we have given notice to you on the request of PTI, he added. Saying this, the CEC ordered to provide the relevant documents to Barrister Gohar and adjourned the hearing till August 8.

It should be noted that the Election Commission had issued a notice to the PTI chairman on the issue of the intra-party election of Tehreek-e-Insaf for today, in which it was warned that if the intra-party election is not held, PTI would be ineligible to get the election symbol.



RAWALPINDI: World Junior Squash Champion Mohammad Hamza Khan called on Chief of Army Staff, General Asim Munir, at GHQ.

### PTI strangled freedom of media: Marriyum

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Information and Broadcasting Marriyum Aurangzeb stated on Friday that some persons were now delivering speeches on freedom of expression though they themselves had kept the 'media corner' in the Parliament House closed, banned programmes by journalists, and strangled freedom of media during their four-year stint in power.

Talking to the media outside the Parliament House, on a question about the economic crisis, inflation and violation of the IMF agreement, she said the PTI chief just manoeuvred to shift the blame from his economic team and his cabinet for the theft of 190 million pounds. Castigating the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) chairman, she said the person arrived in courts covering his face with a bucket, box or canister as he could not face the masses and had no answer for theft allegations.

"We suffered censorship for four years but we did not put buckets, boxes or canisters on our faces and faced the odds bravely with our heads high," she added. The minister said the PEMRA (Amendment) Bill 2023 was a serious piece of legislation and on her request, the bill was referred to the Senate's Standing Committee, which should give a constructive opinion about it. The bill had already been passed by the National Assembly.

He said "an incompetent, inefficient, corrupt and fascist group" remained in control of the legislature and the government for four years, which kept the media corner closed in the Parliament and today they were talking about freedom of press and freedom of expression. She said 12-month long consultation was held on the PEMRA bill. All the representative organizations of the media, including the Parliamentary Reporters Association, provided their professional input and guidance for which she was grateful to them. The bill would further strengthen the freedom of expression in the country, she added.

Marriyum said while tabling the bill in the Senate on Friday, she briefed the House

about the amendments being made in it. In the amended bill, the difference between misinformation and disinformation had been defined, besides providing the margin of error. As per the bill, powers, after taking back from the Pakistan Electronic Media Regulatory Authority (PEMRA) chairman, had now been given to the Council of Complaints which had representation of the media as well, she added.

The minister said the bill was drafted in consensus of all media organizations, and unanimously passed by the National Assembly after thorough discussion by its Standing Committee on Information and Broadcasting. However, she wished that the senators should also have their opinion on the bill as it was a serious legislation. "I do not want to make it controversial, so I requested the Senate chairman to send the bill to the Senate's Standing Committee," she added. There were enough members in the House to pass the bill, but the government wanted to complete the process and did not object to sending it to the committee, the minister said.

Taking a jibe on the PTI chief, she said today was not the era when the programmes hosted by journalists were banned. On the contrary, the prime minister got the title of a 'media predator' as journalists were kidnapped, arrested, beaten and imprisoned during his government, she added. Marriyum said the bill had been sent to the standing committee as the opinion of all the senators was important. However, there should be constructive discussion in the committee so that the legislation could be improved but there should not be opposition for the sake of opposition, she added.

The minister said the world was moving towards "co-regulation" and "self-regulation", and after assessing the laws and best practices of the world, the PEMRA law was being amended. Answering a question, she said the chairman of the Senate's Standing Committee on Information was absconding. The Senate chairman had the power to appoint any member of the committee as its acting chairman for the important legislation.



## Karamullah Waqasi appointed as PPPP Chief Whip for KMC

KARACHI (APP): Pakistan People's Party (PPP) Sindh Chapter's President Nisar Ahmed Khuhro has appointed Karamullah Waqasi as PPPP Chief Whip for Karachi Metropolitan Corporation (KMC). The appointment was made with the approval of PPP leadership.

Khuhro also appointed Juman Darwan and Dil Mohammed as Deputy Parliamentary leaders of PPPP for KMC. The PPP Sindh President has issued a notification in that regard.

## 12 dead, 1,263 injured in Punjab road accidents

LAHORE (APP): At least 12 people were killed and 1,263 others injured in 1,161 road traffic crashes in Punjab during the last 24 hours. As many as 639 people with serious injuries were shifted to different hospitals, while 624 with minor injuries were treated at the incident site by rescue medical teams.

The analysis showed that 649 drivers, 34 underage drivers, 147 pedestrians, and 479 passengers were among the victims of road traffic crashes.

The statistics show that 256 accidents were reported in Lahore, which affected 289 persons, placing the provincial capital at top of the list, followed by 81 in Faisalabad with 78 victims and at third Multan with 76 accidents and 81 victims.

According to the data, 1,002 motorcycles, 79 auto-rickshaws, 113 motorcars, 26 vans, 14 passenger buses, 33 trucks and 128 other types of vehicles and slow-moving carts were involved in the road traffic accidents.

## Sindh Police observes Police Martyrs Day

KARACHI (APP): The Sindh Police on Thursday observed Police Martyrs Day (Youm-e-Shuhada-e-Police) to pay tribute to the sacrifices of policemen laid their lives in fight against crimes. In this connection, Quran Khuwani was held at different police stations and other venues across the city. Senior Police Officers visited the residences of martyrs and met the their families. The officers distributed gifts among the families. Banners and flags were displayed on police mobiles, vehicles and others.

In his statement, Inspector General of Police (IGP) Sindh Gulam Nabi Memon said Police Martyrs' Day remind us of the outstanding deeds of our brave sons of the soil.

He said the sacrifices of brave officers and personnel of the Sindh Police were unforgettable. "We are proud of the sacrifices of Sindh police martyrs", said the Sindh Police chief.

## PFA confiscates 235kg tainted spices

LAHORE (APP): The Punjab Food Authority (PFA) has confiscated 235 kilograms tainted and sub-standard spices during a raid on Kareem Spices Unit in Dalgiran Bazaar, Kasur.

PFA Director General Raja Jahangir Anwar said on Friday that the team confiscated 160kg of turmeric powder, 75kg of red chilli and non-food grade colour besides discarding 120kg of prohibited ingredients.

He said that the authority took action against the food point over the failure of their food sample results in the laboratory test. The raiding team found contamination of prohibited colours, bran (choker), rice flour and other harmful ingredients in the chilli. He further said that turmeric mixed with bran was to be supplied to different local shops in the market. He said that the use of contaminated spices causes stomach and intestine problems.

Moreover, he appealed to the public to read the writing on the label before purchasing any foodstuff and avoid purchasing loose spices.

# CM chairs LDA's governing body meeting

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Caretaker Chief Minister Mohsin Naqvi chaired the third governing body meeting of the Lahore Development Authority (LDA) at his office which approved LDA's surplus budget for the financial year 2023-24.

The collective budget for the three major projects, i.e., UD Wing, WASA and TEPA was also approved, totaling more than 78.66 billion rupees.

The meeting approved the construction of additional U-turns in Shahrah-e-Nazaria Pakistan to ease traffic congestion. The repair and maintenance of roads was linked to an effective water drainage system. Approval was given for the construction of Akbar Chowk flyover, and an agreement was reached to utilize the old vegetable and fruit market land, adjoining the Arfa Karim Tower, for better purposes.

Furthermore, approvals were given for the renovation and operational management of mosques in Mohlanwal, Jubilee Town and LDA Avenue-1 housing schemes. An instruction was given to reimburse the 4.5 million proposed fees from the model bazaar management company in Johar Town. A review of the NOCs for petrol pumps in Lahore was carried out and the permission for apartments for registered members of the New Pakistan Housing Department in the LDA City Housing Scheme was also discussed.

A committee was formed to address the sewerage infrastructure charges for private housing societies. The CM ordered the establishment of a technical department in LDA and stressed the need to expedite the repair and maintenance work on city roads.

# Career Management Course at NIM Karachi

F.P. Report

KARACHI: The Chief Instructor MCMC, Ms Samina Intizar started the ceremony by highlighting the importance of this course and how it will help in efficient public delivery. She further said that government machinery is integral part of government and these trainings further polish their skills in public administration.

Then Chief Guest Mayor Karachi Murtaza Wahab addressed the 34 participants of MCMC course.

He said "I have worked with all tiers of government machinery. What I like with young officers is that they have right mixture of idealism and pragmatism. These courses where you interact in public domain are necessary to keep idealism alive". Further, he added "the world is changing and we have to change our attitude. The common man is looking for answers related to provision of basic amenities".

Moreover, Murtaza Wahab stated that biggest problem for Pakistan is brain drain. He said "I have studied from public school and I take pride in it. Its a debt we owe to our country and everyone should think like this. We are the ones who will make the difference and take initiatives in the form of one window solution".


On highlighting importance of bureaucracy he mentioned "Politicians come and go, the bureaucracy has a relationship with state for nearly 30 years. They guide the politicians in providing relief to the people". He reiterated that decision making seems missing and there is




reluctance from officers. He said its necessary to take timely decisions in order to provide relief to public.

After the ceremony during press conference Mayor Karachi said that he has taken initiative regarding water issue in Karachi in K-3 but the mafia

has gathered public to protest against them. Further he mentioned that all hospitals should be under provincial government in order to improve efficiency. The passing out ceremony was concluded with a group photo of participants with Mayor Karachi.



حکومت پاکستان  
وزارت داخلہ



NADRA  
PROVIDENT

نیشنل ڈیٹا بیس اینڈ رجسٹریشن  
اتھارٹی (نادر)

نوٹس بیوجہ غیر حاضری

آپ کو نوٹس دیا گیا ہے کہ آپ کو 63811 نمبر پر 31 جولائی 2023ء کو ایک ای میل پر مبنی نوٹس ارسال کیا گیا ہے۔

نادر، مورخہ 30 - Jan - 2023

نادر، مورخہ 30 - Jan - 2023

RHO/NADRA/Disp/08/HR/63811/First Notice

RHO/NADRA/Disp/08/HR/63811

Second Notice Dated: 06-June-2023

PID(I) 733/23

پروجیکٹ ڈائریکٹر، سمناء انس

پیشہ ورانہ ادارہ، نیشنل ڈیٹا بیس اینڈ رجسٹریشن

فون نمبر: 091-9217735

## INVITING TENDER NOTICE

Sealed tender are invited from the registered contractors of Headquarters Frontier Corps KP (South) who have renewed their registration from HQFC KP and Pakistan Engineering Council Relevant category for the year 2023-24 for following civil works at Headquarter Frontier Corps KP (South) D.I. Khan. Tenders should reach in the office of the undersigned on 31 August 2023 upto 11:00 AM, which will be opened the same day at 12:30 PM in the presence of contractors or their legal representatives. Desirous contractors to contact the office of undersigned for contract documents during working hours. Tender documents will be issued after prequalification on 20 August 2023. All bidders must submit call deposit at the rate of 2% from Schedule bank in name of IGFC KP (South).

Ser.	Description	Unit	Covered Area (Sft)
1.	Const of 1 x Wing HQ at Ahmed Wam SWD Wana of HQFC KP (South)		
	Residential / Non Residential Accomodation		
a.	Wing Office	1	4,212
b.	Quarter Guard with Kote	1	2,931
c.	Officers Mess with Kitchen	1	4,875
d.	Stores Block	2	5,500
e.	Magazine	2	880
f.	Utility Shop	2	3,544
g.	Mi Room	1	2,799
h.	Mosque	1	3,000
i.	MT Shed (16 x sheds)	1	5,613
j.	JCO/Supdt/Asst/Overseer Married Acqn	10	7,100
k.	Single JCO Supdt/Asst/Overseer Married Acqn	20	10,580
l.	BOQs Block (6 x BOQs)	1	4,280
m.	Married Officers Quarters (MOQ)	2	3,500
n.	Single Men Barrack (128 men)	4	64,000
o.	Soldiers/JCOs Mess with Dining Hall	1	4,220
p.	Overhead Water Tank	1	1
q.	WAPDA connection, Transformer charges	1	1
r.	Solar Tube well	1	1
s.	Sewerage System	Rft	800
t.	Road Work	Rft	550
u.	Water Supply Scheme	Rft	578
v.	RCC Boundary Wall (10 ft high)	1	3,100
2.	Const of 1 x Wing HQ at Gomal Zam SWD Wana of HQFC KP (South)		
	Residential / Non Residential Accomodation		
a.	Wing Officer	1	4,212
b.	Quarter Guard with Kote	1	2,931
c.	Officers Mess with Kitchen	1	4,875
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q.	WAPDA connection, Transformer charges	1	1
r.	Solar Tube well	1	1

Lt Col Bilal Ahmed  
For Inspector General Frontier Corps KP (South)

## Sindh Info Secy visits Karachi Press Club

KARACHI (APP): Sindh Information Secretary Nadeem-ur-Rehman Memon Friday met President Karachi Press Club (KPC) Saeed Sarbazi and Secretary Shoaib Ahmed. Director Press Information Hasan Asghar Naqvi was also present on the occasion. On this occasion, the provincial Information Secretary said that the Sindh government had resolved the problems of journalists on priority basis. He said that the government was trying its best to settle all the issues related to the plots of journalists colonies allotted to the KPC members.

The Sindh government has constituted a committee comprising the representatives of all relevant institutions and the president and secretary of KPC in this regard, he added. The Information Secretary said that the purpose of his visit to KPC as the chairman of the committee was to consult with the President and Secretary of KPC before convening the first meeting of the committee. The participants of the meeting have decided to call the meeting of the committee in the next week, he said. The matter regarding steps for allotment of plots to the remaining KPC members, removal of encroachments from Journalist Colony Scheme 42 and early launching of development work in its various blocks as well as resolution of the issues regarding Journalist Colony New Malir Housing Society and Journalist Colony Teesar Town were discussed on the occasion.

# Indian persecution can't stifle voice of Kashmiris, says Balighur Rehman

LAHORE (APP): Governor Punjab Muhammad Balighur Rehman has said that state persecution by the Indian rulers can not stifle voice for freedom of the Kashmiri people.

In a message on the occasion of Kashmir Exploitation Day here on Friday, he said August 5, 2019 is the darkest day in the history of Kashmir when India abolished special status of Kashmir by usurping human rights through illegal action.

He said Kashmiri people are constantly making sacrifices for the legitimate right of self-determination and India is continuously violating human rights in illegally Occupied Kashmir, adding that United Nations (UN) and international communi-

ty should take cognizance of human rights violation in IIOJK. He said Kashmiris should be given their right of self-determination according to the UN resolutions and international community should take notice of the inhumane atrocities on the oppressed Kashmiris.

Governor Punjab Muhammad Balighur Rehman emphasized that peaceful resolution of the Kashmir issue in the light of UN resolutions is very important for durable peace in the region.



KARACHI: Meeting regarding Engagement of Private Sector in Business Ready(Be-Ready) Project of World Bank organized at Commissioner Karachi office.

## GOVERNMENT OF PAKISTAN PAKISTAN PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT INVITATION OF BIDS (SINGLE STAGE TWO ENVELOPES)

Sealed tender/bids on the basis of "Single Stage Two envelopes Procedure" are hereby invited for execution of the following works from eligible contractors/firms duly enlisted/register with Pakistan Engineering council (PEC) in relevant specialization technical category and financial limit Category C-5 & above is required on percentage rates basis on Pak. PWD Schedule of Rates 2022, who process valid renewal with PEC, having renewal upto 30/06/2024.

S#	Title of Work	Approved Cost in Million	Earnest Money	Tender Cost
	DISTRICT LOWER DIR			
1	Construction Jeepable Road at UC Kotigram District Lower Dir	Rs.50.00 Mln	2% of bid amount	Rs.5000/-
2	Construction of PCC Roads Drain Retaining Wall Pipe Culvert at UC Ouch Phase-I at District Lower Dir	Rs.50.00 Mln	2% of bid amount	Rs.5000/-
3	Construction of PCC Streets Drain Retaining Wall Pipe Culvert at UC Ouch Phase-II at District Lower Dir	Rs.50.00 Mln	2% of bid amount	Rs.5000/-
4	Drinking Water Supply Schemes at UC Ouch District Lower Dir	Rs.32.600 Mln	2% of bid amount	Rs.5000/-
5	Development Water Supply schemes Hand Pumps at UC Ouch at District Lower Dir	Rs.9.00 Mln	2% of bid amount	Rs.5000/-
6	Drinking Water Supply Schemes at Water Tank at Uc Ouch District Lower Dir	Rs.8.40 Mln	2% of bid amount	Rs.5000/-

### Terms and Condition for Bidding

- The constructors/firms/companies who will receive bidding documents are required to submit their bid in two separate sealed envelopes. i.e., one envelop containing technical information/data and documents of the contractor/firm required for post qualification clearly marked as "Technical Bid", while the second envelop containing bid price clearly marked as "Financial Bid".
- The application must be accompanied with bid security @ 2% of the NIT amount in shape of DR/deposit at call from any Scheduled Bank of Pakistan, in favour of Executive Engineer, Central Civil Division-II, Pak. PWD, Peshawar, clearly mentioning the name of firm, whereas the difference of the tendered amount must be accompanied with Financial Bid with its sealed envelop.
- Bidders may purchase the Bidding Documents from the office of Executive Engineer, Central Civil Division-II, Pak. PWD Peshawar at cost of Rs.5,000/- (Non refundable upto 24/08/2023 during office hours).
- Envelopes of Technical Bid & Financial Bid shall be submitted in the office of the Executive Engineer, Central Civil Division-II, Pak. PWD Shami Road Peshawar on 25/08/2023 by 12.30 PM The envelope containing Technical Bid shall be opened on same day at 01.00 P.M in the presence of Bidders representatives who opt to be present, Bids received after the prescribed date and time shall not be accepted.
- Bidders will be Technically Qualified on the basis of information provided with the Bids as per the criteria prescribed in the Bidding Documents. Once a Technical Bid received and opened in this office, no addition/subtraction/alteration of any sort of document will be acceptable.
- Pay Order/Demand draft will not be acceptable.
- All CDR once received will be credit into the Government Account and will be re-funded through Government Cheque.
- No tender will be entertained without bid security @2% of the bid amount if not found will be declared as non-responsive.
- Every firm contractor must provide the affidavit on stamp paper regarding the non litigation with the department.
- The documents provided by the bidders will be verified and in case found ambiguous fake one, the firm will face immediate appropriate penal action as per rule and law.
- Under Rule 33(1) of PPRA Rules 2004, the under signed reserves the right to accept reject any or all bids proposals at any time prior to acceptance of a bid or proposal.
- METHOD OF PROCUREMENT**
  - As per PPRA rule 36(b), open competitive Bidding with "Single Stage Two Envelop" Procedure-One envelop containing Technical Proposal and the other Financial Proposal and both sealed in separate envelopes.
  - After conducting evaluation of Technical Bids, qualified firms shall be informed accordingly for opening of their Financial Bids whereas bid of unqualified firms shall be returned unopened.
  - Non-compliance of Instructions to bidders in the Tender Documents will lead to disqualification non-responsiveness of the bid/firm.

**Nazir Ahmad, Executive Engineer**  
**Central Civil Division No.II, Pakistan Public Works Department,**  
**Shami Road Peshawar**  
Phone/Fax: 091-9211471/091-9211471, E-mail: ccd1pwdpsh@gmail.com

## IN THE COURT OF SPECIAL JUDGE (CNS-II), KARACHI

Special Case No.218/2016  
FIR No. DEC-07/2016-JIAP  
P.S. CUSTOMS. KARACHI

## The State.....Versus.....Zaman Sher & Others PROCLAMATION PREQUIRING THE APPEARANCE OF TWO (02) ACCUSED PERSON UNDER SECTION 87 Cr. Pc.

Whereas, complaint had made before me that accused persons namely Zaman Sher S/o Gul Fazal, Pakistani National (Passport No. HW 5125031), r/o Awan Dobiyan Dakhana Khas, Tehsil Lahore District Swabi (KPK) and Akber Ali S/o. Sher Afzal, CNIC No. 16202-7416556-7, R/o. Mohallah Khira Din Koti Bachal District Swabi, KPK have committed an offence of smuggling of narcotics and it has been returned to a warrant of arrest issued thereupon that the said accused persons cannot be found and whereas it had been shown to my satisfaction that the above mentioned accused persons absconded to avoid the service of the said warrant.

2. Proclamation is hereby made that the said accused are required to appear on 19.08.2023 at 09:00 am before this Hon'ble Court to answer the said complaint.

Given under my hand and seal of this Court on 25.07.2023

--sd--  
Special Judge  
Special Court (CNS-II) Karachi

**ELEMENTARY & SECONDARY EDUCATION FOUNDATION  
GOVERNMENT OF KHYBER PAKHTUNKHWA**  
Plot No.20, Street No.13, Sector E-8, Phase 7,  
Hayatabad Peshawar 091-9219106, 9219108

Applications are invited from the eligible private education institutions of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa for partnership with Elementary & Secondary Education Foundation (ESEF) in Education Support Scheme (2023-24)

With the following terms and conditions

- The scheme is for admission of girls candidates in 11th grade only.
- Two institutions will not be selected from the same tehsil, Districts or tehsils already availing this scheme for intermediate classes will not be eligible
- Students passed out from govt. schools only, will be eligible.
- Initially, assistance will be for one year only.
- Preference will be given to areas where no government girls higher secondary school, girls second shift or government girls colleges exist.
- Shortlisting and selection of schools will be purely on merit through computerized generated online system. Therefore, no need of physical and telephonic contact.
- Information provided through online portal will be verified physically. Report of the verification team will be considered final.
- For detail terms & conditions and online apply please visit the following link: <http://esef.gkp.pk/ess-apply/>
- Closing date: 10 days from the date of publication of this advertisement.

**DIRECTOR PROGRAM** INF(P)#1855/23



# Swift resolution of public complaints top priority: Federal Ombudsman

## F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Federal Ombudsman, Ejaz Ahmad Qureshi here Friday said that swift resolution of people's complaints was the topmost priority of his department and asked the employees of all federal government organizations to double their efforts for speedy disposal of people complaints and implementation of the decisions made by his office.

Chairing a high-level meeting here at Federal Ombudsman Office Peshawar, Ejaz Qureshi said that access of people to Federal Ombudsman office has been made easy and comfortable and complaints could be registered through a simple application or submit online.

He said it has been mandatory that all complaints may be disposed off in 60 days. Urging the Govt departments to swiftly implement the decisions of the Federal Ombudsman Office, Ejaz Ahmad Qureshi said that advisers and consultants were hired

on merit while facilitation centers established for assistance of complainants. Ejaz Qureshi said that complaints against federal governments departments may increase upto 1,90,000 this year, saying that leniency or delay in implementation decisions would not be tolerated.

In 2021, the number of complaints were 1,10,000 that increased to 1,64,000 in 2022 and this year it was expected to reach it to 1,90,000 that reflected people confidence in Federal Ombudsman Office. He said that informal resolution of dispute (IRD) program has been started for speedy resolution of complaints through reconciliatory approach.

He said that 18 offices of his organization were working in all provinces of the country including in Peshawar, Abbottabad, Swat and DI Khan for speedy disposal of cases and implementation of the Federal Ombudsman Office's decisions at people doorsteps. Majority com-

plaints in KP were received against PESCO and that significant reduction in complaints against NADRA, BISP and SNGPL were witnessed. To address people's complaints, he urged all federal government departments to establish a well equipped digitization system and upload all the necessary data and information on their website for people's facilitation.

Ejaz Qureshi said the Federal Ombudsman Office has been digitalized as result of which complaints of people were increased and implementation of the decisions was being monitored. He said that a review appeal can be filed by the aggrieved parties within the stipulated time. Director General Benazir Income Support Program KP said that about nine million families were registered with BISP and swift action was being taken on complaints under an inclusive mechanism. The NADRA, SNGPL and other officials assured full cooperation with Federal Ombudsman Office.

## CTD claims arresting 3 facilitators of suicide attack

PESHAWAR (PPI): Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's Counter-Terrorism Department (CTD) on Friday claimed to have arrested three facilitators of the suicide attack on a mosque at Ali Masjid in Khyber district.

A CTD spokesperson said the three facilitators were traced by the intelligence agencies. They were identified as Dilawar Khan and his two sons namely Zabta Khan and Arif Khan. The spokesperson further informed that the accused have confessed to facilitating the suicide explosion at the mosque. More disclosures are expected to be made by the suspects who are being interrogated by the CTD personnel, he added.

