

#### Four samples test positive

ISLAMABAD (APP): Four environmental samples collected in the month of August have tested positive for poliovirus. The virus was isolated from a sewage sample collected from Shaheen Muslim Town in Peshawar on August 17, from two samples collected from two tributaries of Naray Khuwar in Peshawar on August 22, and from a sample collected from a site in Karachi Keamari on August 17, Pakistan Polio Laboratory at the National Institute of Health said.



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# Crackdown on smuggling bringing positive outcomes, being welcomed by neighboring countries: PM

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar on Thursday said that the crackdown by the government on smuggling during the last 48 hours brought positive outcomes and was also welcomed by the authorities of neighboring countries.

The prime minister, in a meeting with a delegation of Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry, said that an operation against the smuggling had been launched across the country, particularly in the border areas. He said the consultation was underway to promote trade with neighboring countries which had also welcomed the government's crackdown against smuggling.

He said the resolution of business community's problems was among the government's priorities.

The prime minister welcomed the proposals by the delegation and assured implementation of the practicable ones.

He told the delegation that after assuming the office, he interacted with the business community and listened to their issues.

He appreciated the business community's role for economic development and provision of job opportuni-

ties. Prime Minister Kakar said the government was reforming the taxation system through digitalisation.

He said the economic development was not possible unless the tax collection was increased.

He said the government would bring in the economic stability by winning confidence of traders, industrialists and investors.

The reformation process in the power sector was also going on and action was being taken against those involved in the power theft.

The prime minister said that consultation with all the stakeholders was essential for issues resolution and the Commerce Ministry would regularly seek suggestions from the chambers.

He directed the authorities concerned to submit a report on expansion of FBR's Point of Sales system besides improving the performance of commercial attaches in Pakistan's diplomatic missions.

The prime minister also instructed the Capital Development Authority to improve its working and include the business community in the consultation process.

Besides, the CDA should also digitize the provision of facilities to the citizens as well as the land record.

Federal Secretaries of commerce and industries, chairmen of FBR and CDA attended the meeting.

Headed by the ICCI President Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari, the delegation congratulated the prime minister on assuming the office.

They apprised the prime minister of the issues faced by the traders community and put forward their suggestions. The prime minister welcomed the suggestions and assured the resolution of their issues.

**PM praises forces for thwarting attack on military posts in Chitral:** Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar on Thursday praised the armed forces for thwarting a terrorist attack on military posts near the Pak-Afghan border in Chitral.

"Thanks to our alert forces, the terrorist attack on military posts near the Pak-Afghan border in Chitral, was repelled with heavy casualties on the terrorist side," he said in his social media post on X, formerly twitter.

He also expressed sorrow over the loss of four brave soldiers who embraced Shahadat in the incident.

"Our resolve to eradicate terrorism remains unshaken, and all our citizens stand firm with us," he added.

# Prolonged detention of PTI leaders: IHC indicts DC, three others in contempt case

ISLAMABAD (NNI): The Islamabad High Court on Thursday indicted the Deputy Commissioner (DC) and the SSP operations for the contempt of court for prolonging detention of PTI leaders Shehryar Afridi and Shandana Gulzar under the Maintenance of Public Order (MPO) ordinance.

Justice Babar Sattar indicted DC Irfan Nawaz Memon, Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Operations Jamil Zafar, Superintendent of Police (SP) Farooq Buttar and Station House Officer Nasir Manzoor.

The officials, on the occasion, submitted to the court their replies in the case. Justice Sattar remarked that today charges were to be framed.

During the hearing, the judge asked the officials whether they were now aware of the charges against them. Both the deputy commissioner and the SSP pleaded not guilty.

When the judge asked them whether they wanted to say something in their defence, the SSP replied that he wanted some time from the court. A day ago the IHC stripped Islamabad's district magistrate of his powers to detain suspects under the MPO while hearing the contempt of court petitions.

The PTI leaders had been arrested by police in connection with the May 9 violence. On Aug 16, the IHC ordered Afridi and Gulzar to be released and decided to indict the DC and SSP for contempt of

court after deeming their responses to court as "unsatisfactory".

On Tuesday, the IHC had also issued show-cause notices to the city police chief, chief commissioner and other police officials for "criminal contempt of court for abuse of authority to obstruct dispensation of justice and cause diversion to the course of justice".

Today (Thursday), as proceedings to indict DC Memon began, the official furnished an unconditional apology and requested the IHC to not indict him.

The DC and the three other officers denied the charge after they were indicted, with SSP Zafar seeking time to defend himself.

At the outset of the hearing, the advocate general presented his arguments against indicting the officers. He urged the IHC to not indict them as the "officers have furnished an unconditional apology".