The CTD personnel also seized suicide vests, weapons including a Kalashnikov and other materials from the suspects' residence in Sultan Khel. On July 25 last, Additional Station House Officer (SHO) Adnan Afridi was martyred and several other people sustained injuries in the suicide blast at the mosque in Khyber district.

## FIA promotes 19 Inpsectors to ADs

### F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) Peshawar 19 Inspectors have been promoted to Assistant Directors as per recommendation of Departmental Promotion Committee held on 20th June 2023.

In this regard notification has been issued by Ministry of Interior stated that Secretary approved recommendations of DPC for promotion of 19 BPS-16 Inspectors to BPS-17 as Assistant Directors FIA.

The promoted officers named Hafeez Ullah Khan, Muhammad Muzammil, Shahid Saeed, Rana Asad Ramzan, Zain Ullah, Bashir Ahmad, Nomeria Erim, Waqas Bashir, Syed Ahmad Shah, Tahira Batool, Shahid Ali, Zohaib Hassan Khan, Sufyan Dilbar, Saad Umar Riaz, Saeed Rahman, Sufia, Amma Qureshi and Zeeshan Kokhar. Moreover, Zain Ullah Khan newly promoted Assistant Director is qualified professional and serving FIA Cyber Wing at Peshawar.

## Mumtaz defends his PhD thesis

### F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Scholar Mumtaz Khan has successfully completed his PhD in Computer Science from the University of Peshawar (UoP). He was supervised by Dr. Shah Khuro, chairman department of Computer Science, UoP. The panel of examiners included Dr. Mukhtaj Khan, Dean IT, and chairman department of Computer Science, University of Haripur and Dr. Sara Shehzad of UoP.

## PAJCCI hails FBR's decision

### F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Director Pak-Afghan Joint Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PAJCCI), Zia ul Haq Sarhadi has appreciated the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) over its notification of introducing new Tracking and Monitoring of Cargo Rule 2023.

In a media statement issued here on Friday, Zia Sarhadi said that the decision was a long demand of the business community of the country aimed at ending the monopoly of one company providing tracking service to vehicles carrying cargo goods. It merits to mention here that FBR has issued SRO996(I)/2023 to notify new Tracking and Monitoring of Cargo Rules, 2023 on August 2.

The FBR has allowed companies having a minimum annual turnover of Rs175 million or financial worth of Rs100 million to

obtain the licence for tracking and monitoring of vehicles and containers carrying transit/imported cargo. Under the new rules, the annual turnover has been reduced from Rs350 million to Rs175 million and financial health from Rs200 million to Rs100 million for the companies intended to apply for the licenses for tracking and monitoring of vehicles and containers carrying transit cargo.

"Relaxation in annual turnover and financial health for intending companies will provide an opportunity for more firms to come in the arena and provide quality service," Zia opined. Zia Sarhadi said that at present, the lone company is charging containers exorbitantly due to the lack of any other option for businessmen for switching over to another tracking company.

Director PAJCCI

expressed the hope that FBR will undertake the bidding process on its scheduled time in September 2023 and fulfill other official requirements expediently for engaging new companies in the tracking process. He thanked the Chairman FBR for taking this decision which after implementation, will provide relaxation to the business community and introduce the provision of state-of-the-art and competitive tracking and monitoring service to importers and exporters.

The decision will also expedite the passage and clearance of goods-laden containers at ports which usually get delay due to different reasons and businessmen have to bear the brunt of paying extra payments under the heads of detention charges and demurrages, he expressed.



PESHAWAR: Central president of Tribal Youth Association Murtaza Mehsood presenting a gift to senior teacher Hashim Khan at a seminar.

## Info minister highlights sacrifices of police

### F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Provincial Caretaker Minister for Information and Minority Affairs, Barrister Feroz Jamal Kakakhel Friday highlighted role of police in maintaining peace and said that their sacrifices in line of duty would always be remembered.

Talking to media after attending a ceremony in connection with Martyrs Day, he said that it is our collective responsibility to take care of families of martyrs adding that provincial government has already taken steps for their welfare.

He said that provincial government has allocated

special grant for heirs of martyrs and various initiatives have been taken to provide them help and assistance.

Paying tribute to martyrs, he said that KP government stands with families of martyrs and no stone would be left unturned to address their problems and issues.

## Police sacrifices for peace hailed

### F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: For peace in my province, the sacrifice of police will be honoured and remembered forever. For the protection of all our communities in the province and also in the whole country, the efforts and courage of our police play a crucial role in maintaining law and order.

All the teachers, officers, employees and students of Gomal University are grateful for their services and dedication for their duties. These views were expressed by Vice Chancellor Gomal University Professor Dr.

Shakibullah while talking to PRO Gomal University Raja Alamzeb on the occasion of "4th August Police Martyrs' Day".

Vice Chancellor further said that police and army personnel are risking their lives in combating against evils, and being away from their families, they dedicate themselves to protect their nation's interests and uphold freedom and security. Their sacrifices exemplify their commitment to serving their country and ensuring the safety of nation. The Vice-Chancellor further said that we have never forgotten

our martyrs and will never forget them, Gomal University has announced in his admissions advertisement and reserved one seat for the children of martyrs.

## Shopkeeper shot dead

PESHAWAR (APP): Unknown assailants killed shopkeeper by indiscriminate firing in village Adina of District Swabi here on Friday.

According to local police, two attackers riding a motorcycle shot injured a shopkeeper, Syed Ashfaq in village Adeena.



PESHAWAR: Mayor Haji Zubair Ali in a group photo with newly joined JUI-F party members.

## ALW issues performance report

### F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: The Artificial Limbs Workshop (ALW) of Social Welfare department Khyber Pakhtunkhwa on Friday issued the July month performance report.

According to the report Social Services for physically Handicapped ALW provided free of cost services to 178 physically handicapped including women, children and aged of KP and newly merged tribal districts. However, the institution working for physically disabled persons also registered 43 new patients.

The report mentioned that in last month of July the workshop provided orthosis service to one patient while trans femoral prosthesis 3, TLSO and extension brace 6, AFO 21, KAFO 9? arches 3, hand splint , cock up and dynamic splint6, above knee prosthosis 2, trans tibial splints 11, humerous brace 2, PTB brace 9 , heal pad digital 1, ortho-prosthesis 1 , abduction brace 8 , D.B shoes 5, knee brace 6, digital heal pad arch 1, repair 6 and 1 shoulder brace patient facilitated in the institution.

Manager of the workshop Tahira Ali talking about the activities of the institution said that ALW of social welfare department provided services to physically disabled persons of the province and tribal districts without any discrimination. She said that she supervises all the services being provided to needy and trying to deliver in good way.

## Polio vaccination drive from 7th

### F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: The Emergency Operations Center (EOC) in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa has announced a polio vaccination drive that will be conducted from August 7 to 10 in selected districts of the province.

During the drive, over 2.72 million eligible children under the age of five will be vaccinated against polio.

The drive will be conducted in eight complete and nine partial districts of the province. In districts Peshawar and Khyber, fractional doses of Inactivated Polio Vaccine (IPV) will also be administered to children aged four to 59 months.

The Emergency Operations Center (EOC) has deployed a total of 6,947 teams of trained polio workers to implement the drive. These teams will visit homes and other places where children are likely to be found to administer polio drops. In order to ensure the security of the polio teams, 18,474 security personnel have been deployed in the target areas.

The Emergency Operations Center (EOC) has appealed to all parents and caregivers to ensure that their children are vaccinated during the drive. They have also urged the media to play a role in spreading awareness about the importance of polio vaccination.

## Honest leadership to steer country out of crisis: ATP

### F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Amun Taraqqi Party (ATP) chairman Muhammad Faiq Shah said the country has been plagued with countless challenges and issues and blamed the incumbent and previous governments for current economic and political turmoil in the country. Shah said that only honest leadership and sincere leadership can steer the country out of crisis.

He said no steps were taken to improve living standards of the common man. He said spiraling inflation has broken the backbone of poor people. He said the government's 'flawed' policies have pushed the country many years back. Chairing a meeting of the party's central executive committee

here on Friday, Shah criticized that the outgoing coalition government has snatched people's right to live.

He slammed the consistently increasing power and gas tariffs, saying that frequent increase in prices of petrol, electricity and gas is highly condemnable. He said people have faced hour-long electricity and gas outages. The party leader called for initiating unified efforts to steer the country out from prevailing crisis situations. Faiq said owing to the government's flawed policies, economic, trade and commercial activities have been halted.

The party leader said usurping the rights of the smaller federating units is intolerable. He said they will foil attempts to abuse constitutional and basic

rights of the unprivileged and marginalized segment of the society. Shah said the incumbent coalition government not only violated the constitution and law in 15 months but also deprived the poor of their livelihood. He reminded his party was carrying out a vigorous political and awareness campaign.

He vowed to ensure public authority and power and all basic rights to people at their doorstep. Faiq asked people to support new political parties and manifesto, if they want real change and democracy in the country. He furthermore asked competent, intellectuals and young people to come forward to play their due role to get rid the nation from present rulers and bring political and economic stability in the country.

## Aug 5 action exposes India's conspiracies

PESHAWAR (APP): International relations and political experts here Friday said that August 5, 2019 illegal acts of the Indian government has exposed the deep rooted conspiracies of the fascist Modi regime to deprive the oppressed Kashmiris of IIOJK of freedom.

Professor Dr AH Hilali, former Chairman Political Science Department, University of Peshawar told APP that Indian government four years ago had made a deeprooted conspiracy to rob Kashmiris of their identity, history and culture.

He said India had deprived oppressed Kashmiris of all kinds of liberties and human rights since 1947, and that the fascist Modi government's illegal and unconstitutional acts of August 5, 2019 of revoking special status of the Indian Illegally Occupied Kashmir (IIOJK) has exposed his conspiracy to rob Kashmiris of their history, language and ethno-cultural identity. Breaking all records of human rights violations and war crimes in IIOJK&K, he said the India's apartheid regime deprived the oppressed people of all liberties and services after stripping IIOJK&K of its special status by abrogating article 370 and 35 A on August 5, 2019 thereby holding hostage millions of oppressed Kashmiris at gun point.

Mushtaq Ahmed Shah, Vice Chairman, Jammu and Kashmir Peoples League told APP that August 5, 2019 was a blackest day in the history of Kashmir as on this day the 'butcher of Indian Gujrat' under a nefarious plan had tried to take away from Kashmiris their identity, history, language and culture besides broke all records of oppression. "All the ethno-religious communities living in occupied Kashmir including Muslims, Hindus, Sikhs, Buddhists and others had now realized how India was snatching away from Kashmiris their lands and reducing them to second class citizens."

"The Indian occupation forces had resorted to extra judicial killing of hundreds of innocent Kashmiris in fake encounters, putting the Kashmiri leadership behind bars, imposing clampdown on media and used rape of

women and molestation of children as weapon of war after August 5 illegal actions," he maintained. Mushtaq said Indian forces even didn't allow mass ritual and funeral of great Kashmiri leader, Syed Ali Gillani and forcefully snatched his body from the bereaved family and buried him at night.

Similarly, great hurriat leader, Muhammad Yasin Malik was jailed for life in a fake case to silence his strong voice for Kashmiris freedom. He said India has failed to suppress the indigenous freedom movement in IIOJK despite the brutal killing of freedom fighter Burhan Wani and others Kashmiris leadership and youth in a fake encounter. He claimed the Indian Govt had provided over six million illegal domicile certificates of IIOJK to Hindus in a bid to bring about demographic change there.

Besides illegal occupation of Kashmiris lands and demographic changes, he said India was going to commit the biggest robbery of the century in held Kashmir by displacing Kashmiris from their own homes and throwing them to the streets. He said the gruesome violation of human rights including forced disappearance of over 8,000 innocent Kashmiris, 8,652 unmarked mass graves, imposition of longest curfew on some 10 million unarmed Kashmiris, extra judicial killings, rape and molestation of women and children have exposed India's ugly secular face.

He said over 162,000 Kashmiris were subjected to inhuman torture by the Indian forces since 1989. Referring to the September 2021's Pakistani dossier having strong evidences of India's involvement in war crimes, human rights abuses, genocide and torture of innocent Kashmiris in IIOJK said about 8,652 unmarked graves had been identified in 89 villages of six districts in the held valley while bodies of 37 Kashmiris burnt alive by Indian forces were beyond recognition. Since 1989, he said over 96,000 cases of extra judicial killings, around 162,000 cases of arbitrary arrests and torture, over 25,000 pellet guns injuries, 11,250 women raped, 23,000 women wid-

owed and over 108,000 children were orphaned by the Indian army.

Mushtaq Ahmed said an excessive use of snipers and cluster ammunitions by India to target innocent Kashmiris along the Line of Control (LoC) in recent past, use of children and women as human shields by Indian army during encounters and making them sleep at military camps forcing them to dig out minefields and tying youth on military jeeps had testified Modi government's direct involvement in war crimes and genocide of Kashmiris. Manzoorul Haq, former Ambassador told APP that the illegal occupation of Kashmir valley by India contravened multiple articles of the 30 fundamental human rights of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) drafted by representatives from all the regions of the world including India on December 10, 1948 and was subsequently adopted by the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA).

"Yes, this declaration was applied to all the signatory members of the UN including India and restrained them from abuse, exploitation, maltreatment and all kinds of violence on IIOJK besides violation of any fundamental rights protected in UDHR," he said. He said the extensive abuse of UDHR in IIOJK has drawn attention of the international community and UN to probe into the grave violations of human rights reported by Pakistan and International bodies in the IIOJK.

Dr Ejaz Khan, former Chairman International Relations, University of Peshawar said the forced occupation and abolishing special status of IIOJK was a complete violation of international human rights and humanitarian laws including 4th Geneva Convention and UN Security Resolutions. He said India went against security Council's resolutions by revoking the IIOJK's special status and urged international community including world powers to press Modi Govt to immediately go back to pre August 5, 2019 status of IIOJK and give right of self determination to the oppressed Kashmiris.





## In brief

## House of Ali Amin raided

D I KHAN (INP): Police raided the residence of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leader Ali Amin Gandapur in Dera Ismail Khan. According to police, it raided the house of Ali Amin Gandapur but he was not present at home at the time. However, they recovered flood relief and Corona relief items besides catapults and batons from his home. The PTI leader in a letter dispatched to caretaker chief minister had leveled allegations against him. The letter which went viral on social media instigated public against interim CM and the action was outcome of same letter. The family of Ali Amin Gandapur asserted that police took away their personal households and they have receipts of the said stuff.

## Driver killed, another injured

BAHAWALPUR (INP): Driver of a trailer was killed while another injured in collision between two trailers here early Friday morning. Motorway Police said. According to details, due to feeling sleepy, driver lost control over the steering and it rammed into another trailer at National Highway near Khanqah Sharif in Bahawalpur. Driver of one trailer was killed while another person sustained critical injuries. The body and injured were shifted to hospital for medico-legal formalities.

## One killed as boat capsized

OKARA (INP): A minor child was killed and six other persons were missing when a boat carrying 40 people capsized in River Sutlej in Jasoke village near Okara. According to Deputy Commissioner Okara, Muhammad Zeeshan Hanif, at least 40 persons, including women and children, were onboard the boat when it capsized in the middle of the River Sutlej. He said that rescue teams from a nearby flood relief camp, which was set up for the flood affected people in the area, reached the spot immediately and started rescue operation. He informed that rescuers have saved 33 persons due to timely operation while dead body of a five-year-old boy was also retrieved from the river. He said that operation to find six missing persons still going on.

## 28 injured in road mishap

MURREE (INP): At least twenty-eight persons including women and children got injured when a passenger bus overturned in Rawalpindi Murree expressway Bastal Mor here Friday morning. According to details, motorway police said a passenger bus travelling from Murree to Lahore overturned after its tyre burst, resulting in multiple passengers receiving serious wounds, a private news channel reported. The police and rescue teams reached the spot after they were informed. The injured passengers were shifted to the nearby hospital. Further investigation into the incident is underway.

## Girl among two killed for honour

NAUSHAHRO FEROZE (INP): A youth gunned down two including a girl for honour and fled the scene here on Friday, police said. According to details, the incident took place near Moro area of Naushahro Feroze. A youth suspicion of illicit relations killed his fiancée and another person and fled after committing dual murder. The bodies were shifted to hospital for medico-legal formalities and police after registering a case against the murderer have started investigation.

# Swat police pay tribute to martyrs

## Shafi Ullah

MINGORA: Swat police has organized a spectacular ceremony at Police Training School Swat to pay tribute to the martyrs of police and their sacrifices.

Regional Police Officer Malakand Nasir Mehmood Sati, DPO Swat Shafi ullah Gandapur, Deputy Commissioner Swat Irfan ullah Wazir, Brigadier

fought against anti-social elements on every front and will also fight for the peace, survival and security of this land for the future.

He further said that 310 police officers and jawans of Malakand region were martyred while 455 police officers and jawans were injured in the last tense situation. He appreciated the efforts of DPO Swat Shafi ullah Gandapur for setting

up a dispensary at Javed Iqbal Shaheed Police Line named after martyrs of police, adding that as soon as possible a hospital would be established in Malakand region in the name of Inspector General of Police Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Martyrs, in which all medical facilities would be provided to the families of police martyrs. "The doors of our offices are always open for the families of police martyrs and they can come without hesitation," he added.



Sajid Akbar, President Swat Bar Association Saeed Khan, President Trade Federation Abdul Rahim Khan, representatives of Swat Press Club, Police officers and youths and families of police martyrs participated in large numbers.

Addressing the ceremony, RPO Malakand Nasir Mahmood Sati said that due to the sacrifices of the martyrs of the police, there is an atmosphere of peace in the entire region today. Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Police is a brave police force, they have

up a dispensary at Javed Iqbal Shaheed Police Line named after martyrs of police, adding that as soon as possible a hospital would be established in Malakand region in the name of Inspector General of Police Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Martyrs, in which all medical facilities would be provided to the families of police martyrs. "The doors of our offices are always open for the families of police martyrs and they can come without hesitation," he added.

Speaking on the occa-

sion, DPO Swat Shafi ullah Gandapur said that August 04 is the day of martyrdom of our police general Sifat Ghayor. And the purpose of celebrating this day is to pay tribute to the eternal sacrifices of our martyrs, the police martyrs have sacrificed their precious lives for the protection of the motherland.

He said that the sacrifices of the martyrs who sacrificed their lives for the survival and integrity of the country and the nation will be written in golden letters in history and we will not leave the families and children of our martyred police alone in any way.

On this occasion, the Deputy Commissioner Swat, Irfan ullah Wazir, while addressing the ceremony on the occasion of Martyrs' Day, appreciated the sacrifices of the martyrs of the police and said that the martyrs of the police sacrificed their lives for the sake of maintaining the country and the nation, law and order situation and this pure soil, we are proud of them, their heirs are very dear to us. We pay tribute to the children that due to these martyrs we are living in a peaceful environment today.

He further said that the sacrifices of the martyrs are unforgettable, the sacrifices of our martyrs will not go in vain, giving a message to the anti-social elements, he said that your gun bullets will end, but we will not hesitate to make sacrifices for the safety and security of our country.

## Police sacrifices against terrorists hailed

## F.P. Report

MARDAN: Regional Police Officer Mardan Muhammad Sulaiman here on Friday said that the sacrifices of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Police in the war against terrorism would be written in golden letters in history.

He expressed these views in a special ceremony held on the police Yum-e-Shuhada day in police-lines to commemorate the sacrifices of KP police force. Additional Commissioner Mardan Naem Akhtar, Deputy Commissioner Mardan Captain Retired Abdul Rahman and District Police Officer Mardan Mujibur Rahman, officers of administrative departments, relatives of martyrs and civil society members participated in the ceremony.

In this battle, the RPO Mr. Muhammad Sulaiman claimed that Mardan Police

was not left behind and 373 soldiers of Mardan region laid down their lives. "The sacrifices of martyrs will not go in vain and the day is not far when there will be peace and tranquility in this region", he added. He went on to say that the police martyrs laid their lives to pave way for peace and prosperity that was why Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Police was proud of its martyrs and ghazis.

He said that heirs of the martyrs were respectable for them, adding that to service family members of police martyrs was no less than an honor for them. The DPO Mardan Mr. Mujibur Rehman also addressed participants of the ceremony. He said that the blood of police martyrs was a debt to the motherland and the whole nation was always ready to pay this debt. He said, "police is an important part of administrative management and if we

imagine a society without police for a moment, it will be clear what the condition of day to day life would be," he maintained.

Earlier, ASI Ibrahim, the son of Shaheed Police Constable Anwar Sher Shaheed, mentioned to the martyrdom of his father in an emotional speech, which brought tears to eyes of the participants of ceremony. He vowed that he would spare no sacrifice to complete his father's mission against terrorism.

On the occasion, Constable Taimur presented a national song and received applause from the audience. At the end, Regional Police Officer Muhammad Sulaiman distributed gifts among family members of the martyrs. Besides, the RPO also visited the police martyrs memorial in Police Lines Mardan, laid flowers and recited Fatha for the martyrs.

## FC restores historic mosque in Bajaur

## F.P. Report

KHAR: Frontier Corps North proudly announces the successful completion of the preservation work on the iconic Mujahideen Mosque in Bar Chamarkand area of Bajaur. Originally built in 1835, the historical mosque has been meticulously renovated over the course of three months, culminating in an inauguration ceremony attended by locals, notables and dignitaries.

The preservation effort, carried out in March 2023, showcases Frontier Corps North's unwavering commitment to safeguarding



the rich cultural heritage. The restoration aimed to protect and maintain the historical significance of the Mujahideen Mosque, ensuring it remains an integral part of the communi-

ty's identity for generations to come. The local community expressed heartfelt appreciation for Frontier Corps North's initiative and efforts in restoring the beloved mosque.

## Two children die of consuming toxic milkshake

FAISALABAD (INP): Two grandchildren of Jamiat Ahle Hadith Punjab Chief Maulana Abdul Rashid Hijazi died of consuming toxic milkshake while their mother was hospitalized in critical condition.

The incident took place in Tariq Colony of Mamukanjan tehsil Tandlianwala of Faisalabad where daughter-in-law of Jamiat Ahle Hadith chief prepared milkshake for her and two children which turned toxic due

to unknown reason. After consuming toxic milkshake, six-year-old Rooha Raza and four-year-old Roohan Raza died while their mother was shifted to hospital in critical condition.

## Man kills brother-in-law over domestic disputes

MIANWALI (INP): A man gunned down his brother-in-law over domestic disputes and fled the scene of crime, police said on Friday.

According to details, the incident took place in Tabbi area of tehsil Kundian district Mianwali where accused Razzaq shot death Irfan, the husband of his

elder sister. The body was shifted to Rural Health Central Kundian and police after registering a case against the murderer started raids for his arrest.



JAMRUD: District Police Officer Saleem Kulachvi saluting after putting floral wrath at the memorial of martyred police officials.

## Wassan sees caretaker setup will stay beyond Feb

KHAIRPUR (PPI): Pakistan People's Party (PPP) leader Manzoor Wassan said Friday that the government would end its term on Wednesday and the caretaker setup would stay beyond February 2024.

Manzoor Wassan told the media in Khairpur about the new dream he saw. "The dream is good for Pakistan. I cannot say whether it will be good for the people or not," he stated. "The Secret Act is not in the interest of people. There should be no bill that affects people," he said.

"The Grand Democratic Alliance (GDA) has been disintegrated. Those who have been left in the party will join either Pakistan People's Party (PPP) or Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N)," he claimed. "We are ready to die for Pakistan," he declared and supported the announcement of the caretaker government of Punjab. Manzoor Wassan expressed these thoughts on the occasion of the inauguration of various projects in Kot Diji, Khairpur.

## Soldier laid to rest with state honor

## F.P. Report

LANDI KOTAL: The Frontier Corp (FC) 224 wing soldier, Naik Khan Abbas who embraced martyrdom in militants attack on forces check post in Sararogha, Waziristan was laid to rest with full military honor here in Ghundi Khel, Loy-Shelman village of tehsil Landi Kotal district Khyber on Thursday night.

Besides a large number of people, relatives and friends, civil and military officials attended the funeral prayer of the martyred soldier. Later on he was buried with state honor in his ancestral graveyard. He left three children and a widow behind him.