To this, Justice Sattar said, "How can we not indict them? The matter of contempt of court was under way here yet you issued an MPO order. The court rejected the advocate general's plea and initiated the indictment proceedings.

Justice Sattar, while addressing DC Memon, said, "If you are sentenced, you will be sent to jail at the most. "It is a six-month sentence. You may also live in jail and see how those who you send to jail live there," he remarked.

The DC replied, "The aim of this [detention] order was not to

violate the court order at all." He then furnished an unconditional apology to the court, which was rejected. Subsequently, DC Memon's indictment order was read out aloud and he was indicted.

Then, the proceedings to indict SSP Zafar for the same charge were initiated. Justice Sattar read out aloud the SSP's indictment order and he was charged with the offence, which he denied. At this, the IHC asked him if he wished to defend himself, for which he sought more time from the court. SP Buttar and SHO Manzoor were also indicted for the contempt.

Afridi was first arrested on May 16 from his Islamabad residence under Section 3 of the MPO Ordinance, 1960. He was rearrested on May 30 under the same section soon after his release from prison.

On July 31, the Lahore High Court's Rawalpindi bench granted Afridi bail but was arrested again a few days later by the Rawalpindi police soon after his release from Adiala jail.

A petition was subsequently filed by his lawyer in the IHC calling for Afridi's release and for the MPO order to be set aside.

Meanwhile, Gulzar was allegedly "abducted" by the Islamabad police on Aug 9.

A petition was filed by her mother in the IHC on the grounds of illegal arrest and violation of Articles 4, 9, 10A and 14 of the Constitution, calling for police to produce her daughter in court.

# Taliban using US weapons abandoned by Afghan army in attacks on Pakistan: US

--John Kirby says ready to work with Islamabad to mitigate threat from Afghan border

WASHINGTON (NNI): The United States has said that it is ready to work with Pakistan to counter the threat it faced from Afghanistan border, strongly rejecting suggestions that terrorists are using weapons left behind by American forces.

US National Security Council spokesman John Kirby reacted sharply to the suggestion that military equipment left by American forces in Afghanistan fell into the hands of militants and created security problems for countries in the region including Pakistan.

However, the spokesperson said that Washington would work with Pakistan to counter the threat it faced from Afghanistan border.

The US reaction came amid rising incidents of cross-border terrorist attacks inside Pakistan from Afghanistan. In the latest attack on Wednesday, Pakistan troops repelled a cross-border raid from Afghanistan by "hundreds" of Taliban militants.

The ensuing four-hour intense gunbattle left behind 12 terrorists dead and four Pakistani soldiers martyred. At a briefing in Washington, US NSC Coordinator for Strategic Communications John Kirby discussed Biden-Harris Administration goals and priorities at the upcoming G20 Leaders' Summit and US-ASEAN and East Asia Summits.

At one point, a journalist said, "Groups like ISIS, Al-Qaeda, and Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan, many oth-

ers, also gained control of the military equipment, about \$7 billion, left behind by American forces."

John Kirby interrupted him with "whoa, whoa, whoa, say that last part again?" When the journalist said that militants gained the control of the military equipment left behind by American forces in Afghanistan, Kirby stopped him there: "Just let me stop you right there."

He then vociferously rejected the notion that the US abandoned military hardware in Afghanistan. "There was no equipment left behind by American forces. There was a small amount of equipment and some aircraft at the airport when we finished our evacuation efforts, but they were all rendered unusable as we left. In fact, the only thing that we left -- we left that the Taliban could take advantage of was some airport mechanic capabilities: tow trucks and trucks with ladders on them, and that kind of things; I think some firefighting equipment."

Kirby did admit that military equipment fell into the hands of militants saying "the equipment that you're talking about, and I don't mean to get pugilistic here, but it's an important point -- the equipment that people are saying the Americans left behind, that was equipment that was transferred well in advance of our departure to the Afghan National Security Forces.

It belonged to the Afghan National

Security Forces, because that was part of the mission that our troops were involved in Afghanistan to do in the first place, which was to train up and to support Afghan national security forces as they took charge of security in their country. And they needed equipment to do that, and so there -- yeah, there was turnover of American equipment to them."

Kirby said that Afghan forces abandoned that equipment, not the United States. "Sorry to interrupt you, but that's an important point, and I wanted to make sure I made that," he said. In response to another question about President Biden's remarks that Pakistan is the most dangerous country with the nuclear weapons, John Kirby said the Biden administration would work with Pakistan to mitigate threat from Afghanistan border.