## One killed, two injured in road accident

SARGODHA (INP): A man was killed and two others were injured in a firing incident in Sargodha on Friday.

The incident took place in Lalyani, which is in the jurisdiction of Kot Momin police station. Police said that a youngster, Hasrat Iqbal, had a domestic dispute with his brothers-in-law, Amir Sheikh, Atif, and Mumtaz. After an exchange of harsh words, Hasrat allegedly shot dead Amir Sheikh and injured Atif and Mumtaz. Police reached the spot after receiving information, shifted the body and the injured to an area hospital, and arrested the alleged killer. The police are investigating the matter.

## Boy drowns in canal water

FAISALABAD (INP): A 12-years-old boy drowned in a canal water near Kashmir bridge in the limits of Millat town police station, here on Friday.

Police said that deceased Zain with his friends went to the canal for bathing to beat the heat.

## KKKUK holds 31st syndicate meeting

## F.P. Report

KARAK: The 31st Syndicate Meeting of Khushal Khan Khattak University, Karak, was held on Friday in Peshawar. The meeting focused on academic and administrative matters of the University, aiming to ensure the development of the institution. The Syndicate was chaired by the Vice Chancellor, Professor Dr Sardar Khan. The meeting was also actively participated other members of the Syndicate.

The other members were Registrar Khushal Khan Khattak University, Karak Muhammad Rashad Khattak, Treasurer Hafiz Ismail Khan, Justice Retired Daud Khan, Chairman HEC nominee and Vice Chancellor FATA University Dr. Muhammad

Jahanzeb Khan, Dr. Muhammad Riaz Khan, Deputy Director Audit Farid Jalal, Muhammad Shah Din, Dr. Muhammad Inam ul Haq, Abdul Latif, Abdus Salam, Principal GPGC Karak Prof. Ajmal Khan and representatives from the Secretaries Higher Education Archives & Libraries Department, Finance Department, and Establishment Department of the Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

During the meeting, fruitful discussions were held, and vital decisions were taken to address the issues faced by University in administrative, academic and financial matters. The Syndicate members emphasized the importance of providing quality education and creating a conducive environment for students,

faculty, and staff.

The 31st Syndicate meeting also approved the minutes of the 15th Finance and Planning Committee Meeting, to ensure transparent and effective financial management of the university's resources. Vice Chancellor Professor Dr Sardar Khan expressed his gratitude to all the Syndicate members for their valuable contributions and commitment to the university's progress. He emphasized that collaborative efforts were essential to achieving the institution's vision and goals. Earlier, the 15th Finance & Planning held its 15th meeting on Friday under the chairmanship of Vice Chancellor Prof. Dr. Sardar Khan which gave away recommendations on financial matters to the Syndicate.

## Police Martyrs' Day observed in Wana

## F.P. Report

WANA: A dignified ceremony was organized to commemorate and pay tribute to police martyrs on August 4th under the leadership of DPO Farman Ullah (PPM) in Wana, District headquarters of Lower South Waziristan. DIG FC South, Commandant SWS Wana Muhammad Owais Shamim, DC Lower South Waziristan Nasir Khan, AC Wana Yasir Salman Kundi, local tribal elders, Ullams and media representatives specially participated in the event.

Addressing the ceremony, all the speakers appreciated the sacrifices of the police martyrs and expressed hope that the sacrifices of the martyrs will definitely bring colours in the form of safety and survival of the dear motherland and acknowledging the sacrifices of the police, the tribal leaders said that the local tribal elders stand side by side with their police and other law enforcement agencies.

The heirs of the martyrs expressed their determination that we will not hesi-

tate to sacrifice our lives and make further sacrifices for the sake of the security and survival of our country.

On this occasion, DIG FC South and DPO assured the heirs of martyrs that the police will carry forward the mission of their martyrs while the police are always ready for the welfare of their families and their service. Gifts were distributed among the police veterans and the heirs of the martyrs, and at the end special prayers were offered for the martyrs and for the safety of the homeland and the peace of the region.

## Police Martyrs Day observed in Khyber

## F.P. Report

LANDI KOTAL: Police Martyrs Day was observed across the Khyber on Friday and rich tribute was paid to the unparalleled sacrifices of the police persons on the occasion.

In his message, District Police Officer (DPO) Khyber Saleem Khulachvi said that those police officials who laid down their lives in the line of duty were the real heroes of the police force and the nation would never forget them. He maintained that the sacrifices of the martyrs make us realize that they have

sacrificed their lives for our safe future.

On Thursday night DPO along with relatives of the Shuhadas lit candles at the memorial of the martyrs police personnel and presented a salute. Separate celebrations in connection of the Day had been organized in all three tehsils of Khyber.

On Thursday night DPO, Saleem Kulachvi along relatives of the Shuhadas lit candles at the memorials of the martyrs police personnel at Jamrud and a smart contingent of police presented salute on the occasion. In Landi Kotal Quran Khwani was held in the

mosque, inside the tehsil compound and prayers were offered for the martyrs police.

In the same way Station House Officer (SHO) flanked by Tehsildar Dawood Afridi and other officials put floral wreaths at the graves of the Shuhadas. They visited families of the Martyred cops and presented them with gifts. Banners of martyred police photos were also hovered at important sites to pay homage to them. As per police department so far 26 police cops in Khyber have embraced Shahdat in the line of duty.

## Teachers demands quota for retired employees

## F.P. Report

LARKANA: The teachers of Shaheed Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto Medical University in Larkana protested against Dr. Abdul Hafeez Abro, General Secretary of the Teachers Association, on the policy of the university administration on keeping retired employees on contract without any advertisement or legal basis.

A meeting was held in the auditorium of Chandka Medical College under the chairmanship, in which Fatima was recited for the forgiveness of the deceased Dr. Balqis Malik, Dr. Sikandar Sheikh and Dr.

Inam Soomro, after which the gratuity of the employees and various agendas were discussed. Keeping a legally retired employee on contract is a violation of the orders of the Supreme Court of Pakistan, while the university administration has the right to file a contempt of court case in the Supreme Court if it keeps any retired employee on contract.

The current employees should be promoted to the next grade through the selection board and possible steps should be taken to accommodate the teachers. If our demands are not accepted, we will prepare an action plan.

Residents protested

against stolen of electricity cables: In Garhi Khairi, a suburb near Qamber, after unknown persons stole electric cables, WAPDA staff delayed the restoration of electricity. Due to road closure, the traffic going to Karachi, Quetta and other cities was completely stopped.

Speaking on this occasion, Zohaib Ali Mirani, Hussain Imrani, Maulana Zahid Ali Jamali and others said that the protest will last for a week. Time has passed but it does not matter to the officers and staff of WAPDA while the intensity of heat due to the strong sun has made the residents uncomfortable.





# In Niger, US seeks to hang on to its last, best counterterrorist outpost in West Africa

WASHINGTON (AP): Ten days into a coup in Niger, life has become more challenging for US forces at a counterterrorism base in a region of West Africa known as the world's epicenter of terrorism. Flights in and out of the country have been curtailed as coup leaders require Americans to seek permission for each flight. Fuel shortages mean the US commander must sign off whenever an aircraft is refused.

And yet, as several European countries evacuate Niger, the Biden administration is showing itself intent on staying. It sees Niger as the United States' last, best counterterrorism outpost - and until the coup, a promising democracy - in an unstable region south of the Sahara Desert. Abandoning it risks not only a surge in jihadist groups, but even greater influence by Russia's Wagner mercenary group. While some European governments shut embassies and evacuated their citizens on military flights this week, as scattered anti-Western protests broke out following the coup, US diplomats sent home nonessential staff and some family this week but stayed on.

"The US Embassy is open. We intend for it to remain open," State Department spokesman Matthew Miller told reporters in Washington. President Joe Biden, in a statement, called for the Nigerien presidential guards who are holding democratically elected President Mohammed Bazoum to release him and immediately restore Niger's "hard-earned democracy." Secretary of State Antony Blinken, who praised Niger as a "model of resilience, a model of

democracy, and a model of cooperation" when he visited in March, has been calling Niger's captive president almost daily, affirming US support for his safety and return to power. In an opinion piece published in The Washington Post, Bazoum urged the US and others to help Niger restore its constitutional order. He warned that otherwise the "entire central Sahel region could fall to Russian influence via the Wagner Group" and Islamic extremists would take advantage of Niger's instability. "They will ramp up their efforts to target our youths with hateful anti-Western indoctrination, turning them against the very partners who are helping us build a more hopeful future," the president wrote.

As the military overthrow stretches into its second week, US officials refuse to formally call it a coup, saying they retain hope of a return to civilian government. The firm US stance in Niger is in contrast to its response to other recent international crises and armed takeovers. That includes in nearby Sudan, when fighting erupted between two rival generals in April. Then, American diplomats and security forces were among the first foreigners to shut down operations in Sudan and fly out. The 2021 US retreat from Afghanistan, itself an important territory for US counterterrorism operations, signaled an administration willing to cut deep in paring its security obligations to focus attention on a main challenge, from China. US officials declined to say how far they would go to restore Niger's government, including whether they would support any use of force by a



regional security bloc known as ECOWAS. "Right now, we're focused on diplomacy," said John Kirby, a spokesman for the National Security Council. "We still believe there's time and space for that. The window is not going to be open forever. We understand that. But we believe it's still open. Diplomacy should still be the first tool of choice."

Both France - Niger's colonial ruler and the object of much of the anti-West anger in Niger - and the United States have threatened to cut off millions of dollars in aid unless the new junta steps down. But the usual US response of sanctions and isolation when military figures seize power in West Africa is riskier now given the avidity of the jihadists and Kremlin-allied forces. John Lechner, a West Africa analyst and author on the Wagner Group, sensed more analysts

proposing some in-between solution, such as the US retaining security ties in exchange for mere promises of a transition back toward democracy. US personnel, including members of the 409th Air Expeditionary Group, remain at US counterterror outposts in Niger. That includes Air Base 201 in Agadez, a city of more than 100,000 people on the southern edge of the Sahara, and Air Base 101 in Niamey, Niger's capital. Americans have made Niger their main regional outposts for wide-ranging patrols by armed drones and other counterterror operations against Islamic extremist movements that over the years have seized territory, massacred civilians and battled foreign armies.

Air Base 201 operates in a sandstorm-whipped, remote area of Niger that serves as a gateway to the Sahara Desert for migrants and traders. In

sandstorms, US military personnel wear goggles and face masks as the gritty sky turns red or black. In heat that can reach well over 100 degrees Fahrenheit (38 degrees Celsius), US military personnel in their free time have built classrooms for local schools, created weekly English-language discussion groups, helped villagers find a lost 2-year-old girl in a nighttime desert search, challenged a local soccer team to a match, offered residents "American snacks" for International Women's Day and delivered pencils, prayer mats, soap and other aid to communities in what one sergeant described as "the unforgiving environment of Africa." A civilian aviation notice this week warned that refueling was being limited at Agadez since the coup, with every single gassing up requiring approval from the 409th's commander. Niger's junta closed the country's airspace on July 27. Since then, the US government has negotiated access for flights on a case-by-case basis, a US official who was not authorized to speak publicly said on the condition of anonymity.

Pentagon spokesman Brig. Gen. Pat Ryder said most US forces in Niger are staying inside their military bases and are not conducting training exercises as they normally would.

Americans have invested years and hundreds of millions of dollars in training Nigerien forces. In 2018, fighters loyal to the Islamic State group ambushed and killed four American service members, four Nigeriens and an interpreter. West Africa recorded over 1,800 extremist attacks in the first six months of this year, which killed nearly 4,600 people,

according to ECOWAS. The Islamic extremist group Boko Haram operates in neighboring Nigeria and Chad. Along Niger's borders with Mali and Burkina Faso, the Islamic State in the Greater Sahara and al-Qaida affiliate Jama'at Nusrat al-Islam wal-Muslimin pose greater threats.

"Affiliates, franchises and branches of IS and AQ are probably most robust in that part of the world, outside of Afghanistan. So, you know, there's a lot at stake," said Colin Clarke, research director at The Soufan Group security and intelligence consultancy. If the coup in Niger sticks, it will alter what has been US security forces' best partnership in the region and create momentum for those forces to reduce their presence. Especially after any US military drawdown, domestic turmoil from the coup could draw Niger's troops away from the country's borders, allowing jihadist groups to make further inroads into Niger. Russia's Wagner Group mercenaries already are a force in neighboring Mali and the nearby Central African Republic, supporting and protecting anti-Western governments. Wagner forces usually take a share of countries' mineral resources in return. In Niger, the country's notable resource is high-grade uranium ore. Wagner forces are notoriously bad at fighting Islamic extremists, with scorched-earth tactics that only draw civilians to the jihadists' side, Clarke said. And when Wagner is done extracting gold and other resources from a country, "they're out, right? And the situation is then fourfold worse, and who's there to clean it up?" he said.

## US to keep Russia's food exports flowing if grain deal revived: Blinken

UNITED NATIONS (Reuters): The United States would continue to do "whatever is necessary" to ensure Russia can freely export food if there was a revival of a deal allowing the safe Black Sea export of Ukrainian grain, US Secretary of State Antony Blinken said. Russia last month quit the July 2022 deal brokered by the United Nations and Turkey aimed at easing a global food crisis after Russia's invasion of Ukraine five months earlier. Ukraine and Russia are both leading grain exporters.

"In the event of return to the agreement, of course, we'll continue to do whatever is necessary to make sure that everyone can export their food and food products freely and safely to include Russia," Blinken told reporters at the United Nations. "We want to see that food on world markets. We want everyone to benefit from the lower prices," he said after chairing a UN Security Council meeting on food insecurity caused by conflict. Many countries at the gathering expressed disappointment that Russia had quit the deal and urged them to reconsider. To convince Russia to agree to the Black Sea deal, another pact was also struck in July 2022 under which UN officials agreed to help Russia get its food and fertilizer exports to

foreign markets. While Russian exports of food and fertilizer are not subject to Western sanctions imposed after Russia's February 2022 invasion of Ukraine, Moscow has said restrictions on payments, logistics and insurance have hindered shipments. During the Security Council meeting, Russia's Deputy UN Ambassador Dmitry Polyanskiy accused Western countries of an "arrogant unwillingness" to help fulfill the UN pact with Moscow. He stressed that Russia held a larger share of the global wheat market than Ukraine and was a key fertilizer exporter. "Western countries need to focus on ensuring that Russian grain and fertilizers can get to countries in need without hindrance," Polyanskiy said. Blinken told reporters that Russia's exports of food have exceeded levels prior to its invasion of Ukraine.

"Having said that, to the extent that there have been any problems with things like shipping and insurance, we have throughout the process of the Black Sea Grant initiative, taken steps to work through them and to address them," he said. This included writing comfort letters to banks "to assure them that it was fine to process these transactions and that they wouldn't run afoul of our sanctions," Blinken said.

US bank JPMorgan has processed some Russian grain export payments with reassurances from Washington. The United Nations has argued that the Black Sea deal helped everyone because it brought prices down 23% from a record high in the weeks following Russia's invasion of Ukraine. After Moscow quit the deal, it began targeting Ukrainian ports and grain infrastructure on the Black Sea and Danube River, sending global grain prices soaring. Moscow has said it may resurrect the Black Sea agreement if its demands to improve its own exports of grain and fertilizer are met.

"If all the problems that have been publicly raised by us ... are eliminated, we will be ready to once again take part in the Black Sea initiative," Polyanskiy reiterated. The European Union has warned developing countries that Russia is offering cheap grain "to create new dependencies by exacerbating economic vulnerabilities and global food insecurity," according to a letter seen by Reuters. Russian President Vladimir Putin told African leaders last week that Russia was ready to replace Ukrainian grain exports to Africa on both a commercial and aid basis to fulfill what he said was Moscow's critical role in global food security.

## China hints leaders started annual seaside vacation in flood-hit areas

BEIJING (Reuters): Chinese President Xi Jinping's chief of staff met with experts holidaying at Beidaihe, a signal that typically means top leaders have started their vacation at the seaside resort, even as large areas of northern China remain flooded. The summer retreat comes as questions continue to swirl around the unexplained removal as foreign minister of Qin Gang, a former rising star under Xi's patronage, the abrupt replacement of the top brass at the People's Liberation Army Rocket Force, and as the leadership struggles to find the right tools to stimulate the economy.

Beidaihe has traditionally provided a relaxed setting for retired Chinese Communist Party leaders to interact and raise concerns with the current leadership. But as Xi has consolidated power over the past decade, the scope for elders to speak their minds has shrunk, said a Chinese scholar who declined to be named as he is not authorized to speak to foreign media. Cai Qi, who is Xi's chief of staff, met with 57 technology experts on vacation at Beidaihe and urged them to do more to make China technologically self-reliant, state news agency Xinhua reported. China does not announce when leaders go on holiday but typically indicates the start of their vacation with an announcement about meeting experts. Leaders then disappear from public view for about two weeks.

It is unclear if Qin, who would be qualified to holiday at Beidaihe with the leadership since he retains the title of state councillor, will turn up. Qin has not been seen in public since June 25. One of Xi's last tasks before going on vacation was to instruct emergency responders to work harder at rescuing those affected by floods battering northern China as a result of Typhoon Doksuri. At least 100,000 people in the province where Beidaihe is located have been evacuated, but the resort itself has not been affected. Since the founding of the people's republic, current and retired party and government leaders have gathered for summer vacations at Beidaihe, 3-1/2 hours east of Beijing by car. But Beidaihe is not just fun and games. Top leaders have traditionally held official meetings at the resort to discuss important matters such as choosing the next leadership, often in consultation with retired party elders. Absent this year will be Jiang Zemin, a former party chief who influenced Chinese politics until his death last year. It is unclear if Hu Jintao, Xi's predecessor who was removed from the stage last October in the middle of a vote to determine the party's leaders for the next five years, will be at the resort.

## 'Groups of migrants pushed back into desert no man's land'

TUNIS (AP): Tunisia's interior minister conceded that small groups of sub-Saharan migrants trying to enter the country are pushed back into the desert border areas with Libya and Algeria, but labeled as "false allegations" claims by the UN, humanitarian groups and migrants themselves of mistreatment. In an interview with The Associated Press, Kamel Fekih said that while there is no "collective" expulsion of migrants, small groups trying to enter Tunisia are pushed back into the desert no man's land.

However, he disputed remarks earlier this week by the deputy spokesman for the UN Secretary-General, Farhan Haq, who called for an "immediate end" to "the expulsion of migrants, refugees and asylum seekers from Tunisia to the borders with Libya and also Algeria." "What is this monsieur from the UN talking about?" the Tunisian interior minister said in the interview. "There are no collective deportations by us." But he did say that "there are just little groups of 6 to 12 people who are pushed back" because they don't have papers. He said that three bodies of migrants had been found in the desert frontiers between Libya and Algeria, to the north, but added the dead

were found outside Tunisian territory. Tunisia's eastern coast, notably the port city of Sfax, has become the main launching point for migrants, mostly from sub-Saharan Africa, to get to Italy and other parts of Europe in small boats. With migrants pouring into Sfax and other points, tensions have risen between the local population and migrants, culminating last month with the death of a Tunisian in the city. In recent months, security forces began removing some migrants from the city, bussing them elsewhere and, migrants say, dumping some of them in the desert. The AP is among media outlets who have spoken to migrants abandoned in a no-man's land in dire conditions. Temperatures in the desert last month routinely exceeded 40 degrees Celsius (104 Fahrenheit). Fekih said that 1,057 migrants had agreed to be returned home by July 20. There are currently some 80,000 undocumented migrants in Tunisia, concentrated on the coast, with 17,000 in Sfax, he said. President Kais Saied triggered anti-migrant fervor in February, saying the "hordes" of migrants were part of a plot to erase Tunisia's identity and change its demography.

The interior minister reiterated, without elaborating, more recent claims by Saied that an organ trafficking business has sprouted up around migrants. "It is a large-scale migration ... that sometimes engenders violence aggravated by the emergence of gangs that deal in the trafficking of humans and their organs and sell migrants fragile vessels called 'boats of death' that put their lives in danger and often sink at sea," the interior minister said. From January to July 20, the bodies of 901 migrants had been pulled from the waters off the Tunisian coast, he added.

Some migrants have said they were beaten by Tunisian security officials, their possessions taken from them in some cases. The minister dismissed their claims, saying they had been "manipulated" in the hope of getting favors from organizations who deal with migration. Photos, video and interviews with migrants in the no-man's land between Tunisia and Libya that went viral on social media have dented Tunisia's image as a friendly North African country, a reputation that officials are trying to repair. Some entertainers, including rappers, have canceled their summer concerts in Tunisia,

apparently as fall-out from the migrant crisis. Among them were rappers Bigflo and Oli who were to perform in Carthage, outside Tunis where the presidential palace is located. They said on Instagram that they did not want to perform, given the current situation, and would give the money they were to earn to the humanitarian organization Doctors Without Borders. Because Tunisia has no borders with sub-Saharan Africa, migrants are forced to pass through Algeria or Libya - which do - to reach Tunisia, Fekih noted. "There are no collective pushbacks, but these (illegal) migrants are stopped from entering Tunisian territory because they come from Algeria and Libya," Haq, the UN deputy spokesman, reiterated that "migrants, refugees and asylum seekers must be protected and treated with dignity ... regardless of their status and in accordance with international human rights and refugee law." The interior minister said the short-term solution was to return migrants to their homeland, in cooperation with their countries and human rights organizations, because "Tunisia cannot support this large number of undocumented sub-Saharan migrants."

## 'NK 'responds' to UN outreach on Travis King'

SEOUL (AFP): North Korea has "responded" to efforts by the United Nations Command to discuss American soldier Travis King, who ran across the border into North Korea last month and is believed to be detained by Pyongyang, the Command said. The US-led multinational force, which oversees the Korean War truce, said in a statement that Pyongyang's military "has responded to the United Nations Command with regards to Private King".

"In order not to interfere with our efforts to get him home, we will not go into details at this time," it added. The latest announcement comes more than a week after the UN Command said it had started a conversation with the North over the soldier. US Secretary of State Antony Blinken confirmed contact had been made with North Koreans, adding he still had no idea where King was or in what condition. "We're actually trying to learn more about his whereabouts and his well-being, and we simply don't have that information," Blinken told US television

channel ABC. "Yesterday, finally, the North Koreans acknowledged that they understand we're asking these questions. They haven't given us responses," he added.

After a drunken pub fight, an incident with police and a stay in South Korean jail, Private Second Class King was being taken to the airport last month to fly back to Texas. But instead of travelling to Fort Bliss for disciplinary hearings, King snuck away, joined a Demilitarised Zone sightseeing trip and slipped over the border. The two Koreans remain technically at war because the 1950-53 conflict ended in an armistice, not a treaty, and most of the border between them is heavily fortified. But at the JSA, the frontier is marked only by a low concrete divider and is relatively easy to cross, despite the presence of soldiers on both sides. Pyongyang has a long history of detaining Americans and using them as bargaining chips in bilateral negotiations.

The latest incident comes as relations between the two Koreans are at one

of their lowest points ever, with diplomacy stalled and North Korean leader Kim Jong Un calling for increased weapons development, including of tactical nuclear warheads. But development "reads as a sign of North's willingness to negotiate", Vladimir Tikhonov, professor of Korean studies at the University of Oslo, told AFP. "They basically want some progress towards normalisation with the US, in order to offset the disproportionately high dependency on the Chinese economy. So, a goodwill gesture may happen -- although it is far from sure for now." Beijing is North Korea's most important ally and economic benefactor.

Washington continues to enforce stringent sanctions against North Korea as a means of addressing the ongoing concerns surrounding their nuclear weapons programme. Pyongyang last week held a dramatic military parade featuring its new attack drones and nuclear-capable intercontinental ballistic missiles, with leader Kim flanked by visiting Russian and Chinese officials.

MOSCOW (AFP): Russia gives few glimpses nowadays of Alexei Navalny, an opposition icon who leveraged social media and fatigue with the Kremlin to rise to stardom before being poisoned and jailed. He now only appears in grainy videos from court hearings at his maximum-security prison -- occasions he has used to slam the Kremlin for what he sees as its latest folly: attacking Ukraine.

"(Russia) is floundering in a pool of either mud or blood, with broken bones, with a poor and robbed population, and around it lie tens of thousands of people killed in the most stupid and senseless war of the 21st century," Navalny said at his last hearing in July. The most prominent Kremlin critic inside Russia over the last decade, 47-year-old Navalny is serving a nine-year prison sentence near Moscow on embezzlement charges he and his allies contest. But authorities are expected to add 20 years to his term for extremism, building on a sweeping clampdown on any dissent since launching large-scale hostilities in Ukraine in 2022. Navalny's criticism of the military intervention is just the latest chapter of his long and dramatic fight against ruling elites and his activism has taken many forms. He

has campaigned across the country to be president, published corruption investigations that embarrassed the Kremlin and rallied massive crowds onto Russia's streets.

His message -- pumped to fans through glitzy social media content -- contrasts dramatically to that of Vladimir Putin, a Soviet-styled, 70-year-old former KGB agent who has ruled without compromise for over 20 years. Navalny returned to Russia from Germany in early 2021 after recuperating from a near-fatal poisoning attack with Novichok, a Soviet-era nerve agent. His return to Russia despite facing jail put him on a collision course with Putin, after Navalny blamed the poisoning attack in Siberia on the Kremlin. "I'm not afraid and I call on you not to be afraid," he said in an appeal to supporters as he landed in Moscow, moments before being detained on charges linked to an old fraud conviction. His arrest spurred some of the largest demonstrations Russia had seen in decades, and thousands were detained at rallies nationwide calling for his release. Navalny countered with the release of "Putin's Palace," an investigation into a lavish Black Sea mansion that his team claimed was gifted to

Putin through corruption. The expose forced a rare denial from Putin, who quipped that if his security services had really been behind the poisoning, they would have finished the job.

While Navalny traffics confidently in memes, Putin is known both for not using the internet and asking a teenager who wanted him to follow his YouTube channel: "What should I sign?" A similar Navalny corruption video targeting then prime minister Dmitry Medvedev spurred large demonstrations in 2017, with protesters carrying rubber ducks which became a symbol of the protests. Ahead of a presidential election in 2018, Navalny toured cities across the country to drum up support but was barred from running because of the old fraud charge. ("Putin) fears me and he fears the people I represent," he told AFP at the time. Before that he had challenged Sergei Sobyanin to become Moscow mayor and forced a runoff. At rallies and in courtrooms, Navalny is a convincing public speaker and rallied protesters around home-grown slogans like "the party of crooks and thieves" to slam the ruling United Russia party.

But he has been tainted by an early foray into far-

right nationalism, and a pro-gun video from 2007 routinely resurfaces in which he compares people from the ex-Soviet South Caucasus region to cockroaches. Navalny also remains a fringe figure for a large portion of Russian society, who back the Kremlin's official portrayal of him as a Western stooge and convicted criminal. Before he was sentenced in February 2020, he had become such a thorn in the Kremlin's side that Putin refused to pronounce his name in public. His anti-corruption group was shuttered and his top allies are either imprisoned or in exile.

Navalny's team says he has been harassed in prison and repeatedly moved to a punitive solitary confinement cell. He says guards have subjected him and other inmates to "torture by Putin", making them listen to the president's speeches. Still Navalny is upbeat and sardonic on social media accounts curated by aides. The lawyer by training has fought for basic rights and taken prison officials to court. He has also tormented them, filing formal requests for a kimono and a balalaika -- a traditional musical instrument -- and to be allowed to keep a kangaroo. "You cannot shut my mouth," he declared.



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# Pak-Iran ties, a promising prospect

**PAKISTAN** and Iran have agreed to activate remaining five border markets by the end of this year. Both nations pledged to combat Islamophobia, advance peace and stability in Afghanistan, and promote the welfare of the Afghans. Both countries also decided to repatriate all fishermen detained in each other country, waive fines imposed on them, and release their fishing boats. Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari, addressing a joint press conference with his Iranian counterpart Hossein Amir Abdollahian, emphasized the complete agreement between Pakistan and Iran on matters of mutual interest, recognizing that prosperity and development are interconnected with peace and stability in the neighborhood and the region.

The bilateral relations between Pakistan and Islamic Republic of Iran has improved significantly over the past months while this positive momentum was further augmented by the recent reunion between Riyadh and Tehran that was a major hurdle in the promotion of Pak-Iran tie up. There had been frequent high-level contacts and exchanges of the top-level delegations between Tehran and Islamabad aimed at strengthening bilateral ties, boosting trade and economic cooperation and achieving mutually beneficial shared objectives of the two neighborly nations. During the recent visit of the Foreign Minister of Iran, both countries signed various agreements including the protocols of bilateral economic consultation, and formation of the joint investment committee (JIC) along with a five-year trade cooperation plan to boost bilateral trade between Pakistan and Iran during the next five years from 2023-2028. Both governments also agreed to waive fines and release detained ship and fishermen of each other nation. Meanwhile, Afghanistan was an important topic of discussions during Hossein Amir Abdollahian interaction with Pakistani authorities, because, both nations have common borders with Afghanistan, host millions of Afghan refugees and have a consensus viewpoint regarding the prevailing humanitarian and law and order situations in neighboring Afghanistan.

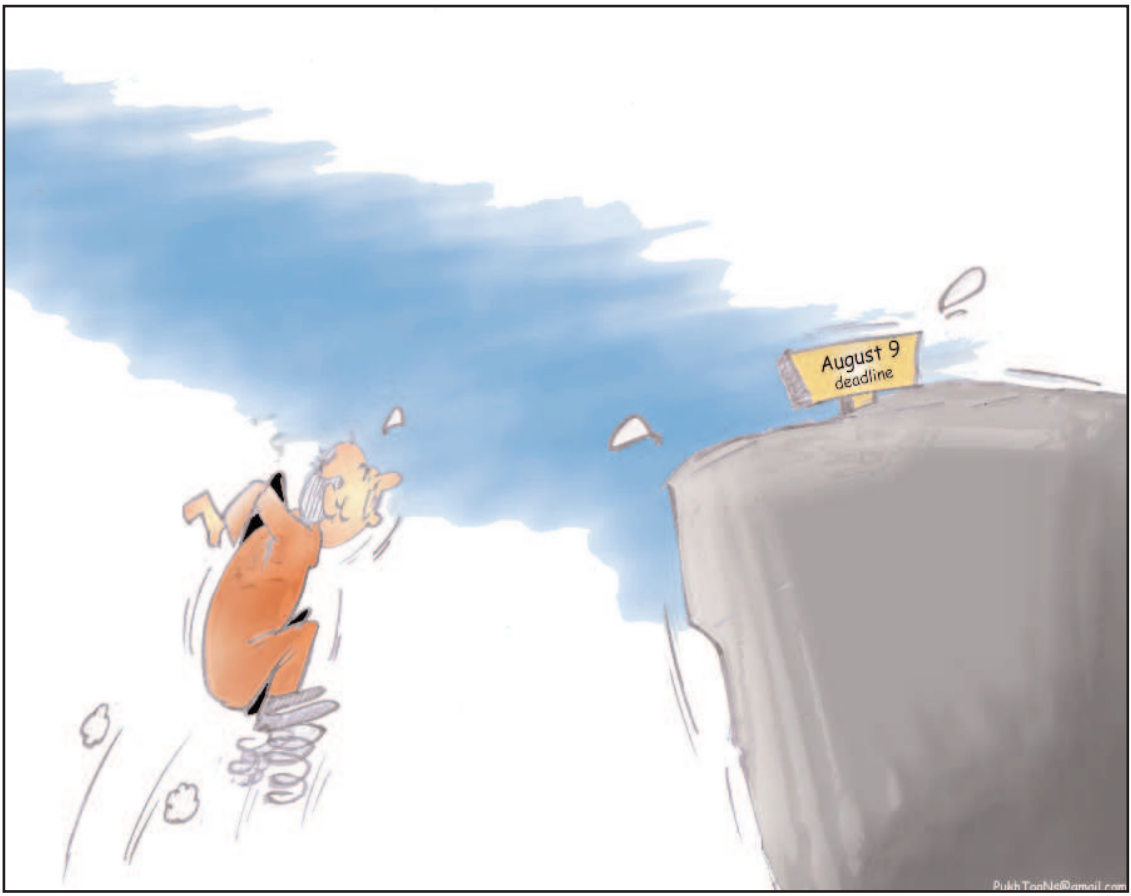
Pakistan and Iran are two brotherly Muslim countries, who are firmly tied in multiple bonds of history, religion, culture and heritage, language as well as Muslim brotherhood and good neighborliness. Iran was the first country who recognized an Independent Pakistan. The people and the government of Iran had always displayed unmatched generosity and brotherhood through resolute support and crucially needed assistance during the difficult situations of foreign aggressions, natural disasters, and calamities throughout the past seven and a half decades of their bilateral relations. There is a huge potential for the expansion and promotion of bilateral cooperation in multiple domains including trade and investment, energy and food security, defense and security, counter terrorism, and against human and drug trafficking, science and technology, education, travel and tourism etc. The border belt regions of both countries are less developed and lack essential infrastructure and resources while smugglers, criminals and terrorist groups exploit those lapses to their advantage and create security and administrative issues for Tehran and Islamabad. Pakistan and Iran have agreed to set up border markets at different locations on their common border to boost trade activities, curb illegal smuggling, and increase livelihood in their less developed border areas. Recently, the Iranian President and Prime Minister of Pakistan jointly inaugurated the Mand-Pishin border market and laid the foundation of the Gahd-Polan power project, which categorically manifest the collective commitment of both nations in finding mutual cooperation for the betterment of their homelands.

Historically, Pak-Iran bilateral relations fell victim to the global rivalry between the United States and China, and global sanctions against Iran, while the sectarian tussle between Saudi-Iran further undermined bilateral cooperation between Islamabad and Tehran. Amid intensifying global rivalries, the people of Pakistan were the biggest victims of political tussle and sectarian clash between other nations, magnificent energy projects, trade and connectivity endeavors met delays and failures, while anti-social elements and terrorists groups enjoys freedom and safe havens in border regions of both countries making their cooperation more difficult and challenging. Presently, the leadership of both neighboring nations have bridged up their communication gap, overcomed differences and identified multiple areas of bilateral cooperation to benefit from each other's resources, capabilities and technical specialties. That is highly promising and equally beneficial for their people as well as the entire region.

In fact, Pakistan and Iran have common fate, single destination, similar issues and intersecting problems that need consensus of view, collective endeavors, and joint work to overcome concurrent challenges. Expansion of China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) into Iran, Turkey and Iraq, effective border management, completion of already under construction gas pipeline, and enhanced religious tourism, and trade will not only boost economic and security prospects for both nations but proved to be the last nail in the cuffs of global conspiracies and regional rivalries for ever. For that purpose, continued political commitment, persistent work, and loyalty of the leaders are crucial to comprehend such miracles in the contemporary world.

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# A corporate takeover of the UN must be stopped

Harris Gleckman

**THE** United Nations needs a revamp. There can be little dispute about that. And the UN's September 2024 Summit for the Future is an ideal opportunity for this upgrade. The people of the world expect a global form of governance that can confront the unique challenges of the 21st century. The UN's creaking, post-World War II structures have been struggling to meet the challenges of the modern world for a long time. The many crises we face demand that the UN evolves to meet these challenges.

But Secretary-General Antonio Guterres's vision for that evolution - as set out in his report to the General Assembly, Our Common Agenda - is ill-conceived and underwhelming. Instead of expanding access to the UN system to communities of people impacted by today's crises, it gives more influence and power to corporate actors who are most culpable of bringing us to the precipice of ecological and social disaster. The secretary-general's approach, called multistakeholder governance, would increase corporate influence over global governance, deepening the damaging consequences of prioritising 'return on investment' above social and ecological needs. In a multistakeholder world, corporate executives and other founders bring together a friendly group of civil society organisations, governments, academics, UN staff, and other non-state organisations to take on a global governance role. This would marginalise over two-thirds of the nations of the UN. Instead, a new vision and institutional arrangement that focus on people and the planet should be at the heart of the Summit for the Future.

The role of national governments in the UN would be diluted by the addition of corporate-led bodies, which might soon take on more decision-making, managing everything from the oceans to financial markets. In this brave new world, a fossil fuel giant could have a privileged voice in decisions about providing important energy for all - conflicts of interest be damned. Do we really want the world's biggest tech behemoths and profit-oriented Big Pharma firms 'legislating' global

rules? Perhaps most worrying of all in this new vision of the UN is the absence of ideas for new intergovernmental negotiations to deal with current social, economic, environmental or gender debates. As it stands, governments, as representatives of their citizens, take the final decisions on global issues and direct international organisations to implement these decisions. This proposed new system would make 'stakeholders' the main players. But who exactly is a 'stakeholder' and why? There are countless possible stakeholder categories. At last year's multistakeholder Food System Summit, organised out of the Office of the Secretary-General, for example, the 'stakeholders' were large agribusinesses, data management firms and commodity dealers, not the six billion people who actually need the food or their local representatives or civil society advocates. Much of this thinking stems from the 2012 Global Redesign Initiative report of the World Economic Forum (WEF), which proposed such a shift in global governance.

According to the WEF (and now the UN secretary-general), nation-states and governments alone cannot solve the main issues of global governance, and other actors need to be involved. The best of those actors according to them in WEF are corporations. Indeed, we have already witnessed an increased role of the corporate private sector through their involvement in the implementation - or rather the non-implementation - of the Sustainable Development Goals. In 2021, the WEF and the Office of the Secretary-General concluded a memorandum of understanding on this, which, not incidentally, was never made publicly available by the UN nor submitted to the General Assembly.

By displacing governments and states from decision-making, a brand-new parallel set of corporate-compromised institutions will sit with a voice and a de facto vote to decide on global policies that impact the planet and its people. For decades, the corporate world has fraudulently claimed greater efficiency than all

others. This efficiency can be seen in the hollowed-out public services of the rich world, the crippling debt burdens of the poor world, and almost universal cultural impoverishment. Now, sweetening its proposition with insinuations of massive philanthropic financing, the corporate world - the only real beneficiaries of these proposed changes - has international decision-making in its sights.

Where nongovernmental organisations were once the largest non-state entities attending UN system meetings, transnational corporations (TNCs) have grown to become the biggest players. Civil society organisations, educators, scientists, women and other social communities now have less space to influence the behaviour of the UN and intergovernmental processes. This approach erodes sovereignty. When other actors are seen as equivalent to states, it undermines the longstanding concepts of state responsibilities, obligations and liabilities, as the new actors are unencumbered by any such legal requirements. Multistakeholder groups and their corporate participants get to choose which policy issues they want to participate in, picking and choosing the ones likely to generate a profit, reduce the rate of return or which may limit the continued acceptance of globalisation. When they do get involved in the governance of a certain issue, they act in such a way as to narrow the range of policy decisions to only those that are compatible with a commercial return. Needless to say, this is not always aligned with the public good. Communities around the world already feel the international community is failing to solve problems. Multistakeholderism adds to this loss of trust by throwing up a smokescreen around conflicts of interest and proposing commercially viable 'solutions', which cannot address today's major structural crises. Meanwhile, rich country governments get to sidestep their funding promises, while multistakeholder groups pose as open wallets that can underwrite global public goods and development. But direct payments and loans from govern-

ments are very different from investment flows, discounts on technology licensing, negotiated tax payments and supply chain funding. Even linguistically, multistakeholderism is taking us in the wrong direction. Public services around the world have subtly shifted their language from talking about 'citizens' to talking about 'customers'. The longstanding UN vocabulary speaks of 'peoples', 'citizens', 'communities', 'constituencies' and 'nongovernmental organisations'. Now everyone is a 'stakeholder'.

This leads to absurdities such as equating the needs, interests and influence of huge corporations with those of governments or small economies or local nonprofit community organisations. As the UN resets its agenda for the next 25 years, states from the Global South, represented by the G-77 at the UN, are pushing back against this dangerous new mission to quietly redefine how the UN works towards its mandate. They are making sure that their voices are heard in the September 2023 Sustainable Development Goals Summit and the September 2024 Summit for the Future. The UN Secretariat had originally proposed a September 2023 multistakeholder Summit of the Future, which was intended to solidify the secretary-general's blueprint for reform. At the end of 2022, however, a coalition of developing countries intervened to shift planning and decision-making to the General Assembly and erased the proposed lead role for multistakeholderism - for now. They also chose to halt the event's preparations until 2024, arguing that the UN must focus this year on implementing its existing and faltering Sustainable Development Goals.

Thanks to effective lobbying and continuing pressure from activists and scholars, the G-77 is continuing to fight back against the preponderance of corporate-friendly language and policies, and the increased role of corporations in global governance. The secretary-general must take heed, reverse course and keep 'nations' and 'peoples' at the centre of global governance. A possibly irreversible corporate takeover of the UN system must be prevented.

# It's time to end solitary confinement behind bars

Terry A Kupers

**AS** a forensic psychiatrist, I have studied and testified in court for over four decades about the harms of solitary confinement. Research indicates it does not reduce violence behind bars, and in US states where the population in solitary confinement has been reduced, the result has actually been a reduction in the rate of prison violence.

The harm stems from social isolation and forced idleness. Human beings are social creatures who need human engagement and meaningful productive activities to sustain mental stability, healthy relationships and productive pro-social pursuits. Forced isolation leads to a decimation of life skills, including the capacity to resolve differences peacefully, and that explains why there is less violence in the prisons when the use of solitary confinement declines. The well-known psychological effects of being alone in a cell nearly 24 hours per day with no meaningful activities include severe anxiety, panic, paranoia, problems with memory and concentration that make reading and studying nearly impossible, despair, depression, self-mutilation, the exacerbation of mental illness and an extraordinarily high rate of suicide. Solitary confinement also worsens medical conditions such as heart disease, hypertension and diabetes. It's no surprise that individuals who have spent significant time in solitary are at a much-heightened risk of substance abuse and crime, subsequent to their release from prison. They also have an increased mortality rate from all causes in the year following their release. Solitary confinement is disproportionately inflicted on Black, Latino, Native American and other people of colour. The United Nations Special Rapporteur on Torture declared solitary confinement for more than 15 days to be torture, and the United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners (the Mandela Rules) prohibit more than 15 days of solitary confinement.

Yet, in the US, more than 120,000 prisoners are consigned to solitary confinement, many for years and even decades. Dennis Wayne Hope spent 27 years in solitary confinement in the Texas Department of Criminal Justice. The Box: 27 Years in Solitary Confinement, a recent 30-minute documentary on Al Jazeera Fault Lines tells his story. Hope speaks frankly on camera about the devastating effects of solitary confinement, including an impulse to self-harm, massive despair and frighteningly altered thoughts and perceptions. It is notable that he was convicted for non-violent robberies, so he is hardly "the worst of the worst," the label prison authorities use to stigmatise individuals they put in solitary confinement. He escaped prison twice in the 1990s, resulting in his being sent to solitary confinement for 27 years. His journey is remarkable in the ways he figured out how to maintain his emotional stability as well as his quest for freedom under extraordinarily harsh conditions. This must-see documentary provides rich and inspiring lessons in resilience as well as ingenuity in devising ways to remain sane in a psychosocially inducing torture-chamber. Hope exhibited remarkable emotional stability against all odds while in "The Box" for

27 years. But individuals who suffer from serious mental illness are condemned to experience even worse mental illness in solitary confinement. Still, in many departments of correction, people with serious mental illness are selectively consigned to solitary confinement and left there for years, usually in the context of very substandard correctional mental health services. An explosive growth in the number of prisoners with serious mental illness occurred subsequent to de-institutionalisation and the incremental defunding of public mental health services.

The neoliberal agenda since the mid-1970s has been to dismantle social welfare safety net programmes, including public mental health, vocational support and affordable housing. As a result, the population in psychiatric hospitals has dramatically shrunk while the number of people with serious mental illness in jail and prison has grown geometrically. There are currently far more people with serious mental illness in jails and prisons than there are in psychiatric hospitals. It is as if the people whose needs are ignored on account of cruel social priorities are disappeared into jails and prisons so more affluent people will not have to see them unhouse and floundering on the streets. Then, once behind bars, they are disappeared again, into solitary confinement where, out of public view, their mental illness is exacerbated or they die by suicide. There is a growing momentum across the United States to restrict or eliminate solitary confinement in jails, prisons and immigration detention facilities. New York State, New Jersey, Colorado and Nevada have enacted laws to end long-term solitary confinement in their prisons. Chicago, New York City, Pennsylvania's Allegheny County and the State of Colorado have announced an end to solitary confinement in their jails. In California, the Mandela Act, a bill that would restrict solitary confinement in prison and jail to 15 days in accordance with the UN's Mandela Rules and the standards of the US National Commission on Correctional Health Care, has been passed in both houses of the legislature only to be vetoed by Governor Gavin.

Unsurprisingly, I've found that in facility after facility that offers this kind of "alternative," prisoners reject it, choosing to remain in their cells rather than spend hours in a separate cage with nothing to do and nowhere to sit, and these cage-like structures remain mostly empty. The alternatives to solitary confinement must include meaningful programmes that educate and rehabilitate individuals who land in prison. We know how to run such rehabilitation programmes. We as a society simply lack the will to treat folks in prison with respect and compassion. Given all the momentum and public support for restricting and eventually eliminating solitary confinement, we have a real opportunity to actually eliminate the practice and replace it with evidence-based alternatives that foster mental health and rehabilitation and make possible eventual successful reintegration into the community. For the sake of public safety, as well as our humanity and morality, our local, state and federal governments need to embrace a true end to solitary confinement in all its forms and by all its names.

# Sunak turns UK's green goals into a political dividing line

Andrew Hammond

**PRIME** Minister Rishi Sunak this week unexpectedly decided to grant hundreds of new licenses for oil and gas production in the North Sea. His intention is to open up new fossil fuel energy sources, but he has also ignited a huge political furor about the UK's net-zero commitments.

Turning the conventional wisdom on its head, the prime minister said on Monday that the new oil and gas drilling licenses for the North Sea would help the UK achieve net-zero carbon emissions and that the plan would strengthen the UK's energy independence, reducing its reliance on hostile states such as Russia. He also claimed that, even if the UK hits net zero, the nation would have to import much oil and gas. But if it does so using domestic oil and gas, it will be much better for the environment. Sunak's assertions have been disputed even by some key backbench MPs within his own Conservative Party. Chris

Skidmore, who led a review of the UK's climate goals earlier this year, asserted that the prime minister is on the wrong side of history and called for an emergency debate in Parliament as soon as MPs return from their summer recess.

As significant as the internal Conservative opposition may be to Sunak's policy, there may well be many more MPs in his party who feel that the government needs to dilute its net-zero commitments. For instance, more than 40 Conservative MPs and Lords wrote to Sunak recently calling for the UK's 2030 deadline on banning the sale of new petrol and diesel cars to be pushed back. So, the bigger issue is that a clear political dividing line is opening up in UK politics. This is because Labour leader Keir Starmer asserted in June that any future government led by him would end new North Sea oil and gas exploration, while helping communities profit from clean power projects. He said it

would be a "historic mistake" to wait until North Sea oil and gas runs out and to let the opportunities "pass us by."

The context for Sunak's decision is the criticism that recent Conservative governments have received about the lack of long-term energy focus over the last decade and a half. While Monday's announcement has been depicted as an attempt to reset UK policy, it was probably, in large part, a political move that attempts to create a wedge issue ahead of the general election that is expected next year. In the last quarter of a century, the quantity of fossil fuels extracted from the North Sea has fallen significantly. In 2000, North Sea oil and gas production was nearly 250 million tons of oil equivalent. In 2022, it was less than 80. It is forecast to continue declining because North Sea fossil fuel supplies are falling, with extra costs involved in extracting new sources.

One reason why Sunak appears to be trying to make this a wedge issue is the result of last month's Uxbridge and South Ruislip by-election in London. The Conservatives' slim victory there has been attributed to a plan by Labour Mayor Sadiq Khan to extend the capital's Ultra Low Emission Zone. That scheme aims to boost air quality via a daily £12.50 (\$15.87) charge for driving in London if a vehicle does not meet certain emission standards. The interpretation Sunak appears to have gleaned from that ballot is that a fast, messy transition from fossil fuels to renewables could be a significant vote-loser. In proposals outlined on Monday, Sunak sought to take the edge off the fossil fuel controversy by announcing plans to also fund carbon capture and storage schemes. However, welcome as this announcement is to many environmentalists, there is a danger that the core fossil fuel commitment could

further undercut the UK's green economy leadership credentials.