"We know that the Pakistani people continue to suffer the threat from terrorism, particularly along that border, that border with Afghanistan. And we're going to continue to work with Pakistan -- to the degree that they're comfortable with, of course -- to help address those kinds of security threats to their own people and to their own borders because it's not an insignificant threat. There's a -- there is a lot of danger that's still posed to the Pakistani people, and the President understands that, and he's committed to continue to work with Pakistan."

# The Frontier Post

#### Five TTP terrorists killed

QUETTA (NNI): Another five terrorists belonging to outlawed Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan were killed in an operation carried out by law-enforcement agencies in Quetta suburbs. The latest action came a day after a major clash between Army soldiers and scores of TTP terrorists in Chitral in which 122 attackers were killed while four troops were also martyred.



ISLAMABAD: A delegation of Bohra community led by Shahzada Hussain Burhanuddin called on caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar.

## Corps Commanders' Conference vows to deal all terrorists with full might



ISLAMABAD (PPI): Chief of Army Staff (COAS) General Syed Asim Munir Thursday presided over the 259th Corps Commanders' Conference (CCC) at General Head Quarters (GHQ) in Rawalpindi.

Forum resolved that all terrorists, their facilitators and abettors, working at the behest of hostile forces to destabilise Pakistan will be dealt with full might of the state. The participants reiterated Pakistan Army's resolve to defend the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Pakistan against all kinds of direct and indirect threats.

A declaration issued by Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) said, "Forum paid rich tribute to the supreme sacrifices of Shuhadas including officers and men of the Armed Forces, Law Enforcement Agencies and Citizens who laid their lives for the safety, security and territorial integrity of the country.

Fateha was offered for the martyrs and it was reiterated that the State of Pakistan and Armed Forces will continue to hold the Shuhadas and their families in highest esteem, ever honoring them with utmost respect and dignity.

Commemoration of Defence and Martyrs Day on 6 September across the country by all segments of the society was appreciated for which the Armed Forces of Pakistan remain ever thankful to our proud nation.

Forum re-affirmed that inimical propagandists' desperate attempts to cause wedge between the state institutions and public are indicative of their mounting desperation and will only result in more humiliation of such elements, InshaAllah. Participants were briefed on prevalent geo-strategic environment, challenges to national security and own strategy in response to evolving threat.

The need for speedy

development of economic potential of Newly Merged Districts (NMDs) and Border Districts of Balochistan for sustainable peace and growth was also emphasised.

COAS stressed on maintaining high standards of professionalism and motivation during operations and achieving excellence during training of the formations.

He commended the commanders for their constant focus on the wellbeing of their soldiers and maintenance of morale which constituted the foundation of Army's operational readiness.

Forum reiterated to continue full support of ongoing efforts in uplifting the socioeconomic growth under the umbrella of Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC) and wholeheartedly assisting the government in curbing all illegal activities which hamper economic stability, growth and investors' confidence."

## SCBA announces countrywide strike on Sep 14

ISLAMABAD (PPI): The Supreme Court Bar Association of Pakistan (SCBA) on Thursday announced a nationwide strike on September 14 for the supremacy of the Constitution, the rule of law and the protection of fundamental rights in Pakistan. The SCBA directed the bar councils to hold a peaceful protest on September 14 across the country. It said that there will be protests for the supremacy of the Constitution, the rule of law and the protection of fundamental rights in Pakistan.

Earlier, the 25th Executive Committee of the Supreme Court Bar Association organised the 'All Pakistan Lawyers Convention', where concerns surrounding the country's constitutional violations from the institutes took centre stage.

Lawyers from across the nation congregated, emphasising their commitment to the rule of law, the constitution, and the rights of Pakistan's citizens.

The Lawyers Convention, held in the backdrop of mounting socio-political issues, concluded with the unanimous passing of several resolutions, reflecting the collective will of the legal fraternity. Foremost amongst the resolutions was the insistence that elections should adhere to the constitution, conducted within the stipulated 90 days post the dissolution of the assemblies.

The resolution underscored lawyers as staunch defenders of not only the Constitution but also the fundamental rights and civil liberties of the populace.

## IHC dismisses Parvez Elahi's contempt of court petition

ISLAMABAD (NNI): The Islamabad High Court has dismissed the contempt of court petition filed by PTI president and former Punjab chief minister Parvez Elahi.

Justice Tariq Mehmood Jahangiri of IHC heard the contempt petition pertaining to the re-arrest of Elahi. The Islamabad IGP, the DC, the SSP Operations, the Shalimar police station SHO and others were made parties in the petition.