The UK's independent Climate Change Commission has said that the best way to lower bills during the cost-of-living crisis, while boosting energy security, would be to cut fossil fuel use and invest in renewables. However, this requires significant investment, meaning investors must be willing to bet on the UK in the global green investment race, even though much larger subsidies can be secured from other powers, including the US via its Inflation Reduction Act. Lord Harrington, who is currently conducting a review into the UK's foreign direct investment regime on behalf of the government, has already warned that the country faces a "big threat" from such subsidies. It has been reported that he will soon recommend a sizable shift in the way the UK attracts inward investment. There are fears that the nation could miss out on a rising tide of green invest-

ment, as the world economy grows from about \$90 trillion today to a forecast \$190 trillion by mid-century, when the world may hit net-zero emissions. In this scenario, the government risks failing badly on its strategy to provide high-skilled jobs, transition from fossil fuels, secure the UK's energy supply and use green technology to drive economic growth. For instance, the government's strategy hopes to create up to 440,000 jobs by 2030, leveraging up to £90 billion of private investment. It is this promised vision that is now under threat unless Sunak and his team can step up to the plate. With UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres warning last week that we are now entering the age of "global boiling," the UK government needs to raise its game. If it fails, it will not just be letting the UK public down, but also much of the wider world, for which UK leadership could help encourage it to undertake this transition faster.



# Netanyahu unlikely to make concessions on normalization with Muslim world

Dr. Dania Koleilat Khatib

**THE US received an important wake-up call with the Saudi Arabia-Iran deal that was brokered by China. The significance of the March deal goes beyond the normalization between the two regional foes - it also means that Beijing's role in the Gulf is increasing. The US definitely does not want China to become the new security guarantor in the region.**

It would be another blow to the US if countries in the Middle East started accepting the yuan for its oil exports to China. So far, there has been no clear indication that the petroyuan will replace the petrodollar, but the issue is being talked about and that is in itself a threat to the US' hegemony over the oil market and the US dollar's supremacy as a worldwide reference currency. So, this would not only be a blow to American influence in the Middle East, but also a setback for Washington in terms of its competition with China. While the American discourse was previously signaling its disengagement from the region, we now suddenly see the US rushing back to court Saudi Arabia.

What we see is overoptimism from the American side about an Israeli normalization deal with the Muslim world. Saudi Arabia, in particular, has always put Palestine at the center of any normalization talks with Israel. In 2002, it launched the Arab Peace Initiative that Israel has rejected. Saudi Arabia is also the center of the Islamic world; hence its support for the Palestinian cause - a cause that has taken on a central significance in the Islamic world. Thomas Friedman, writing for The New York Times last week,

assumed that Biden would coerce Israel into making concessions and that Benjamin Netanyahu would give up his lunatic far-right allies and replace them with more moderate ones. However, this is probably driven by wishful thinking and is an overestimation of the US' leverage over Israel.

To start with, Netanyahu is more concerned with his constituency than with the US or any other foreign power. The Israeli prime minister will not seek to please America at the expense of upsetting his voter base. It was his constituency that gave him the premiership, not the US. Another issue is that Washington, as revealed by Friedman - who is supposedly close to the Biden administration - is expecting Netanyahu to change course. To do that, his allies will have to be convinced of the importance of normalization with the Muslim world and they will have to relay that to their voters. This is far-fetched. For the settlers, the extremist factions and the dogmatic people in Israel, acquiring the land that they claim God gave them is far more important than normalizing with Muslim countries. A settler driven by ideology is probably far more interested in Hebron than in having the freedom to travel to these countries.

The other assumption Friedman makes is that Netanyahu can change his allies' minds. This is not as easy as it might look. If Netanyahu breaks with his allies, he will lose his majority and the country will head to new elections. And he will not necessarily be able to garner the support of the more moderate factions. He only allied

himself with Itamar Ben-Gvir, Bezalel Smotrich and their ilk because he was desperate to win a majority and return to the premiership. The downside of him losing power now could be that he goes to jail. Will Netanyahu take this risk? We have to remember that the Netanyahu coalition won the last election by a relatively small margin. His bloc won 2.36 million votes, while the anti-Netanyahu camp was able to garner 2.33 million votes, a difference of only 30,000. And some in the opposing camp say that Netanyahu's win could be attributed to their own missteps, as they were disorganized and did not have a consistent message. Their defeat was also attributed to the fact former Prime Minister Yair Lapid did not give his constituency anything tangible. While Lapid hyped up peace with the Palestinians, he did not take any serious step toward it.

If the country were to go to the polls again now, the anti-Netanyahu camp might win, especially as a result of the judicial overhaul that has upset a lot of Israelis. The only alternative that could prevent another election would be if Netanyahu broke with Ben-Gvir and Smotrich and replaced them with Lapid and Benny Gantz. Would they join him? I doubt it. As mentioned, they would have a chance of winning on their own if a new election were to be held. There is also an overestimation of how much the US can pressure Israel, especially in the Arab world. Israel gets \$3.8 billion in aid from the US every year. But Israel could very much live without this aid. The other help the UN offers to Israel is its veto at the UN

Security Council, which is a flag Uncle Sam waves every time a resolution condemning Tel Aviv is proposed. However, when a resolution condemning Israel's illegal settlements was not vetoed by the Obama administration, nothing happened.

The other perk for Israel could be the economic benefits that can come from normalizing with Muslim countries. However, Israel is already a prosperous nation, with a per capita gross domestic product of \$55,540, which is the highest in the Middle East after Qatar. Normalization would probably add to this prosperity. It would be a cherry on top but it is not essential to the country's economic growth. Israel has a vibrant economy and has trade relations with most countries around the world. Again, could you convince the ideological settler that a few billion dollars on top of the country's GDP is worth relinquishing the West Bank for? Not really. Most importantly, from a security perspective, Netanyahu does not need to have peace with the Palestinians.

He can keep them contained using coercive measures. While the anti-Netanyahu, pro-peace camp has been warning of a possible third intifada if there is no proper settlement, the Israeli military machine has been able to pacify the Palestinians, at least for now. Hence, it is unlikely that Netanyahu will make any concessions, or at least any meaningful ones that could make the American plan happen. Ultimately, Netanyahu is a political survivor who thinks from one election cycle to the next and, for the moment, his No. 1 priority is to keep the premiership and stay out of jail.

Arab News

# The Fitch US downgrade won't rock the dollar. Here's why

Maximilian Hess

**ON August 1, credit rating agency Fitch downgraded the United States from its highest triple AAA rating to AA+. Two of the three leading ratings agencies now rate the US at their second highest tier - Standard and Poor's previously downgraded the US to AA+ in 2011, leaving only Moody's with the US at the highest rating.**

However, the market impact has been minimal. There was no significant movement in the price and yield of US Treasuries, the benchmark borrowing mechanism, nor in the value of the US dollar against other currencies - even after the US Treasury announced the following day that it would increase borrowing by \$7bn in the next quarter and add another \$6bn in its debt auctions in the coming month. The reality is that there is ample demand for US debt, which plays a vital role not only in the US financial system but across the globe.

Consider the two largest economies below the US: China and Japan. One is a rival, the other an ally. Yet, both are the world's largest buyers of US Treasuries, which serve not only as the source of US dollar holdings for global reserves but are also the predominant instrument in which international trade is financed. US Treasuries account for roughly half of cross-border loans and trade financing arrangements globally. This grants the US what former French President Valéry Giscard d'Estaing called its 'exorbitant privilege'. The privilege gives the US not just substantial economic benefits, but also political ones. It is the reason that US sanctions sting so hard and have such an extra-territorial reach. Companies and countries that need dollars cannot risk running afoul of them.

It also means that the US Federal Reserve's baseline interest rate has a

determinant impact on interest rates globally; when the Fed raises rates to fight inflation, other countries follow suit or risk seeing their own currencies depreciate against the dollar as capital can seek a higher relative return in the US in such periods. This is precisely what played out in 2022 when the US dollar repeatedly reached 20-year highs despite the US simultaneously recording its highest inflation rates over that period. This privilege also refers to US's ability to issue debt with far less risk than other countries. They need dollars, and only the US can issue them. To be sure, there is also a strong appetite for the sovereign debts of other countries. Japan's government-debt-to-GDP ratio for example is around 221 percent, far in excess of the US's 115 percent. Even Italy reports a higher ratio than Washington, despite its BBB rating from Fitch - though it also benefits from the European Union's AAA rating from all three agencies, in itself a mystery given the lack of any definitive criteria for bailouts of Eurozone members.

Indeed, the demand for the few securities issued with the EU's backing is far lower than that for those issued with US backing. Fitch's action, therefore, comes across as a surprise. Famed economist Mohamed El-Erian noted as much, asking, "Why now ... when you look at the reason, you scratch your head as to the timing?" Fitch gives its primary reason as "deterioration in standards of governance over the last 20 years, including on fiscal and debt matters, notwithstanding the June bipartisan agreement to suspend the debt limit until January 2025". That point is well-taken. The debt ceiling standoffs are driven by partisanship; Democrats regularly back the ceiling - or even support abolishing it. The US is one of just two countries with

such a limit, alongside Denmark, and the Biden administration has openly questioned whether it is constitutional. Republicans do too, at least when there is a Republican in the White House. It is when the US suffers from a divided government that the issue becomes so heated, and it was a similar standoff in 2011 that led S&P to first downgrade the US back then. At the time, the move raised concerns about the impact on financial markets, in particular, about bank and pension mandates to buy AAA-rated securities and similar language in financial agreements used to manage risk. However, these concerns were quickly revealed to be inflated, and mandates were swiftly adjusted where there was potential concern.

There rightly appears to be far less concern this time around. Fitch also noted that the US rating ceiling would remain at AAA, meaning that the highest-rated corporates such as Apple do not need to worry about their ratings being affected, nor do US-backed institutions such as the various development banks that underpin its leading role in the international economic order. Nevertheless, there are those who claim that Fitch's action risks causing investors to treat US debt differently, or to accelerate their search for another reserve asset. The reality though is that no genuine alternative appears on the horizon. There has been talk about the Brazil-Russia-India-China-South Africa (BRICS) grouping contemplating a trading currency at its upcoming summit in Johannesburg. Russian President Vladimir Putin pitched the idea at the BRICS summit last year and has continued to rail against the dollar's dominance. But the bloc quietly dropped the news that new currency talks will not be on the agenda, a day

after host South Africa announced that Putin would not be attending at a time when he faces an arrest warrant from the International Criminal Court related to the war in Ukraine.

Fitch itself recently declared that the US dollar appears set to remain the "pre-eminent global currency" through 2050. Global demand for dollars, and Treasuries, will more than cover the US's debt issuance. Professor Daniel McDowell, author of the must-read book on risks to the US dollar system, Bucking the Buck: US Financial Sanctions and the International Backlash Against the Dollar, notes that "everything Fitch mentions in their rating is old news. Investors can make up their own minds about US debt and markets consistently say it's the safest option available". To be fair, Fitch's explanation for the downgrade correctly focuses on the US political environment, rather than the role of the dollar in the international economic order or the US domestic economy. But precisely because of its role in this international economic order, it is time to abandon shibboleths about US debt, including the idea that a sovereign credit rating matters, or that US debt risks becoming unsustainable by comparing it to a household balance sheet. After all, the Federal Reserve's interest rate is often referred to as the 'risk-free' rate because of the US government's ability to print more dollars if it needs to in order to meet its commitments. It is long overdue for the US to recognise that debt issuance is Washington's golden goose. The market shows the golden eggs it lays are still very much in demand. Republicans have blamed the Biden administration for the downgrade, but if they want to restore the AAA rating, the path to doing so is very simple: Abolish the debt ceiling once and for all.

Aljazeera

# Italy should not mull exiting Belt and Road

Michele Geraci

**ITALIAN and international media have reported that the Italian government is mulling exiting the China-proposed Belt and Road Initiative which Italy joined during President Xi Jinping's visit to Italy in March 2019. Given the role I played in the signing of the memorandum of understanding between Rome and Beijing and my current involvement in this important issue, I think that these reports are not based on facts nor should they reflect the real intention or views of Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni.**

The reality is much simpler: Prime Minister Meloni has not yet fully focused on the Belt and Road Initiative, because she has been preoccupied with other more pressing issues related to domestic politics as well as international crises, such as Ukraine crisis, inflation, energy supply in Italy, the flow of migrants into Italy, a seasonal crisis that Italy faces every summer. Meloni is an avid reader of reports, data and analyses, and she always makes decisions, not on whim, but after fully understanding the issues at hand, analyzing all the facts and taking into consideration all possible implications. She is a true politician and, as such, will make a decision purely based on what is best for our own country, Italy.

As an indication of that, during her meeting with the United States President Joe Biden a few days ago, she emphasized that she will not accept any interference in Italy's national affairs by the US and that her responsibility as prime minister is to protect and take care of the interests of Italy. Therefore, the Belt and Road Initiative is an issue that will be discussed between Rome and Beijing, not decided by Washington. And the decision will be based on facts. So what do the facts say? Data and analyses clearly point to benefits and therefore a renewal of the initiative for an additional five years. I focus on only a few.

From 2018 to 2021, Italy's exports to China grew by 20 percent, higher than those of its main competitors France and Germany. Even extending the range, from 2018 to 2022, the difficult years for the Chinese economy, Italy's figures show its exports to China grew by 11 percent compared with about 2 percent for both France and Germany. This indicates the catch-up process, which was my goal when I worked to

ensure Italy joined the Belt and Road Initiative, is starting to materialize, which is encouraging. Critics of the MoU argue that, while Italy's exports to China have grown, Chinese

increase in Italy's trade deficit, more than 40 percent (\$7 billion) comes from imports of mobile phones, electric batteries, laptops and other "cheap" electronic equipment that we need to expedite our digital and green transition

**Today, Italy mostly imports goods that it does not produce, hence they cannot be detrimental to domestic consumption or companies. Italy imports Chinese goods that are components of our production chain, and thus are necessary to support our import-led-growth and import-led-export model. And since these goods are relatively cheap, they contribute to mitigation of inflation. Of the \$17 billion increase in Italy's trade deficit, more than 40 percent (\$7 billion) comes from imports of mobile phones, electric batteries, laptops and other "cheap" electronic equipment that we need to expedite our digital and green transition in addition to mitigating inflation.**

exports to Italy have grown at a faster and higher rate, increasing the trade deficit for Italy. True, Italy's trade deficit has increased, but using it as an argument against the renewal of the MoU is fundamentally flawed. No economist looks at trade surplus or deficit in itself as a measure of a country's advantages or disadvantages. In fact, trade surplus was considered a source of wealth back in the 16th century, during the mercantilist era, before economists developed new theories to prove it wrong around 1800. Therefore, those who insist that "trade deficit is bad" are hanging on to a 200-year-old, wrong theory. But in the specific case of Italy's growing import of goods from China, not only this is not a bad thing; instead, it can actually be good for our own economy. What Italy buys today from China are not those goods that used to compete with Italian domestic products (textiles for instance) which indeed created some problems for the Italian economy 30 years ago.

Today, Italy mostly imports goods that it does not produce, hence they cannot be detrimental to domestic consumption or companies. Italy imports Chinese goods that are components of our production chain, and thus are necessary to support our import-led-growth and import-led-export model. And since these goods are relatively cheap, they contribute to mitigation of inflation. Of the \$17 billion

in addition to mitigating inflation. Moreover, the Belt and Road Initiative is not just a trade deal between Italy and China. It is also a platform to cooperate with the rest of Europe, Asia and, above all, Africa. The other urgent problem Meloni needs to solve is the inflow of migrants from Africa. The solution is not, like some media outlets argue, proportionately distributing the tens of thousands of migrants that arrive every year in Europe among the European Union member states.

The real solution is how to promote stable social and economic development in African countries, whose population will grow from the current 1.5 billion to 4 billion by 2100. The Belt and Road Initiative will prove a golden asset in achieving that.

In the coming months, Meloni will likely analyze various aspects of the initiative, and I will also provide her with all the necessary data and analyses on the global economy. I expect the MoU to be renewed with potential changes in language to put emphasis on stronger cooperation with China on climate action, peace and security, and Africa's development.

As the first and only G7 country to join the Belt and Road Initiative, Italy could inspire other European G7 countries to join the initiative. If anything, the agreement between Italy and China should be further strengthened, not abandoned.

# Being wrong doesn't make Trump a criminal

Alan Dershowitz

**THE bottom line of the recent Trump indictment alleges that he knew or should have known that he lost the election fair and square, and that his actions in challenging the result were therefore corrupt and unlawful. The problem with the indictment is that the Supreme Court has repeatedly held under the First Amendment that there's no such thing as a false opinion. Every American, and especially politicians, have the right to be wrong about their opinions. They also have the right to express their false opinions, at least as long as they honestly believe they are true.**

Imagine what the world would look like if every politician who told a fib in order to get elected were to be prosecuted and imprisoned. Our legislative sessions would have to be held in the Allenwood prison rather than in the halls of Congress. Lying has long been endemic in politics. That's why we honour George Washington and Abraham Lincoln as truth-tellers among the array of politicians who don't meet that standard. Indeed, this indictment itself fails to meet the standard of honesty that it requires of Donald Trump. In describing his speech of December 6, this is what it says: "Finally, after exhorting that 'we fight. We fight like hell. And if you don't fight like hell, you're not going to have a country anymore,' the defendant directed the people in front of him to head to the Capitol, suggested he was going with

them, and told them to give members of Congress 'the kind of pride and boldness that they need to take back our country.'" Yet the indictment omits two key words from that speech - "peacefully" and "patriotically" - which suggest that the speech itself was protected advocacy under the First Amendment rather than unlawful incitement. A lie by omission is as serious as a lie by commission, especially in the context of a legal document such as an indictment.

Accordingly, for the US government to win its case, it will have to prove beyond a reasonable doubt that Donald Trump actually believed at and around January 6 that he had lost the election. The indictment alleges that many of his associates told him he had lost, but I am aware of no smoking gun testimony that Trump actually admitted that he believed them. On the contrary, many people can testify that Trump told them the election had been stolen and that they believe he believed that. As Thomas Jefferson wrote more than 200 years ago: "We have nothing to fear from the demoralising reasoning of some, if others are left free to demonstrate their error?..." The constitutionally appropriate response to false political opinions is the open marketplace of ideas, not the closed prison cells of censorship. If this trial is held in the District of Columbia - one of the most anti-Trump areas of the nation - a skewed jury may well disregard the First

Amendment and convict. But the appellate courts, especially the Supreme Court, could prioritise the First Amendment and reverse any conviction that violates the Constitution.

The indictment endangers not only free speech but also the right to counsel. It describes several people who are believed to be Trump's lawyers as unindicted co-conspirators. This makes it difficult for Trump to claim that he relied on their legal advice in challenging the election. It also sends a dangerous message to creative lawyers whose advice may be second-guessed by a prosecutor after the fact. As one of Trump's lawyers in his first Senate impeachment trial, I am particularly concerned about the impact this indictment could have on the will-iness of lawyers to represent him or other controversial politicians. All in all, this indictment does not seem to serve the interests of non-partisan justice. It appears to be yet another manifestation of the weaponisation of the criminal justice system for partisan advantage.

When an attorney general authorises the prosecution of his president's main political opponent in an upcoming election, the case must be so strong that it leaves no doubt as to its non-partisan credibility. It should meet what I call the "Nixon standard". The case against Richard Nixon was so strong that members of his own party and independents supported his impeachment and possible prosecution. That standard does not seem to have been met in this case.

The Telegraph

# How Trump's indictment reverses a 50-year precedent

Julian Zelizer

**FORMER President Donald Trump pleaded not guilty to charges that he conspired to subvert the 2020 presidential election. Thursday's arraignment was not Trump's first courtroom rodeo; this year already he has been federally charged for his alleged mishandling of classified documents and charged in New York for his role in a hush-money payment to adult film actress Stormy Daniels during the 2016 presidential campaign. (Trump pleaded not guilty to all charges in those cases as well.)**

The fact that Trump has been indicted again should not diminish the historic significance of this moment. Of all the indictments thus far, this is clearly the most consequential, with Trump facing four counts, including conspiring to defraud the government, to obstruct an official proceeding and to violate the most essential part of our democracy - the right of voters to choose their president. By refusing to accept the results of an election that was proven to be legitimate and actively trying to overturn the results, Trump put our democracy in grave danger. By seeking this indictment, as well as the one involving Trump's handling of classified documents, the Department of Justice has broken with the precedent established by former President Gerald Ford when he preemptively pardoned former President Richard Nixon on September 8, 1974, for any crimes that he might have committed in Watergate. While Congress demanded accountability through

the impeachment process, pressuring Nixon to resign. Ford passed on the opportunity to insist that no person - not even the former president - is above the law.

Ford issued the pardon in an effort to heal the nation from the trauma of Watergate. A lengthy legal trial would have dragged voters through all the ugliness of the scandal, and while accountability mattered, moving on was more important - or so Ford believed. "During this long period of delay and potential litigation," Ford told the nation one month after Nixon resigned, "ugly passions would again be aroused. And our people would again be polarized in their opinions. And the credibility of our free institutions of government would again be challenged at home and abroad." His decision proved to be much more controversial than he suspected. Many Americans were outraged that Ford had allowed Nixon to get off scot-free. Protests broke out all over the country, and Ford was continually greeted with hostile placards and chants, as his approval ratings plummeted. If he hoped that the country would become less polarized, he was wrong - the opposite ended up happening, with the fault lines dividing red and blue only becoming super-charged in the ensuing decades. Ford's pardon - whether he intended to or not - sent a strong message that there were in fact limits to how far the federal government was willing to go to take action against a former president. The result was

significant. Despite a series of congressional reforms aimed at restraining executive power in the first half of the 1970s, such as the War Powers Resolution of 1973 and the Congressional Budget and Impoundment Control Act of 1974, American politics ended up moving in the opposite direction, with presidents becoming increasingly powerful.

This became clear during the Iran Contra Scandal, when then-President Ronald Reagan's national security team used funds from the sale of arms to Iran to assist anti-communist forces in Nicaragua, exploiting a loophole in a congressional ban on direct US funding. Former President George W. Bush also dramatically expanded the power of the national security apparatus after 9/11. As Garrett Graff wrote in a New York Times op-ed, "the precedent Ford set seems to have paralyzed a half-century of prosecutors. That precedent and the Justice Department policy have left the United States with what seems an untenable situation - presidents are immune from prosecution in office and politically untouchable after leaving office." To be sure, there has been an increased willingness on Capitol Hill to deploy the power of impeachment against sitting presidents. But using the law remained off limits - until Trump tested that status quo. Special Counsel Jack Smith has now put forth a rebuttal to Ford's monumental decision, making the case that prosecutorial action against a for-

mer president is a legitimate move.

While the bar must remain extraordinarily high for any administration to take legal action against a former president, it is a necessary response in the case of Trump's attempt to overturn the 2020 election. When the alleged crimes are so egregious that they threaten the stability of our democracy, accountability is vital. The indictment is merely one step in a long-term process that is needed to reinstate the guardrails on presidential power that have been broken in recent decades, particularly by the previous administration. How voters will react to the charges and the outcome of the ensuing trial remains an open question. When 69% of Republicans and Republican-leaning independents believe Biden's 2020 election win was not legitimate, Trump's latest charges are unlikely to harm his standing, at least in the GOP primaries. In fact, it is very possible that Trump continues to benefit from the indictments since they play into the narrative he's crafted of being a victim who is constantly fighting back against the establishment.

But the calculus for the decision to charge Trump shouldn't rest on the former president's political fate. Rather, we need to take a long-term view and consider how we can better hold presidents - present and former - accountable. By this standard, the impact of this week's decision has the potential to be a turning point in US history, nearly 50 years after Ford pardoned Nixon.

CNN





# Weekly inflation up by 1.3%

ISLAMABAD (APP): The weekly inflation, measured by the Sensitive Price Indicator (SPI), witnessed an increase of 1.30 percent for the combined consumption group during the week ended on July August 3, the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS) reported on Friday.

The SPI for the week under review in the above-mentioned group was recorded at 271.56 points as compared to 268.08 points during the past week, according to the PBS data. As compared to the corresponding week of last year, the SPI for the combined consumption group in the week under review witnessed an increase of

29.83 percent.

The weekly SPI with the base year 2015-16 =100 is covering 17 urban centers and 51 essential items for all expenditure groups.