At the beginning of the hearing, the court inquired whether Elahi was released? The lawyer said Elahi was arrested near the police lines after being released. On this, the court asked "what is the difference between not releasing Elahi or arresting him again in another case." The court did not issue any order that he could not be arrested in another case, the judge said. It would be a contempt of court if Elahi was not released despite the court order, the judge remarked. Elahi's lawyer said the Lahore High Court (LHC) had ordered not to arrest him in any case. The court said the contempt of court petition should be filed in the LHC.

## Imran, Qureshi's bail pleas in cipher case fixed for hearing on Sept 9

ISLAMABAD (NNI): The hearing on the bail petitions filed by former premier and PTI Chairman Imran Khan and Vice Chairman Shah Mehmood Qureshi in the cipher leaking case registered under the Official Secrets Act has been adjourned till Sept 9. Since Special Court Judge Abul Hasnat Zulqarnain is on leave, the case hearing was adjourned on Thursday without any proceedings. The judge is on leave till September 8.

The PTI lawyers appeared in the court. They requested the court staff to fix their petitions for Sept 9. But the staff told them that Judge Zulqarnain would be back on duty on Monday (Sept 11) and it would be better if their petition was fixed for Monday. But the PTI lawyer said that if the judge was available on Saturday (Sept 9), they would give their arguments. So, on the PTI lawyers' insistence, the court staff fixed their pleas for Sept 9.

### Bushra Bibi's interim bail in Toshakhana case extended

ISLAMABAD (PPI): Interim bail of PTI Chairman's wife Bushra Bibi has been extended in the Toshakhana case.

Additional Sessions Judge Tahir Abbas Supra conducted hearing of Toshakhana case against Bushra Bibi at the District and Sessions Court Islamabad on Thursday.

Bushra Bibi appeared in the court along with

lawyers Salman Safdar, Intizar Panjotha and Naeem Panjotha. On this occasion, the investigating officer stated in the court that he wanted arrest of the former first lady. The investigation officer said that Bushra Bibi's audio had been sent to FIA for forensics. Petitioner's lawyer said they were called and kept sitting for three hours.

**IHC removes objections on Imran Khan's petition:** The Islamabad High Court (IHC) on Thursday removed the objections of registrar office against the petition seeking to stay arrest of Chairman PTI in other cases and instructed to fix the case for hearing after the summer vacations. Chief Justice Aamer Farooq heard the

petitions of former Prime Minister Imran Khan along with the objections of registrar office. Petitioner's lawyer Salaman Safdar Advocate prayed the court to stop the National Accountability Bureau (NAB), Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) and Police from arresting his client in other cases.



OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER

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**NOTICE INVITING E- BIDDING.**

**(Single Stage Single Envelope Procedure)**

Irrigation Department Govt. of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Intends to Invite Electronic Bids on the basis of Single Stage Single Envelope System from the Government Firms/Contractors enlisted with Irrigation Department who have renewed their Enlistment and valid P.E.C License in the relevant category for the following works.

Sl. No.	Name of work	E/Cost (Rs in M)	02% E/M (Rs in M)	Required Category Code of Specialization
Annual Maintenance & Operation of Irrigation works within the jurisdiction of Dir Irrigation Division Dir Lower for the year 2023-24.				
1	AM&R to Flood and Drainage Control works within the Jurisdiction of Balambat Irrigation Division (2023-24).	2.00	44000/-	C-6 PK-6& Above CE-04
2	Repair to Canal Section and other allied structures along Darora Jughabanji Irrigation Scheme District Dir Upper. 2023-24	2.00	44000/-	C-6 PK-6& Above CE-04
3	Repair to Canal Section and other allied structures along Gandigar Irrigation Scheme District Dir Upper 2023-24	2.00	44000/-	C-6 PK-6& Above CE-04
4	Repair to Canal Section and othr allied structures along Gonorai Irrigation Scheme District Dir Upper 2023-24.	1.00	21250/-	C-6 PK-6& Above CE-04