The SPI for the lowest consumption group up to Rs 17,732, increased by 0.82 percent and went up to 277.55 points from last week's 275.30 points.

The SPI for consumption groups from Rs 17,732-22,888, Rs 22,889-29,517, Rs 29,518-44,175 and above Rs 44,175 increased by 0.92 percent, 0.97 percent, 1.11 and 1.53 percent respectively.

During the week, out of 51 items, prices of 23 (45.10%) items increased, 07 (13.72%) items

decreased and 21 (41.18%) items remained stable.

The items, which recorded a decrease in their average prices on a week-on-week (WoW) included mustard oil (1.63%), chicken (1.40%), vegetable ghee 1 kg (0.51%), vegetable ghee 2.5 kg (0.36%), pulse gram (0.22%), wheat flour (0.20%) and pulse moong (0.03%).

The items that recorded an increase in their average prices on a week-on-week (wow) basis, included tomatoes (16.85%), chillies powder (7.58%), garlic (5.71%), onion (5.50%), powdered milk (5.17%), eggs (3.86%), rice basmati broken (2.06%), LPG (9.82%), petrol (7.86%) and diesel (7.82%).

The commodities that witnessed a decrease in price on a Year-on-Year (YOY) basis, included onions (37.10%), electricity for q1 (18.06%), pulse masoor (15.07%) and vegetable ghee 1 kg (1.13%).

On a Year-on-Year (YoY) basis, the commodities which recorded an increase in their average prices included wheat flour (131.40%), cigarettes (109.57%), gas charges for q1 (108.38%), tea lipton (97.71%), rice basmati broken (82.86%), rice irri-6/9 (72.73%), tomatoes (67.54%), chillies powder (66.74%), sugar (64.12%), chicken (60.51%), gents sponge chappal (58.05%), gur (57.75%) and potatoes (55.75%).

## NPO to organize webinar on 'Strategic Management'

ISLAMABAD (APP): The National Productivity Organization (NPO) would conduct a training course on "Think Strategically and Make Your Idea a Reality" on August 09 (Wednesday).

Strategic Management could be defined as the art and science of formulating, implementing and evaluating cross-functional decisions that would enable an organization to achieve its objective, according to an NPO document.

The workshop would provide information about Strategic management, Why Strategy is the potential tool for winning success, What, Why, How, When and where in Strategic Management, DIY, Hands-on training in devising creative mission statements, strategic analysis and planning, overview and implementation of strategic recommendations, how to write stunning business plans, and conclusion. The webinar has been designed for senior management, middle management, team leaders, supervisor, bankers, industrialists, agriculturalists and students.

## SECP issues promoters' guides in German and Korean languages

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan (SECP), in line with its agenda of facilitating foreign investors, published promoter guides in German and Korean languages.

The SECP has already published promoter guides in different foreign languages, i.e., English, Chinese, Turkish, Spanish, Urdu, and Arabic, to facilitate investors, said a press release issued here.

The guidebooks would help potential investors from these countries/origins understand the procedure for company registration and other requirements in their native languages.

The promoter's guide contains necessary details in a comprehensive manner regarding the registration of a company in Pakistan, which can be accessed at: <https://www.secp.gov.pk/media-center/guide-books/general-guide-books>.

## PSX loses 25 points

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Pakistan Stock Exchange on Friday shed 25.46 points, a nominal negative change of 0.05 percent, closing at 48,585.72 points against 48,611.18 points the previous trading day.

A total of 331,132,473 shares were traded during the day as compared to 526,039,924 shares the previous day, whereas the price of shares stood at Rs 12,500 billion against Rs 19,032 billion on the last trading day.

As many as 337 companies transacted their shares in the stock market; 130 of them recorded gains and 184 sustained losses, whereas the share price of 23 companies remained unchanged.

The three top-trading companies were Nergico PK with 66,505,989 shares at Rs 3.95 per share; Oil and Gas Dev with 27,995,429 shares at Rs 107.66 per share and Pak Refinery with 25,888,166 shares at Rs

18.58 per share.

Unilever Foods witnessed a maximum increase of Rs 150.00 per share price, closing at Rs24,000.00 whereas the runner-up was Khyber Textile with an Rs 60.57 rise in its per share price to Rs 894.00. Al-Abbass Sugar XD witnessed a maximum decrease of Rs 37.90 per share closing at Rs 472.10, followed by Mari Petroleum with Rs 19.16 decline to close at Rs 1,640.01.

## Gold rates up by Rs1,300 per tola

ISLAMABAD (APP): The per tola price of 24 karat gold increased by Rs1,300 and was sold at Rs.221,500 on Friday against its sale at Rs. 220,200 on the previous day, All Sindh Sarafa Jewellers Association

reported. The price of 10 grams of 24-karat gold also increased by Rs1,115 to Rs 189,901 from Rs188,786 whereas the price of 10 gram 22 karat gold went up to Rs174,076 from Rs. 173,054. The price of per

tola and ten gram silver remained stagnant at Rs.2750 and Rs.2,357.68 respectively. The price of gold in the international market decreased by \$4 to \$1,932 from \$1,936, the association reported.

## Pakistani companies to join big fair

KARACHI (PPI): The leading international consumer goods fairs Ambiente is going to be held from 26 - 30 January, 2024 in Frankfurt am Main, Germany. The fair will offer unique spectrum of products for the table, kitchen & housewares, Stationery & gifts, decorative articles & interior design concepts and furnishing accessories.

The last edition of the

fair in 2023 had more than 3,680 exhibitors from 170 countries and around 109,500 buyers from 168 countries from all-around the world. In the last edition of the show the top 10 visitor countries were Italy, France, Great Britain, USA, Netherlands, Spain, Turkey, Poland, Greece and Korea. The Pakistani exhibitors participated in Ambiente 2023 with the products covering interior

decoration items, kitchen accessories & other consumer products. The participants from Pakistan were Anaya Salt Craft, Hub Pak Salt, Tariq Glass Industries, Sharp Edge Enterprises and Pakistan Souvenirs. Trade development Authority of Pakistan (TDAP) is providing subsidized stalls to increase the exports of Handi crafts, Decoration items & Kitchen accessories.

## Important to encourage young leadership in trade representative bodies: UBG

KARACHI (NNI): Patron-in-chief of United Business Group (UBG) and Kati and Provincial Minister for Commerce and Industry (Government of Punjab) SM Tanveer has said that the youth should come forward to lead the business community, senior business leaders should guide the young business leaders and I am ready to serve the business community, I am

trying my best to meet businessmen and industrialist representatives from all over the country and gather them on one platform and so far my and my team's efforts have been successful and soon FPCC Young leadership will come forward in Chambers of Commerce and Trade Associations across the country including I.

He expressed these

views to Syed Usman Ali, Senior Vice Chairman of Towel Manufacturers Association of Pakistan (TMA) and other officials and members in Karachi. President United Business Group (UBG) Zubair Tufail, former chairman of UBG Shahzad Ali Malik, Khalid Tawab, Mirza Ikhtiar Baig and Noor Ahmad Khan were also present on this occasion.



MULTAN: Women purchasing vegetables in Friday Bazaar at Shamsabad.

## Rs12.817m disbursed under PM youth agriculture loan scheme

ISLAMABAD (APP): The government has disbursed Rs12,817 million under Prime Minister Youth Agriculture Loan Scheme in order to encourage youth towards agriculture entrepreneurship as well as promote the agriculture and livestock sector in the country.

The initiative was aimed at creating livelihood opportunities for the huge existing bulge of youth in the country through incentivizing the agriculture sector, said an official in the Ministry of National Food Security and Research.

Talking to APP here on Friday, he said that the amount was disbursed among the youth from all four provinces including Azad Jammu Kashmir and Gilgit-Baltistan to absorb the existing bulge of youth in agriculture entrepreneur-

ship to promote the sector in the country.

He said that the initiative was also aiming at encouraging them to adopt agriculture as a career to become entrepreneurs as well as creating employment opportunities for other skilled and semi-skilled workforce.

He said that over 24,776 applications were approved and out of that 23,857 applications were disbursed, adding that an amount of Rs14,917 million was approved and Rs12,817 million disbursed among the applicants.

Meanwhile, he said that the government under the Kissan Package has provided Rs3,830.9 million in interest-free loans by June, 2023 to landless farmers, which were badly affected due to torrential rains and

flash floods during last year. By the month of June 2023 the interest-free loans were provided to about 35,405 landless farmers in order to revive the agriculture sector in flood-hit areas across the country, he added. The government has introduced a multi-billion rupee Kissan Package to revive the agriculture sector and enhance the per-acre output of major and minor crops, aiming to achieve sustainable agricultural growth and economic development, he added.

Additionally, the government disbursed Rs12,817 million under Prime Minister Youth Business and Agriculture Scheme to 23,857 farmers, which provides financial assistance and support to young farmers in agriculture entrepreneur-

ship, added. He said that recognizing the importance of farm mechanization, the government had provided Rs1,056 million to 507 farmers under the markup and risk scheme, he said adding that the initiative aimed to enhance productivity and efficiency in the agriculture sector.

Moreover, the State Bank of Pakistan's Refinancing Facility for Modernization of SMEs (RFMS) allocated Rs5,414 billion to include agro-SMEs in the SME modernization scheme. Out of this amount, Rs2,953 billion has been availed by agro-based SMEs, leading to the overall development of the agricultural small and medium-sized enterprises, he added.

## ‘Malaysia to open trade office in Karachi, commence direct flights’

KARACHI (APP): Consul General of Malaysia, Herman Hardynata Bin Ahmad, on Friday, said that his country was keen to enhance trade and investment ties with Pakistan and efforts were underway to open a trade office in Karachi and commencing direct flights from Kuala Lumpur.

An 18-member Malaysian trade delegation, comprising representatives from food, agriculture, cosmetics, textiles and other sectors, will be arriving in Karachi next week to explore possibilities of enhancing trade ties, he informed during his visit to the Karachi Chamber of Commerce and Industry (KCCI). The consul general said that Malaysian trade office will be activated in Karachi by the end of the year and presence of Malaysian trade representa-

tive would result in improving trade ties with the business community of Karachi which is very important to Malaysia. A Malaysian Airline will also be commencing direct flights between Kuala Lumpur and Karachi for promoting trade ties and also opening up tourism opportunities, he further said adding that efforts were being made to timely complete all the formalities for the direct flights by the end of this year.

Referring to Pakistan Malaysia Free Trade Agreement (FTA) he said that FTA between the two countries was being refreshed by adding more tradable items in the lists which would help increasing trade volume between the two brotherly countries. Herman Hardynata urged the business community to take advantage of

the immense opportunities of exporting goods to Malaysia as a lot of goods being manufactured in Karachi would find a very good market in Malaysia.

On the matter of visa-free access to Malaysia, the Envoy said that visa free facility was usually a reciprocal arrangement between countries so if Malaysia and Pakistan mutually agree, the visa free facility can be arranged. Currently, all the visa applications for visiting Malaysia are processed within 48 hours and even earlier than that in case of emergency, he informed. President KCCI Mohammed Tariq Yousuf, in his remarks, stressed on enhancing trade volume of the two countries and said that the bilateral trade volume was far below its full potential as Pakistan's exports to Malaysia were

just around \$300 million.

He pointed out that Pakistan's trade volume with the ASEAN bloc was around \$9 billion while Pakistan and ASEAN countries could further deepen cooperation in various areas such as transport, energy, communications, information technology and agricultural research.

"Pakistan can learn from the Malaysian Tourism Model as we have tremendous potential in the tourism sector," he said and also highlighted potential for joint ventures and investment in the areas of Islamic Finance, energy, low-cost housing, infrastructure development, telecommunications, and education. Tariq Yousuf extended full support and cooperation to Malaysian CG for forthcoming visit of Malaysian trade delegation.

## Graana.com and King's Builders unite to reveal the first large scale Mall of Sukkur

### F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Graana.com, the leading real estate marketplace, is thrilled to announce the signing of a momentous MOU with King's Builders, heralding the advent of Sukkur and Interior Sindh's premier central air-conditioned mall: King's Scenic Mall. This collaboration promises to redefine the retail landscape in the region, offering a comprehensive shopping, dining, and entertainment experience like no other.

King's Scenic Mall is poised to become the largest and most innovative retail destination in Interior Sindh, boasting an impressive blend of retail outlets, entertainment facilities, dining options, and recreational amenities. Strategically located in the heart of Sukkur, the mall aims to cater to the growing demands of the local population, offering an array of international and local brands under one roof.

Key Highlights of King's Scenic Mall:

King's Scenic Mall is set to redefine the retail landscape in Interior Sindh and offers an array of facilities that are introduced for the first time in any project of its kind in the region. It includes:

Ample Parking Space: King's Scenic Mall ensures a hassle-free shopping



experience with its spacious parking facility accommodating over 450 vehicles in the basement and ground levels. Visitors can shop with peace of mind, knowing their vehicles are safely parked.

Wide Range of Shopping Options: The mall will be home to a diverse selection of local and international brands, offering an extensive shopping experience under one roof. From high-end fashion boutiques to modern electronics, household essentials, and more, shoppers will find something for every taste.

First Food Court in the Region: King's Scenic Mall introduces Sukkur's inaugural food court, a delight-

ful culinary destination featuring a variety of delicious cuisines. From local favorites to global delicacies, the food court will satisfy all appetites.

Modern Office Block: The mall's purpose-built office block caters to modern business needs, providing entrepreneurs and professionals with a dynamic workspace equipped with modern amenities.

Exciting Entertainment Zone: The mall's entertainment area promises an enjoyable experience for visitors of all ages, with thrilling rides, arcade games, and recreational activities for families to create lasting memories.

Mr. Farhan Javed, Group Director Graana.com,

added, "Our vision has always been to revolutionize the real estate industry and offer innovative spaces that enrich communities. With King's Scenic Mall, we are taking a significant step towards that vision, providing Sukkur and Interior Sindh with an exceptional shopping and entertainment destination."

As the first-of-its-kind in the region, King's Scenic Mall aims to set new standards for commercial complexes, elevating the quality of amenities, services, and experiences. This collaboration between Graana.com and King's Scenic Mall reflects their mutual dedication to excellence and innovation in the real estate sector.



MULTAN: Vendor is busy arranging and displaying national flag color children's garments to attract customers at his roadside setup for the upcoming Independence Day celebrations.





## In brief

## McGrath reveals his top four teams

SYDNEY (Agencies): Former Australian leg-end pacer, Glenn McGrath has revealed his top four teams for the upcoming ICC Cricket World Cup in India later this year in October. In an interview with The Times of India (TOI), McGrath expressed his unsurprising inclusion of Australia in the elite quartet. He pointed out that India, playing on home turf, is expected to be a formidable force. McGrath also lauded England for their impressive cricketing form and a c k n o w l e d g e d Pakistan's strong performance, earning them a spot among the best four teams. "You wouldn't be surprised that I'm putting Australia in that four. Obviously, India is playing in their own conditions. England is playing some great cricket and Pakistan is also playing fine. So, they are the best four," McGrath said. The ICC World Cup 2023 is slated to take place in India during October and November, featuring a total of 10 participating teams. The tournament is set to kick off on October 5, with the final match scheduled for November 19.

## Pakistan's hopes to win medal

CHENGDU (APP): Pakistan's hopes to win a medal at the World University Games suffered a major blow as the country's top athletes remained unable to move to the next stage of the athletics competitions in Chengdu, China on late Thursday. Amtul Rehman, who featured in the triple jump contest scored, 11.16m and 11.04m. In hammer throw, Uzma Azam hurled the metal ball 35.67 metre, which was far behind to put her in the medal race. Talking to APP after the competition, Amtul said she had learnt a lot by featuring in the event. "We are the top performers in our country but lack international exposure. I believe if we keep on appearing in such top-flight international events we will medals," she said. She said appearing in the World University Games was not less than featuring in Olympics as several Olympians from other countries also compete in these Games. Uzma Azam thanked the Higher education Commission for providing them the chance to represent Pakistan at such a top level event. "I've come here to win the medal, but unfortunately remained unable to make a podium finish. I understand that I need to improve my game to match the standard of world's top hammer-throwers, she said and added, I am determined to work hard, polish my skills and win medals in the future events.

## Naseem proves to be different bowler

PALLEKELE (INP): Colombo Strikers are all set for their third match in the Lanka Premier League, where they will be facing Dambulla Aura at Pallekele International Cricket Stadium. The team from Colombo came out victorious in their last encounter against B-Love Kandy by 27 runs, owing to a strong all-round performance. Having lost their first match against the Jaffna Kings, the win against Kandy was a much-needed boost for the team in its debut season. Currently placed third on the points table, the match against Dambulla will be crucial to staying within touching distance of the top spot. Speaking before the match, the Captain of the Colombo Strikers, Niroshan Dickwella, spoke about the mood in the camp and said, "Everyone's together like a family now and gelling up much better.

# Pakistan thump Sandviken to reach Norway Cup semi-final



ISLAMABAD (Monitoring Desk): Faisal Ahmad's twin goals powered the Pakistan Street child football team to the semi-finals of the ongoing Norway Cup as the national team defeated Swedish club Sandviken 2-0 in the quarter-final of the tournament.

Pakistan carried the momentum from their previous triumph against Trysil FK, where they won with a defining margin of 4-0. They challenged Sandviken's defence throughout the first half but failed to convert it into a goal.

However, the Swedish club couldn't stop them for too long as Faisal scored two defining goals

in the second half to win for his team. The national team continued their dominant form in the tournament, after crushing Trysil FK 4-0, Arvoll IL 2-1, and Oslo FK 11-1.

In the pre-quarterfinal, Pakistan dominated Trysil FK throughout the game and created chances from the first whistle. Pakistan's Obaidullah scored 2 goals, while, Shamir Ali and Abdul Wahab scored one each in the first half to give the green shirts a match-winning lead.

Pakistan has been a dominant force throughout the tournament. In their second group fixture, they defeated Arvoll IL 2-1. This was the national

team's second consecutive victory. Pakistan Street child football team will face Bremnes Club in the semifinals today.

In the last game against, Trysil FK Pakistan's Obaidullah scored 2 goals, while, Shamir Ali and Abdul Wahab scored one each in the first half to give the green shirts a match-winning lead. In the game prior to that, they defeated Arvoll IL 2-1, thanks to Abdul Wahab and Tufail Shinwari's goals.

It should be noted that Pakistan has qualified for the semifinals of the Norway Cup for the third time, as Pakistan has secured the second position in Norway Cup 2015 and third in Norway Cup 2016.

# Shahwaiz Irfan's second successive half-century takes Shaheens to final

DARWIN (Monitoring Desk): Shahwaiz Irfan's second successive century and a four-fer from Ali Asfand led Shaheens to an eight-wicket win over Papua New Guinea at the DXC Arena on Friday evening. The win means Shaheens also qualify for the final and will take on Northern Territory Strike at the same venue.

Chasing 121 to win, Shaheens lost their first wicket on 16 with Shamyl Hussain returning to the hut for one off two balls. Right-handed batter Shahwaiz was joined by Azan Awaish and the pair knitted a 54-run partnership for the second wicket. Shahwaiz contributed 40 runs in the partnership and over the course of the partnership brought up a brilliant half-century. He had scored 65 off 37 balls against Melbourne Stars in the team's 43-run

win at the TIO Stadium on Wednesday.

Shahwaiz was dismissed for 54 off 32 balls, which included 10 fours, with Shaheens still requiring 51 for victory off 74 balls. Skipper Rohail Nazir and Azan made sure there were no hiccups in the run-chase and took Shaheens home in the 13th over.

Rohail's quick-fire 33 off 22 balls included three fours and one six. Azan returned undefeated on 26 off 23 balls, hitting two fours.

Earlier, after opting to bat first, Papua New Guinea managed to score 120 for eight in 20 overs after left-arm spinner Ali wreaked havoc with a four-fer. The remaining four wickets to fall were bagged by Aaliyan Mahmood and Arafat Minhas – both taking two wickets each.

For PNG, Sese Bau top-scored with a 28-ball 32 with three boundaries and one six.

Pakistan Shaheens will now take on Northern Territory Strike in the final, which will be played at the DXC Arena on Sunday, 6 August. The first ball will be bowled at 1500 local time and will be live-streamed on Tapmad in Pakistan.

Scores in brief: Pakistan Shaheens beat PNG by eight wickets PNG 120-8, 20 overs (Sese Bau 32, Norman Vanua 25; Ali Asfand 4-11, Aaliyan Mahmood 2-21, Arafat Minhas 2-24) Pakistan Shaheens 121-2, 12.5 overs (Shahwaiz Irfan 54, Rohail Nazir 33 not out, Azan Awaish 26 not out)

Player of the match – Ali Asfand (Pakistan Shaheens).

# Alex Hales retires from international cricket



LONDON (Agencies): England batter Alex Hales has retired from international cricket.

Hales, 34, made 156 appearances for England across three formats, scoring 5,066 runs and lifting the men's T20 World Cup in November.

He last played for his country in the five-wicket win against Pakistan in that final in Melbourne. Hales, who will continue to play for Nottinghamshire and in T20 franchises, said it had been "an absolute privilege" to represent England.

"I've made some memories and some friendships to last a lifetime and I feel that now is the right time to move on," he wrote on Instagram. Hales is currently playing for Trent Rockets in The Hundred, and is expected to continue being a regular in T20 leagues such as Australia's Big Bash League and the

Pakistan Super League.

A short-form specialist, Hales was a key member of England's one-day international side, hitting a six against Australia at Trent Bridge as they broke the record for the highest ODI total in 2018.

He scored 2,419 runs in 70 one-day internationals and 573 in 11 Tests between 2015 and 2016.

However, his time with England has not been without controversy. In 2017, Hales was involved with team-mate Ben Stokes in an incident outside a Bristol nightclub that led to him being charged by the England and Wales Cricket Board and subsequently suspended.

Two years later, he served a 21-day ban for reportedly failing a recreational drugs test which led to him being dropped from England's World Cup squad. His three-year exile ended in September

2022 after he was called up as a replacement for the injured Jonny Bairstow.

Reflecting on his career, he added: "Throughout my time in an England shirt, I've experienced some of the highest highs as well as some of the lowest lows.

"It's been an incredible journey and I feel very content that my last game for England was winning a World Cup final. "Throughout the ups and downs I've always felt a huge amount of support from my friends, family and undoubtedly the best fans in world cricket.

"I look forward to continuing to play for Notts and experiencing more franchise cricket around the world." England next play a T20 series against New Zealand from 30 August, before they defend their World Cup title in West Indies and the USA next June.

Hales' retirement is likely to give an opportunity for Phil Salt to open the batting – the Lancashire opener has played 16 T20s and 14 ODIs and was also part of the side who won the World Cup last year.

It may also give an opportunity for Somerset opener Will Smeed, 21, with 50-over World Cup-winning captain Eoin Morgan having previously praised the right-hander.



Cricket WC 2023

## Pakistan security delegation to visit India

LAHORE (Monitoring Desk): Pakistan has decided to send a delegation comprising security high-ups to India to review the security arrangements ahead of ICC Cricket World Cup 2023.

Pakistan will send a high-level delegation to India to review security arrangements for the ICC Cricket World Cup 2023, sources told private channel.

The federal government will finalise the delegation members including high-ups from Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) and security institutions.

The security delegation will prepare a report after visiting India and the government will make a decision to allow Pakistan's cricket team to travel to India afterwards.

In 2016, Pakistan sent a security delegation to India before T20 World Cup.

Before key tours, the countries can send delegations to review the security measures.

Pakistan-India CWC clash

The Pakistan-India fixture in the ICC Men's Cricket World Cup in Ahmedabad is one of the highly-anticipated contests but the game may be rescheduled due to security reasons.

The arch-rivals will clash on October 15. The date coincides with the first day of the Navratri festival. The joyous event is significantly celebrated in Gujarat state, which hosts the city.

The security agencies are reportedly concerned that managing the influx of fans and their safety may be problematic.

The officials raised their concerns with the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI), which has acknowledged them. The governing body of the sport in the country is exploring different options for staging the match.

"We are mulling the options that we have, and a decision in this regard will be taken soon," a BCCI official stated. "We have been told by the security agencies that a high-profile game like India vs. Pakistan, for which thousands of traveling fans are expected to reach Ahmedabad, should be avoided since they will be stretched because of Navratri."

It is pertinent to mention that the majority of the hotels got booked after the International Cricket Council announced the world championship's schedule. Moreover, the hospitals are also reserved to deal with medical emergencies regarding the fixture.

# Korea hold Pakistan for a 1-1 draw in Asian Hockey Champions Trophy

CHENNAI (Agencies): Pakistan team extended their winless streak in the ongoing Asian Hockey Champions Trophy, as they drew 1-1 against defending champions South Korea here on Friday.

Pakistan started off well with Hanan Shahid's field goal in the 18th minute, however, South Korea equalized in the 53rd minute, courtesy of a penalty stroke by Jihun Yang.

Both teams battled hard until the final whistle but couldn't score a tie-breaker.

Previously, Pakistan was handed a 3-1 defeat at the hands of Malaysia 3-1 in their first game. Pakistan, alongside India, are the most successful side of the tournament, having won the title thrice. Pakistan

won the tournament in 2012 and 2013, while India won in 2011 and 2016.

The 2018 edition of the Asian Hockey Champions Trophy saw Pakistan and India jointly sharing the trophy as the final was forfeited due to persistent rain.

Meanwhile, South Korea are participating in the ongoing tournament as the defending champions, winning the previous edition of the tournament in 2021.

Green Shirts now face Japan and China in their next fixtures on August 6 and 7 respectively.

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

Pakistan squad for Asian Hockey Champions Trophy

Muhammad Umar Bhatta (c), Akmal Hussain, Abdullah Ishtiaq Khan, Muhammad Abdullah, Muhammad Sufyan Khan, Ehtsham Aslam, Osama Bashir, Aqeel Ahmed, Arshad Liaquat, Muhammad Imad, Abdul Hanan Shahid, Zakaria Hayat, Rana Abdul Waheed Ashraf (Vice Captain), Roman, Muhammad Murtaza Yaqoob, Muhammad Shahzaib Khan, Afraz, Abdul Rahman, while the standby includes Ali Raza, Muhammad Baqir, Muhammad Nadeem Khan, Abdul Wahab, Waqar Ali, Muhammad Ahsan and Abdul Qayyum.

Pakistan's remaining matches schedule August 6 – vs Japan August 7 – vs China August 9 – vs India

# Pegula rallies past Svitolina to reach Washington semis

WASHINGTON (Agencies): Top-seeded Jessica Pegula outlasted Wimbledon semi-finalist Elina Svitolina 4-6, 6-3, 6-4 on Friday, holding off a late fightback to reach the Washington Open semifinals.

The 29-year-old American booked a last-four berth in the WTA and ATP hardcourt event against the winner of a later match between US seventh seed Madison Keys and Greek fourth seed Maria Sakkari, who beat Canadian Leylah Fernandez 7-5, 6-2 in a rain-postponed match.

"I knew it was going to be a really tough match and that's what it was," Pegula said. Pegula broke to open the final set and denied Svitolina on five break points in the sixth game before holding for a 4-2 lead.

Svitolina saved two match points before holding in the ninth game but Pegula saved a break point in the 10th game and advanced

with a service winner on her third match point, improving to 3-1 overall against Svitolina after two hours and eight minutes.

"I was like, 'If I don't serve this out, it might have been a quick 5-7.' I probably would have lost," Pegula said. "I was so tired. I know that sounds terrible to say. That's not what you're supposed to be thinking but... I sweated through the entire thing."

World number three Pegula, the 2019 Washington champion, reached her fifth WTA semi-final of the year and first since April on Charleston clay. Past success in the US capital helped her pull through, she said.

"It helps me feel more comfortable," Pegula said. "I've played a lot of matches on this court. I always love coming back. "That definitely helps me dig my heels in a little bit." Svitolina, 28, captured the first set on a forehand winner without facing a break point. Pegula's first

break chance of the match came on Svitolina's first service game in the second set, when the Ukrainian netted a backhand to put the American up 2-0 and she held from there to force a third set.

Svitolina, making a comeback after becoming a mother last year, is coming off a trip to the French Open quarter-finals and a victory over top-ranked Iga Swiatek in a Wimbledon semi-final run. She ousted former world number one Victoria Azarenka in her Washington opener but was foiled in her bid for an 18th career WTA crown.

"Tons of respect for her," Pegula said of Svitolina. "She just had a baby. Everything she's going through with her country. I told her I feel like she came back as a new person. You can see the competitiveness." The rain-hit men's side was hoping to play five round-of-16 matches and all four quarter-finals on Friday.

# Snooker champion Ahsan is our national hero: Adviser to CM Punjab, Wahab Riaz

LAHORE (APP): Adviser to Chief Minister Punjab on sports and Youth Affairs Wahab Riaz along with Provincial Minister for Information Amir Mir, Commissioner Lahore Muhammad Ali Randhawa and CCPO Lahore Bilal Siddique Kamyana visited residence of snooker world champion Ahsan Ramzan here on Friday.

Director Youth Affairs Syed Umair Hassan and other top officials were also present on this occasion.

Talking to media on this occasion, Wahab Riaz said young Ahsan Ramzan, who made the country proud by winning the IBSF World Snooker Championship in Doha and won Under-21

Asian Snooker title, is our national hero. "The whole nation is proud of the young world snooker star of the country."

He condemned and regretted the police incident in which Ahsan Ramzan was detained by the Police on Wednesday night as he was doing practice at a snooker club to prepare for future international events.

It may be mentioned here that the young snooker champion introduced himself as the world champion but policemen did not pay any attention to his claim and locked him up in the police station on the pretext that the snooker club in which he was practising was functioning till late at

night. According to Ahsan the policemen abused him as well and said they were not bothered if he was the world champion.

Adviser to CM Punjab said that an inquiry committee has been constituted that will investigate the entire police incident and present its report tomorrow, Saturday.

Wahab Riaz also announced to award membership of Sabzar Sports Complex to Ahsan Ramzan. "Ahsan Ramzan will also be provided top standard snooker table and other relevant facilities so that he can prepare himself in a befitting manner for the future international snooker competitions," he added.

# Chandimal, Mujeeb lead B-Love Kandy to first victory in LPL 2023

PALLEKELE (Agencies): Mujeeb Ur Rahman's astonishing figures of 2/17 followed by Dinesh Chandimal's 48 bolstered B-Love Kandy to claim their maiden victory in the Lanka Premier League (LPL) 2023.

Bottom-ranked B-Love Kandy put on all-round show to beat second-placed Dambulla Aura by seven wickets and nine balls to spare.

B-Love Kandy openers Fakhar Zaman and Dinesh Chandimal scripted a solid start for the pursuit with a magnificent 67-run partnership.

Fakhar, who batted cautiously for his 26-ball 28, which featured five boundaries, was the first to fall when he chipped one back to Dhananjaya de Silva in the eighth over.

Chandimal then put on a brief 30-run partnership with Kamindu Mendis before he got run out with B-Love Kandy still requiring 58 for victory off 53 balls. He smashed seven boundaries on his way to top score for B-Love Kandy with a 29-ball 48.

Following Mendis's dismissal in the 16th over, Mathews was joined by explosive batter Asif Ali and the pair made sure there were no hiccups in the run-chase and took B-Love Kandy home in the 19th over.

The pair put on an unbeaten 31-run partnership, dominated by Ali, who scored a quickfire 16 off eight while Mathews remained unbeaten on a 20-ball 28. Hayden Kerr and Dhananjaya



Fakhar Zaman and Dinesh Chandimal added 69 for the opening

de Silva could pick up a wicket for Dambulla Aura.

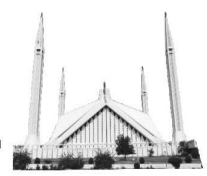
Earlier, after opting to bat first, Dambulla Aura could score 156/6 in 20 overs despite Dhananjaya de Silva's quick half-century. The right-handed batter smashed five boundaries and three sixes and top-scored for the Aura with a 39-ball 61.

The next notable run-getters for the Aura were Avishka Fernando (32) and Alex Ross (21) while the rest

made meagre contributions.

Mujeeb Ur Rahman and Isuru Udana led the bowling attack for B-Love Kandy with two wickets each while Mohammad Hasnain and Dushmantha Chameera made one scalp apiece. Despite a convincing seven-wicket victory, B-Love Kandy remained at the bottom in the LPL 2023 standings while Dambulla Aura managed to get behold of their second position.





## In brief

### IRSA releases 330,600 cusecs water

ISLAMABAD (APP): Indus River System Authority (IRSA) on Friday released 330,600 cusecs water from various rim stations with inflow of 399,500 cusecs. According to the data released by IRSA, water level in River Indus at Tarbela Dam was 1542.29 feet and was 144.29 feet higher than its dead level of 1,398 feet. Water inflow and outflow in the dam was recorded as 217,500 cusecs and 187,700 cusecs respectively. The water level in River Jhelum at Mangla Dam was 1232.90 feet, which was 182.90 feet higher than its dead level of 1,050 feet. The inflow and outflow of water was recorded 49,100 cusecs and 10,000 cusecs respectively. The release of water at Kalabagh, Taunsa, Guddu and Sukkur was recorded as 208,800, 168,600, 370,000 and 364,600 cusecs respectively. Similarly, from River Kabul, a total of 47,100 cusecs of water released at Nowshera and 57,900 cusecs released from River Chenab at Marala.

### IG pays tributes to martyrs of Police

ISLAMABAD (APP): Inspector General National Highways and Motorway Police (NHMP) Sultan Ali Khwaja paid tributes to the 47 martyred National Highways and Motorway Police officials including one female officer who sacrificed their lives in the line of duty. He was addressing as the chief guest at the ceremony organized by the NHMP on 'Youm-e-Shuhada' here Friday. The IG Motorway Police thanked the families of the martyrs and emphasized the role of the martyrs in the development of NHMP as an island of excellence. "Our martyrs are our proud assets who have presented a practical example of courage and bravery", he said while expressing solidarity with the families of the martyrs of NHMP. Later, he distributed certificates of honour among the families of the martyrs.

### RPO, CPO pay surprise visit

RAWALPINDI (APP): Regional Police Officer (RPO) Rawalpindi Syed Khurram Ali and City Police Officer (CPO) Rawalpindi Syed Khalid Hamdani here on Friday paid surprise visits to Civil Lines and Saddar Baroni Police Stations and inspected front desks, records, lockups, and buildings of the police stations. The RPO instructed the Police officers to perform their duties diligently and make all-out efforts to net the criminals. "Prime responsibility of police is to control crime," he said and directed the Station House Officers to formulate effective strategy to make police patrolling more effective. The CPO directed the police officers to improve service delivery at the police station level. Ongoing operations against proclaimed offenders, court absconders, drug peddlers and other lawbreakers should be accelerated. He ordered the officials to take effective measures to facilitate the public besides taking all possible steps to provide relief to the citizens. The CPO said that negligence on the part of the police officials in public service delivery would not be tolerated, adding that all-out efforts should be made to resolve complaints of the citizens at the police station level. He directed the police officers to protect the life and property of the citizens and accelerate ongoing operations against criminals. Later, the RPO and CPO also visited the police command and control room and inspected different desks besides checking their performance.



ISLAMABAD: Advisor to Prime Minister on Kashmir Affairs and Gilgit Baltistan Qamar Zaman Kaira calls on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif.

## Ahsan inaugurates 3 Centres to produce world-class researchers at QAU

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Professor Ahsan Iqbal on Friday inaugurated three centres including Pakistan China Joint Research Centre, Pakistan China Joint Research Centre on Earth Sciences, Dr A Q Khan Institute of Material and Emergency Sciences at the Quaid-e-Azam University (QAU) Islamabad.

These Higher Education Commission (HEC)-sponsored centres, approved by the Central Development Working Party (CDWP), were formally launched during a ceremony held at the QAU which was attended among others by QAU Vice Chancellor Dr Niaz, Chinese officials and a large number of students.

Speaking at the occasion, Planning Minister Ahsan Iqbal said the centres would play a key role in producing world-class

researchers. He said these projects remained pending for the last four years but the incumbent government ensured their launch.

The minister said Pakistan China Joint Research Centre would play a vital role in producing researchers who would prove to be beneficial in the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) projects.

Ahsan Iqbal said the Chinese Vice-Premier recently visited Pakistan to mark the 10-year celebrations of CPEC which showed the complete support from the Chinese government. The incumbent government, the minister, had revived the CPEC projects which remained neglected by the previous government, highlighting several initiatives taken by the government that came into power in April 2022.

Pakistan China Joint Research Centre on Earth

Sciences deals with all fields of natural science related to the study of our planet's physical characteristics, from earthquakes to raindrops, and floods to fossils and the impact of human activities on Earth's environment.

The Centre, besides other earth-related studies, would focus on the impacts of CPEC's large-scale infrastructure activities, promoting scientific and technological research and development studies in the earth sciences.

It would be the 1st of its kind to look into the problems related to land, sea, and atmosphere due to large-scale CPEC infrastructure and other activities. The Centre will also contribute towards enhanced knowledge of the geological evolution of processes and natural hazards, as well as proposing measures to deal with natural hazards.

## ANF seizes 68 kg drugs; arrests two accused

RAWALPINDI (APP): Anti-Narcotics Force in their ongoing operations against drug traffickers, conducted six raids across the country and seized 68 kg drugs, 20,000 intoxicated tablets besides arresting two accused, said an ANF Headquarters spokesman here on Friday.

He informed that in an operation conducted near Bahria Town Rawalpindi, an accused resident of Peshawar was rounded up with 3.6 kg charras.

In another operation conducted on RCD Road Hub, 45 kg charras was recovered from the secret cavities of a truck. An accused resident of Khyber was also netted during the operation. In the third operation at the cargo terminal of Quetta International Airport, 5 kg charras concealed in a fryer, was recovered. The parcel was booked for Havalian.

In the fourth operation at a courier office in Kot Lakhpat Lahore, 420 grams heroin concealed in clothes was recovered. The parcel was booked for Italy.

The spokesman informed that in the fifth operation, 11 kg charras concealed in a deserted area of Jarobi Zakakhel in Khyber was recovered. In the sixth operation conducted near Torkham border, 20,000 intoxicated tablets concealed in bushes were recovered. Separate cases have been registered against the accused while further investigations are under process.

## India cannot suppress legitimate struggle of Kashmiris: Kaira

ISLAMABAD (APP): Advisor to the Prime Minister on Kashmir Affairs and Gilgit Baltistan Qamar Zaman Kaira Friday said India cannot suppress the legitimate struggle of the people of Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK).

Addressing a press conference, he said Pakistan will not allow India to succeed in its nefarious designs to turn the Muslim majority into the minority in the IIOJK.

Flanked by Kashmiri leaders, he said Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto

Zardari presented the Kashmir cause in a befitting manner at all international forums even during his visit to India.

The Advisor to Prime Minister said the Kashmir dispute was not an issue between Hindus and Muslims, rather it was a just freedom cause of the people residing over there. Kaira regretted that India is giving the impression that Kashmir is an issue between Hindus and Muslims through propaganda. He said that in that regard, the resolution will be presented in the National

Assembly session on Monday.

"We are proud of our friendship with China", he said, adding that China has also expressed concerns over the Indian move of August 5.

Farooq Rahmani, leader Kashmir Council said that the Modi government was currently in trouble and feared that it may take steps beyond August 5 for winning the elections. Rahmani said according to the United Nations Charter, Kashmir has a separate identity and India's claims on Kashmir were false.

## Medical colleges asked to avoid offering unrecognized postgraduate program

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan Medical and Dental Council (PMDC) has directed all medical and dental Institutions or universities to register with the council under section 25 of the PM&DC Act for offering postgraduate programs. In a letter written to these institutions on the directions of the Council, the Registrar PM&DC has strictly refrained all the colleges and universities, not to advertise or offer any unrecognized postgraduate medical and dental program.

"In case of non-compliance to the intimation, the PM&DC will initiate disciplinary proceedings under section 35(i) of PM&DC Act 2022 which states Section 35 which says whoever runs or establishes or endorses any institution or advertises admissions in an insti-

tution for imparting education in medicine or dentistry, which is not recognized under sections 21, 22, 25, 26 or 29 or in respect of which recognition has been withdrawn under section 33, shall be guilty of an offence punishable with rigorous imprisonment for a term which may extend to five years, but shall not be less than a year, or with fine which may extend to twenty million rupees, but shall not be less than ten million rupees, or with both and shall also be liable to the closure of such institution," read the letter. According to PM&DC, all medical and dental practitioners intending to acquire postgraduate medical or dental qualifications in Pakistan have been informed to take admissions in PM&DC's recognized postgraduate programs only.

## IHRA continues action against HCEs malpractices in capital

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Islamabad Healthcare Regulatory Authority (IHRA) has continued its action against malpractices of Healthcare Establishments (HCEs) in different areas of the Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT).

According to IHRA, the inspection teams carried out inspections of 82 Healthcare Establishments (HCEs) in different areas of the Islamabad Capital Territory during the past two weeks and sealed 11 HCEs.

Huma Clinic, Ismail Dental Clinic, Rehman Clinic, Al Eman Fatima Hospital, Grow Hair Transplant and Aesthetic Clinic, National Hospital, Fauji Dental Clinic, Al Shifa Clinic, Ali Clinic, Oxford Medical Centre, and Wada Clinic were sealed due to malpractices like absence of qualified medical staff, unhygienic conditions, not getting registration with IHRA and functioning during the suspension.

The authority also suspended the services of two Healthcare Establishments

over different medical non-compliance, including Abid Dental Clinic and Sidra Akhtar Foundation. Similarly, 33 Healthcare Establishments were served notices for minor non-compliance and instructed to comply with the directions given by the inspection teams.

As many as 30 HCEs were found closed upon arrival by inspection teams while five Healthcare Establishments (HCEs) were recommended for registration and revocation of suspension.

IHRA teams are also carrying out zone-wise mapping of healthcare establishments in Islamabad while mapping of 20 HCEs was also conducted over two weeks.

IHRA inspection teams visited government health establishments, including BHU Bhimber Tarar, Capital Development Hospital, Federal Government Polyclinic Hospital, and Blood Bank, and were instructed to comply with the directions given by the inspection teams for improvements.

## 'Youm-e-Shuhada-e-Police' observed

RAWALPINDI (APP): 'Youm-e-Shuhada-e-Police' was observed here on Friday at Police lines to pay tributes to all those Police officers and jawans who sacrificed their lives for the protection of the motherland.

Regional Police Officer (RPO) Syed Khurram Ali, City Police Officer (CPO) Syed Khalid Hamdani, Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Operations Faisal Saleem, SP Headquarters, Divisional SPs, SDPOs, senior police officers, martyrs' families, representatives of trade unions, police officers, constables and civil society members attended the event organized to pay tributes to the martyrs of the Police Department.

Rawalpindi District Police on the special directive of Inspector General Punjab Police organized a function to pay tributes to the martyrs. Senior Police Officers and a Police contingent presented a salute to the martyrs who sacrificed their lives for maintaining peace in society. RPO, CPO, and SSP Operations laid floral wreaths on the martyrs' monument and prayed for the departed souls, peace and security of the country and nation.

The RPO said that the Police were proud of its 'Shuhada'.

"We will never forget their ultimate sacrifices in the line of duty and will look after the bereaved families in every manner," he added. He said that nearly 1600 personnel of the Punjab police rendered the ultimate sacrifices in the

line of duty. The nation could not forget the supreme sacrifices rendered by the martyrs, he said, adding "We are standing with the families of the martyrs". The CPO said that 115 officers and jawans of Rawalpindi police sacrificed their lives for the nation.

The spokesman informed that the lighting of lamps and candles ceremony was also held on Thursday night at the martyrs' monument in connection with the Police martyrs day.

The ceremony was attended by the RPO, CPO, SSP Operations, SSP Investigation, SP Headquarters, Divisional SPs, SDPOs, families of the martyrs, members of the peace committee, and representatives of Anjuman-e-Tajran.

## Pakistan always forcefully raised plight of Kashmiris at world forums: NA told

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Parliamentary Affairs Murtaza Javed Abbasi on Friday informed the National Assembly that Pakistan has always forcefully raised the plight of the people of Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK) at all world forums.

Replying to a question during Question Hour, he said all the political parties of the country have a united stance on the Kashmir dispute. Ministry of Human Rights (MoHR) defended issues, complaints and related matters on human rights through Ministry of Foreign Affairs, he said. He said the concerns were usually conveyed by United Nations, EU, and USA State Department. Some INGOs such as Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch also share their concerns against the state of Pakistan on human rights issues. Such concerns include freedom of expression, custodial torture, extrajudicial killings, enforced disappearance, protection of minorities, women rights and child rights etc, he said.

He said accordingly, the MoHR submitted its responses through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs as per the given mandate under the rules of business. Additionally, various UN treaty bodies communicate their observations/recommendations as a result of a review of obligatory reports submitted by Pakistan on ratified human rights conven-

tions. The Minister for Parliament Affairs said our departments concerned are alert to counter the negative propaganda against Pakistan. He said besides, the Universal Periodic Review Report of Pakistan which provided a holistic overview of the human rights situation, was also presented in Human Rights Council after every 4 years.

Pakistan has recently defended/ presented its fourth Universal Periodic Review report in Human Rights Council on 30 January 2023, he said. During review of Pakistan's Human Rights record, concerns shown by various states on human rights issues were vehemently defended by a high-level delegation of Pakistan comprising the Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, the Secretary Ministry of Human Rights, and representatives from the Ministry of Interior and Ministry of Religious Affairs, he said.

He said additionally, the Government of Pakistan, submitted Periodic Reports on ratified human rights conventions and optional protocols through MoFA and defended before relevant treaty bodies. Lastly, the minister said Pakistan is the GSP + beneficiary regularly submitted biannual implementation reports on 27 Conventions related to human rights, labor, environment, anti-narcotics, and good governance to European Union through the Ministry of Commerce.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Secretary for National Heritage and Culture Division Fareena Mazhar addressing a seminar on National Cultural Narrative of Pakistan-2023 at National Library.



UK ODA funds cut by 59%

KABUL (TOLOnews): The UK Parliament in a statement laid out the FCDO Equality Impact Assessment which was provided to ministers earlier this year to inform their decisions on where significant cuts to the Official Development Assistance budget for 2023-24 would fall. The assessment was published by the International Development Committee. "The Equality Impact Assessment sets out what this means in reality for some of the poorest countries in the world, experiencing the worst humanitarian crises."

Salang Highway closed

KABUL (TOLOnews): The Salang Highway will be closed during the day to all traffic starting Saturday, August 5, due to the beginning of construction inside the tunnel. According to officials, high-speed cars can travel on the Shibar-Bamian route, and only trucks are permitted to cross the roadway at night. "People who have urgent tasks can pass through Shibar through Ghorband," said Abdul Hakim Agha, head of Salang preservation and care.

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

Afghanistan humanitarian situation highlighted at UNSC meeting



KABUL (TOLOnews): Representatives of countries including Russia, UK, Pakistan, India, Qatar and Switzerland at the UN Security Council High-Level Open Debate on Famine and Conflict-Induced Global Food Security in New York pointed out the humanitarian situation of Afghanistan and expressed concerns over the number of people in need of aid.

Barbara Woodward, UK ambassador to the UN, said that the Secretary-General's New Agenda for Peace calls for renewed multilateral cooperation and putting women, such as those in Afghanistan facing a choice between selling their children or starving, at the centre of peace initiatives.

Dmitry Polyanskiy, 1st Deputy Permanent Representative of Russia to the UN, said that the most acute food crises are

directly or indirectly provoked by the action of the United States or its allies.

"For example, Afghanistan has been struggling to climb out of the abyss of hunger and poverty for over 20 years because of the experiments carried by the United States-led coalition to democratize this deeply traditional country in a Western fashion," he said.

Deputy Permanent Representative of Pakistan to the UN, Mohammad Aamir Khan, said that 117 million of the 258 million food-insecure live in 19 war and conflict zones, and that 15.3 million Afghans are projected to face high food insecurity.

"Pakistan will continue to provide support to the 29 million Afghans in need of humanitarian assistance and to help revive Afghanistan's economy," he said.

PAJCCI welcomes new tracking and monitoring of cargo rules

KABUL (Agencies): Zia ul Haq Sarhadi, director of the Pak-Afghan Joint Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PAJCCI), has praised the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) for announcing the new Tracking and Monitoring of Cargo Rule 2023.

Sarhadi said in a Friday statement that the decision resulted from a long-standing demand from the country's business community to eliminate the monopoly of one company providing tracking services to trucks carrying cargo goods.

He thanked the FBR's chairman for taking this decision which will provide relaxation to the business community and introduce the provision of state-of-the-art and competitive tracking and monitoring service to importers and exporters.

On Wednesday, the FBR released SRO996 (I)/2023 to announce the new Tracking and Monitoring of Cargo Rules, 2023.

Meanwhile, the yearly turnover requirement for companies intended to



apply for licenses to track and monitor trucks and containers transporting transit cargo has been decreased from Rs350 million to Rs175 million. In contrast, the requirement for financial stability has been reduced from Rs200 million to Rs100 million, per the new guidelines. Sarhadi said, "Relaxation in annual turnover and financial health for intending

tor trucks and containers transporting transit cargo has been decreased from Rs350 million to Rs175 million. In contrast, the requirement for financial stability has been reduced from Rs200 million to Rs100 million, per the new guidelines. Sarhadi said, "Relaxation in annual turnover and financial health for intending

companies will provide an opportunity for more firms to come in the arena and provide quality service."

Director PAJCCI expressed the hope that FBR would begin the bid process in September 2023 and quickly complete other official procedures for involving new businesses in the tracking process.

Daesh confirms death of its leader, names replacement

KABUL (Agencies): Daesh on Thursday confirmed the death of its leader Abu Hussein al-Husseini al-Quraishi and named Abu Hafis al-Hashimi al-Quraishi as his replacement, the group's spokesperson said in an undated recording published on its Telegram channel.

It appeared to be the militant group's first official announcement on his fate since Turkey's President Tayyip Erdogan said in April that Turkish intelligence forces had killed him in Syria, Reuters reported.

Erdogan said the Turkish national intelligence organization had pursued Quraishi for a long time.

Quraishi was killed during a gun battle with Hayat Tahrir al Sham (HTS), the main Islamist group that holds sway in the last opposition bastion in northwest Syria, the spokesman said.

Daesh that once ruled a third of Iraq and Syria,



gave no details about the new leader, Reuters reported. Daesh reached its peak in 2014 when its then head, Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, declared the territory it controlled a caliphate.

It was beaten back by adversaries in both countries including a U.S.-led coalition, and Baghdadi was killed during a U.S.

military operation in Syria in 2019. According to Reuters Abu Hussein al-Husseini al-Quraishi took over in November 2022 after his predecessor was killed, also in Syria. Daesh militants continue to wage insurgent attacks in both Syria and Iraq. Its remaining thousands of militants have in recent years mostly hid out in remote hinterlands of both countries, though they are still capable of carrying out hit-and-run attacks. The U.S.-led coalition alongside a Kurdish-led alliance known as the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) is still carrying out raids against Daesh in Syria.

KABUL (TOLOnews): Some medical patients and passengers at the Torkham crossing complained of harassment by Pakistani police and that money was demanded under a variety of pretexts.

They said that despite having the legal documents, there was no convenience for them, and that all passengers, including women and children, are facing problems.

Travelers said that Pakistan has not properly

addressed this issue, and patients and passengers have been dealing with it for years. "They mistreat us. They do not let us pass. They force us to pay them," said Shir Ali, who went to Pakistan for his illness to be treated. "They say the scanner is broken, although it is functional. They bother passengers for cash. You may pass with ease if you give a thousand," said Zabihullah, a passenger.

Medical patients and passengers asked the

Islamic Emirate to work to solve this problem. "I ask both sides to be kind to the passengers and provide facilities for them. Facilitate visa and transportation convenience. Why do they stop us when we have a passport?" said Rustam Khan, a passenger.

The Torkham Commission officials said they have spoken with Pakistani authorities about this issue, but the commitments made in this respect have not been fulfilled.

"We shared the issues with high-ranking officials in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Refugees and Repatriation, and in the same way we shared with the Consul General of Pakistan here," said Hafiz Ismatullah, the commissioner at Torkham.

According to official statistics, 2,400 people from Afghanistan have visited Pakistan for medical treatment in the past three months, with an average of 120 patients each day.

Nearly 500,000 tons of cotton cultivated in current solar year

KABUL (TOLOnews): The Afghanistan Chamber of Commerce and Investment (ACCI) said that nearly 500,000 tons of cotton have been cultivated in the country in the current year solar year. The head of ACCI, Mohammad Yunus Momand, suggested that standardized cotton processing facilities be developed in order to export cotton thread and oil to other nations, particularly those in the region.



"We need to construct a huge oil production facility in Afghanistan so that we can process oil from 500,000 tons of cotton seeds, which is a requirement for Afghanistan, and export it abroad. We can export cotton thread to South Asia, India, Bangladesh, Pakistan and Bhutan. If necessary, we can export cotton to Europe," Momand said.

The Chamber of Commerce and Investment said that due to the prohibition of drug cultivation in

the country, the amount of cotton cultivation has increased significantly. Meanwhile, the Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock (MAIL) reported that at the moment cotton processing factories have been built in the provinces of Kandahar, Helmand,

and Balkh, and attempts are under way to build in other parts of the nation. "The Ministry of Agriculture has decided to build the cotton processing factories, together with the private sector, for the sake of a better cotton market," said Musbahuddin Mustaeen, a spokesman for

the ministry. In the meantime, some farmers asked the Islamic Emirate to meet their challenges so their yields increase. "They should make available to us the medicine for agricultural diseases and make the fertilizer a little cheaper," said Ahmad Faisal, a farmer.

Six water projects worth over 100m AFN inaugurated in Nangarhar



NANGARHAR (Agencies): The Ministry of Energy and Water says that work on six projects worth more than 109 million afghanis has been wrapped up in Rodat district of Nangarhar province.

An event to mark the occasion was held in the presence of Mullah Abdul Latif Mansour, Acting Minister of Water and Energy; Mawlawi Seyed Ahmad Banuri, Deputy Governor of Nangarhar;

and a number of other local officials. At the ceremony, Mansour said the ministry has balanced plans for water management and energy production throughout the country. This was especially applicable to the eastern zone and especially Nangarhar province to solve the water shortage problem.

According to the ministry, the projects completed include a 33-meter-

long and one-meter-high dam, a 735-meter-long and 2-meter-high water channel, the cleaning and repair of a 900-meter-long canal, 24 dams checked, hundreds of meters of retaining walls and small water reserves in Roghan, Qatargha and Mirja areas.

The ministry said that the projects were carried out with the financial support of the World Food Organization (WFP), with the technical cooperation

of AED Institute under the supervision of the Nangarhar river zone, where a large number of people were provided with work. Meanwhile, the Acting Minister of Water and Energy visited various projects in Nangarhar province and also visited a water reservoir in Kot district. The reservoir has the capacity to store nearly 83 thousand cubic meters of water.

Work on key Kamal Khan dam canals nearly complete: NDC

NIMROZ (Agencies): Officials at National Development Corporation (NDC) say work on Tarko and Afzal Qala canals in Kamal Khan dam has been completed by 94 percent and the canals will be put into operation in the near future.

NDC officials said that these two canals with a length of 264 kilometers will irrigate 50,000 hectares of agricultural land. According to them, positive changes will occur in the lives of the people of Nimroz province.

"Work on these two canals is 94% complete and work is currently underway on sub-canals,"



said Riazuddin Sharifi, an NDC official. A number of Nimroz residents meanwhile say that due to drought and population increase in this province, locals are struggling with water

shortage. The inhabitants call on NDC to speed up the efforts to complete the work of this project. In the meantime, economic experts also emphasize the need to develop the

agriculture sector in the country, adding that the construction of large water canals can be effective in increasing and expanding agricultural production and reducing the unemployment rate in the country.



## Arrest of former MPA outside court PHC stops arrest of Asad, Rangeez

**Humayun Khan**

PESHAWAR: A special bench of Chief Justice Peshawar High Court (PHC) Justice Muhammad Ibrahim Khan stopped arrested of former Speaker National Assembly Asad Qaiser and ex-MPA Provincial Assembly Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Rangeez Khan till 15th August, on Friday.

It is preeminent to mention that Chief Justice PHC Justice Muhammad Ibrahim held special bench following deferment of case by Justice Ijaz Anwar after arrest of ex-MPA Rangeez Khan outside High Court despite bail obtained from court on his holiday.

Moreover, Justice Ijaz Anwar ordered Capital City Police Officer (CCPO) but he didn't appear due to scheduled activities on occasion of police Martyrs Day while Senior Superintendent of Police Coordination appeared before PHC. Why former MPA has been arrested despite obtaining bail? Justice Ijaz Anwar inquired and deferred to Chief Justice PHC. After resuming the hearing Chief Justice Muhammad Ibrahim Khan remarked that how can police arrest accused after obtaining the bail from court and ordered to appear Rangeez Khan within 30 minutes before PHC.

Chief Justice observed that he was on holiday but reach the court on the subject matter. Advocate

General informed ex-MPA from outside the court, however, Chief Justice Ibrahim Khan inquired did it despite Rangeez Khan has obtained relief from court of law.

Chief Justice Muhammad Ibrahim Khan it is competent of court that an accused arrested after obtaining relief from court of law and added that how can police arrest any person? Advocate General argued that police don't arrested the ex-MPA, however, Chief Justice Ibrahim ordered to produce Rangeez Khan before arrest irrespective which agency has arrested him.

Advocate General Amir Javeed, Additional Advocate General Danyal Chamkani, Muhammad Nisar and Investigation Officer Anti-corruption Establishment Muhammad while petitioner's counsel Shah Faisal Ottomankhel, Arshad Ali and Sher Afzal Marwat advocates appeared while producing former MPA Rangeez Khan before PHC. In the meantime, Chief Justice observe why decision of this court (PHC) was bulldozed and added that couldn't compromise the dignity High Court. Investigation Officer Muhammad Naeem admitted that he wasn't aware about court's orders.

Subsequently, Chief Justice awaken Investigation Officer Anti-corruption that you shall must be aware about the contempt of court jurisdiction and proceedings while provide two paths for Muhammad Naeem to

choose apology or face COC proceedings. Investigation Officer apologized in the open court while Chief Justice ordered submission of apology with affidavit. Law of jungle will prevail if rule of law wasn't established and if such things appeared/happened than Advocate General along with others will lose their positions, Chief Justice Ibrahim Khan remarked.

Justice Muhammad Ibrahim Khan will leave the Chief Justice slot of PHC if he can't disseminate justice in his jurisdiction and added that if Rangeez Khan wasn't produced before PHC yesterday (on Friday) then he will resign from his position, Chief Justice observed. Chief Justice Muhammad Ibrahim Khan observed that he has sought for the first time that an accused is arrested despite court's orders because earlier it doesn't happen in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

During hearing Chief Justice annoyed Sher Afzal Marwat advocate multiple times intervention and observed that don't make point-scoring and added that let us to reach to a legal point in the case. Advocate General informed that former MPA has been arrested in another case, however, Chief Justice remarked that in such case court's orders are necessary for arrest of an accused while stopped arrest of petitioner in any case across Khyber Pakhtunkhwa till 15th August and directed to appear before concerned courts.

## Death toll in Sutlej boat accident rises to four

**F.P. Report**

OKARA: The death toll in a boat accident in the swollen Sutlej River at Head Sulemanki in Okara district rose to four on Friday, according to an update from the Provincial Disaster Management Authority (PDMA).

The ill-fated boat with approximately 45 people aboard capsized in the river on Thursday due to "unknown reason". Eight of the passengers on the boat belonged to Okara, while 32 hailed from Bahawalnagar. So far, 33 people — including women and children — have been rescued, the PDMA said, adding that the deceased included a five-year-old child.

According to an update issued by the PDMA's Okara district emergency operation centre on Friday, four bodies had been retrieved while eight people were missing. It said a rescue operation was under way to find the missing persons with nine rescue boats, three scuba sets and three army boats deployed. Resources from Pakpattan and Bahawalnagar districts were also participating in the operation.

Earlier, the PDMA said all those rescued were said to be out of danger, i.e. they do not have any life-threatening injuries. The authority also warned against unnecessary travel in areas around the swollen rivers, adding that Section 144 should be imposed in the areas to prevent further loss of life. According to the Flood Forecasting Division, Sutlej river is witnessing a low-level flood with 76,000 cusecs at Sulemanki headworks.

## PTI terminates eight Sindh MPs

KARACHI (INP): Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) on Friday terminated membership of its eight Sindh Assembly members over violation of party discipline.

The party members who were expelled by PTI included Bilal Ahmed, Kareem Bux Gabooli, Muhammad Ali Aziz, Rabia Azfar, Imran Ali Shah, Sanjay Gangwani, Sachanand Lakhwani, Sachal and Umar Omari. The termination notice stated: "You are served with this notice of termination of your basic membership from Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf. Your membership has been terminated effective immediately."

It should mentioned here that the termination notice was served three days after party issued show-cause notices to its eight disgruntled provincial assembly members for supporting Qumi Movement Pakistan (MQM-P) Rana Ansar's elevation to the opposition leader's office in Sindh Assembly. According to statement issued on microblogging website, the opposition party said that it had issued notices to MPs Asad Qaiser, Imran Ali Shah, Sanjay Gangwani, Sachanand Lakhwani, Sachal and Rabia Azfar Nizami for voting for Sindh opposition leader.

## Denmark beefs up borders security

COPENHAGEN (Agencies): After consecutive incidents of Quran desecration that instigated tensions within the country, Denmark's government said Friday it was taking steps to boost its domestic security and bar unwanted individuals from entering its territory.

The decision comes days after a similar unholy incident in Sweden. Officials in Denmark are fearing retaliation and revenge after anti-Islam activists in the country and Sweden desecrated and damaged several copies of the Holy Quran in recent months, sparking a fierce backlash from the Muslim world with demands on banning such acts.

"Authorities have concluded that it is necessary at this time to increase the focus on who is entering Denmark, in order to respond to the specific and current threats," the Danish justice ministry said in a statement late Thursday. Passengers arriving at Copenhagen Airport, even from within Europe's free-movement Schengen area, will face greater scrutiny in the form of random checks, police said.



ISLAMABAD: A police man on his way in front of a banner showing solidarity with the people of Kashmir. August 5 is being observed as a black day as it marks the completion of 3 years since people of Indian Occupied Kashmir were deprived of their fundamental human rights.

## Toshakhana trial: SC dismisses Imran's plea

ISLAMABAD (Agencies): The Supreme Court on Friday dismissed former premier Imran Khan's plea against trial proceedings pertaining to the Toshakhana criminal complaint after he withdrew the petition.

At the outset of the hearing, the apex court observed that the trial court could not reserve its verdict on the Toshakhana case until the IHC's gave its verdict. Justice Afridi summoned the ECP lawyer to the rostrum, upon which Imran's lawyer informed the court that the IHC had reserved its verdict yesterday on his client's pleas. The judge then asked, "Has the high court given a stay order?" to which Advocate Haris answered in the negative.

"The trial court cannot make a decision until a decision is made on the plea to transfer the case," Justice Afridi noted. At this, the ECP lawyer said Section 528 (sessions judge may withdraw cases from assistant sessions judge) of the Code of Criminal Procedure was "clear on this matter". Under the said section, "any sessions judge may withdraw any case from, or recall any case which he has made over to, any assistant sessions judge subordinate to him".

At one point during the hearing, Justice Afridi asked Advocate Haris about the current status of the pleas pending in the IHC, to which he responded that the IHC heard four pleas yesterday and that requests were also made during the arguments. "We have requested the high court that the case be transferred to any other judge," the PTI chief's lawyer said. He further informed the apex court of the IHC's dismissal of Imran's witnesses in the Toshakhana trial.

Here, Justice Afridi asked the lawyer, "Has the high court given you any interim relief?", to which the latter replied that the IHC "has not issued the interim order" yet. Advocate Haris further apprised the Supreme Court that the IHC would possibly issue its verdict on Friday on his pleas. At this point, Justice Afridi noted: "If both the respondents agree on the law, then we may write in the order".

However, the ECP lawyer asked the court to not include his consent in the written order, adding that Imran's lawyer "interprets the order in his own way".

Justice Afridi said that the matter had "now gone beyond the law and had come to the respondents' consent". However, Advocate Pervaiz lamented that Advocate Haris "misinterprets if I express consent". While dismissing the plea, the apex court observed that the application seeking the transfer of the case to another court was under way in the IHC. The court expressed the hope that the trial and the IHC will make decisions as per the law.

The Supreme Court observed that the said decision would not affect other pleas filed by Imran. The case, filed by ruling party lawmakers, is based on a criminal complaint filed by the ECP. The case alleges that Imran had "deliberately concealed" details of the gifts he retained from the Toshakhana — a repository where presents handed to government officials from foreign officials are kept — during his time as the prime minister and proceeds from their reported sales. According to Toshakhana rules, gifts/presents and other such materials received by persons to whom these rules apply shall be reported to the Cabinet Division.

Imran has faced a number of legal issues over his retention of gifts. The issue also led to his disqualification by the ECP. On Oct 21, 2022, the ECP concluded that the former premier had indeed made "false statements and incorrect declarations" regarding the gifts. The watchdog's order had said Imran stood disqualified under Article 63(1)(p) of the Constitution. Subsequently, the ECP had approached the Islamabad sessions court with a copy of the complaint, seeking proceedings against Imran under criminal law for allegedly misleading officials about the gifts he received from foreign dignitaries during his tenure as the prime minister.

On May 10, Imran had been indicted in the case, rejecting his petition to declare the Toshakhana case inadmissible. However, on July 4, the Islamabad High Court (IHC) had overturned the said ruling. On July 8, an Islamabad district and sessions court had declared the Toshakhana case against Imran to be maintainable. Subsequently, the former premier challenged the session court's verdict in the IHC.

## Senate okays bill to setup counter financing authority

ISLAMABAD (Agencies): Senate Friday approved a bill establishing counter-financing authority, seeking to keep Pakistan off the Financial Action Task Force's (FATF) grey list.

The bill titled 'National Anti-Money Laundering and Counter Financing of Terrorism Authority Bill' was approved with 28 for and eight against, with strong sloganeering from the opposition benches. Not only did the opposition parties — Jamaat-e-Islami (JI) and the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) — express concerns, but ruling parties' lawmakers Raza Rabbani, Tahir Bizenjo, and Kamran Murtaza also opposed it.

They maintained that hasty legislation would have far-reaching effects and demanded that lawmakers be given time to review the bills. In her defence, Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Hina Rabbani Khar — who moved the bill in the upper house — said the bill has already been approved in the National Assembly.

"Under this bill, we will establish an authority [to counter terror financing]," she said, with Pakistan Peoples Party leader Yousaf Raza Gillani saying the legislation was of crucial importance.

Minister for Finance and Revenue Ishaq Dar told the house that the federal government had given the FATF its future plan when it removed Pakistan from its grey list — on ways to counter terror financing. Pakistan was listed in 2018 because of "strategic counter-terrorist financing-related deficiencies".

After the government took seriously legislated, the international money laundering watchdog removed the nation from the grey list that warrants increased surveillance for terrorism financing. PTI Senator Mohsin Aziz said it is impossible for lawmakers to read 12 bills in a day and demanded that they "not be made a rubber stamp legislature". "The entire world is making fun of us," he said.

In her speech on the floor of the National Assembly a day earlier, the state minister said the legislation was of immense importance and, if properly enforced and implemented, it would make sure that Pakistan did not see the FATF grey list again. Khar said the bill envisages the establishment of a National Anti-Money Laundering and Counter Financing of Terrorism Authority. She said the chairman of the authority would be appointed by the prime minister.

She said the authority would comprise the finance secretary, foreign affairs secretary, interior secretary, State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) governor, Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan chairman, National Accountability Bureau (NAB) chairman, Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) DG, Anti-Narcotics Force DG, Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) chairman, Financial Monitoring Unit DG, NACTA national coordinator and the chief secretaries of provinces.

## Kashmiris to observe Youm-e-Istehsal today

**F.P. Report**

ISLAMABAD: Kashmiris on the both sides of the Line of Control (LoC) and world over will observe Youm-e-Istehsaal tomorrow (Saturday) to send a clear message to New Delhi government that Kashmiris outrightly reject actions taken by Modi-led Indian government on August 5, 2019 and illegal occupation of their homeland.

Scores of events including seminars, protest rallies, screening video documentaries, photo exhibitions exposing Indian brutalities on Kashmiri people, have been organized across the country by the Ministry of Kashmir Affairs and Gilgit Baltistan in collaboration with the provincial governments to pay homage to the Kashmiris and condemn the Indian illegal occupation on Jammu and Kashmir.

One Minute silence will be observed at 9:00 am in support of Kashmiris who were martyred in the freedom struggle. In the Federal Capital Islamabad, a walk will be held at Constitution Avenue, which will start from Foreign Office and culminate at D-Chowk, where Advisor on Kashmir Affairs Qamar Zaman Kaira and leadership of APHC Azad Kashmir chapter will address the participants.

## Mosques shut after riots near India's capital

NEW DELHI (Agencies): Most mosques were shut for Friday prayers in an important business hub on the outskirts of India's capital after six people were killed in sectarian riots. Police were deployed in large numbers outside several mosques in Gurugram — a satellite city of New Delhi and a key business centre where Nokia, Samsung and other multinationals have their Indian headquarters.

Tensions have been high in the area since Monday when mobs hurled stones at a Hindu religious procession and set cars alight in the pre-

dominantly Muslim district of Nuh nearby. An armed mob then attacked a mosque in Gurugram on early Tuesday, killing a cleric in apparent retaliation, while several shops and small restaurants were vandalised or torched by mobs chanting Hindu religious slogans. No major instances of violence have been reported since Tuesday night.

Some mosques in Gurugram did allow small groups to assemble for Friday afternoon prayers — the most important of the week for Muslims. But five of the city's main Muslim

houses of worship visited by AFP were shut, with their entries heavily barricaded by police. Officers said there was no order from authorities to shut mosques and that local Muslim leaders had appealed to worshippers to pray at home in view of the tensions.

"Police are just ensuring that the security arrangements are proper," senior police officer Varun Kumar Dahiya told reporters. Around 500,000 Muslims live in Gurugram, which has also been the site of a long-running dispute over access to worship.



PESHAWAR: Corps Commander Hassan Azhar Hayat presenting bouquet to police official during martyr day ceremony.

## PM inaugurates

(Continued from Page 1)

He said Pakistan was a great place for promoting tourism and cultural heritage. He instructed his Advisor on Tourism Awn Chaudhry to do maximum efforts to promote tourism, though the government was about to complete its term very soon.

Prime Minister Shehbaz instructed the advisors as well as the government officers not to interact merely with their counterparts but also those from other countries which had excelled in tourism, cultural heritage and other fields. "Allah Almighty blessed our country with great natural resources of scenic beauty all over Northern Areas, which can be converted into a great opportunity," he remarked.

In his address, Advisor to Prime Minister of Pakistan on Tourism and Sports Awn Chaudhry said to promote the soft image of the country worldwide,

the PTDC had developed a well-coordinated strategic approach for best utilization of the available resources with focus on building the image of Pakistan as one of most tourist friendly countries in Asia. He said the launching of Tourism Brand for Pakistan was an important step in achieving the goal. The name "SALAM PAK-ISTAN" is selected as Tourism Brand for Pakistan.

The objectives of Tourism Brand of Pakistan include building the image and perception of Pakistan as a safe, secure, friendly and hospitable nation, promoting the country as an attractive tourist destination, especially for international tourists, projecting recreational, mountaineering, adventure, cultural, religious, historical, cuisine, geographical and other tourism related aspects of Pakistan and highlighting diversities of

the provinces, regions, cities etc., variety of food, accommodation, travel, communication and infrastructure facilities etc.

The portal contains information about the top 20 tourist destinations of Pakistan, including K2, Gwadar, Ziarat Valley, Uch Sharif, Deosai National Park, Kalash Valley, Takht Bhai, Hingol National Park, Shandur Pass, Kambhar Lake, Fairy Meadows, Ratti Gali, Lahore Fort, Makli Graveyard, Derawar Fort, Rohtas Fort, Kumrat Valley, Hunza Valley and Mohenjodaro.

It guides the tourists about the beaches and waterfalls, nature and landscape, festivals, spiritual tourism and eco-tourism. Minister of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts of Iran Sayyed Ezzatullah Zarghami and Ambassador of Iran Reza Amiri Moghaddam and diplomats from different countries also attended the ceremony.