**Last date & time for submission of bids is 26-09-2023 at 1200 hours will be opened on the same date at 12.30 hours.**

**TERMS AND CONDITIONS:**

- 1 Bid Soliciting Documents Containing instructions to Bidders, terms and conditions, advertisement for Notice Inviting Bids and required forms to be filled by the bidders can be downloaded from the official website of Irrigation Department Khyber Pakhtunkhwa ([www.irrigation.gkp.pk](http://www.irrigation.gkp.pk)).
- 2 The bidder should submit their E-bid as per KPPRA Notification No.S.R.O.(14)/vol :1-24/2021-22, dated 10-05-2022.
- 3 All Bidders are required to have valid Registration with Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Revenue Authority established under the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Finance Act 2018 (Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Act, XXI of 2013).
- 4 The Competent Authority reserves the right to Accept/Reject any or all bids at any time prior to acceptance of a bid as per Para 47(i) of KPPRA Rules 2014 by assigning cogent reason.
- 5 The interested Firms/Contractors may obtain clarification regarding bid solicitation documents during office hours on any working day from the office of the Executive Engineer, Dir Irrigation Division, Timergara.
- 6 Venue of Bids opening is office of the Superintending Engineer, Swat Irrigation Circle, Saidu Sharif Swat, however, the Contractors must prepared their CDR's i.e 2% Earnest Money and Additional Security (if any) in shape of call deposits only, for all of the above mentioned works in the name of the Executive Engineer, Dir Irrigation Division, Timergara and should ensure its submission with their bids. In case of failure their bids would be rejected and punitive action should be initiated against the defaulter as per KPPRA Act/Rules.
- 7 In case of identical lowest responsive bids the successful bidder would be decided through Toss.

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# Minister chairs monthly performance meeting

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: A high-level meeting on monthly performance and achievement review and reforms in the department under the Chairmanship of the Caretaker Minister for Excise, Revenue and Finance Ahmed Rasool Bangash held here on Thursday.

Secretary Excise, DG Excise and all regional directors and officers participated in the meeting. In the meeting, the performance of all regional and district excise offices for two months (August and July)

of the fiscal year 2023-24 was reviewed. A detailed briefing was also given during the meeting about the Excise Department's revenue recovery with Caretaker Minister Ahmed Rasool Bangash directing all Excise Officers to pay special attention to timely and 100% revenue recovery. The role of the Excise Department is very important in the economic stability of the province, said the Caretaker Minister, Excise, Treasury, Revenue, Caretaker Finance and Excise Minister instructed

all officers to ensure hard-earned recovery. He said, the punishment and punishment Act will be enforced in the Excise Department and corruption, incompetence and neglect of duty will not be tolerated under any circumstances. Any officer who does not work will be punished, and those who work will be rewarded, the Provincial Caretaker Minister told the meeting. According to the law, a special campaign should be launched against major tax evasion across the province, said caretaker

minister Ahmed Rasool Bangash. "We have to work as a team, the doors of my office are open for all officers," the Caretaker Minister added. All Regional Officers should intensify their efforts to ensure the achievement of the goals in time, the Caretaker Minister said. Taxpayers are requested to support the Excise Department in paying taxes and play their role in the development of the province, Caretaker Minister said during the meeting.



PESHAWAR: Chief Secretary Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Nadeem Aslam Chaudhry presiding over a meeting of Provincial Selection Board.

## PHC orders Agri varsity to grant classes to female lecturer

Humayun Khan

PESHAWAR: A divisional bench of Peshawar High Court (PHC) comprising of Justice Ijaz Anwar and Justice Shakeel Ahmad ordered Agriculture University Peshawar to grant classes to female visiting lecturer, on Thursday.

The counsel Changeez Khan Yousafzai advocate appeared before court while Agriculture University's lawyer argued that the petitioner is defaulter of hostel fees.

However, Changeez Khan advocate argued that the petitioner had submitted dues and record is available but varsity's administration didn't grant visiting classes.

Justice Shakeel Ahmad observed that the current status of universities caused by nepotism and favoritism in the institution while remarked that discrimination can't be tolerated. He further ordered if classes are granted to other visiting faculty then also provide to the petitioner.

PHC ordered Agriculture University to grant classes to female visiting lecturer and settle the issue with mutual consultation.

## Afghan's induction in KP police being probed

PESHAWAR (APP): The Internal Accountability of Enquiry Department, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa police has sought the record of induction of an alleged Afghan national in provincial police force.

The police department on Thursday said the record of the induction of an alleged Afghan national has been handed over to the Internal Accountability Department for scrutiny.

The inquiry was initiated after the induction of an Afghan national named Abn e Ameen was reported into the KP police force.

The indicted constable was alleged of being an Afghan national and acquiring Computerized National Identity Card (CNIC) of Pakistan through illegal means before his induction in KP police.

The alleged Afghani constable was nowadays receiving training at Kohat Police Training Center.

## Smuggling gang held

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Police busted intra-provincial smuggling gang while arrested two alleged women culprits and recovered 10 kilograms hashish from their possession in the premises of Badabheir police station, on Thursday.

Deputy Superintendent of Police (DSP) Badabheir circle Zia Ullah Khan deployed squad including women personnel on intelligence reports under supervision of Station House Officer Nasir Khattak on Afridi road.

The alleged smugglers women were identified as wife of Fazal Akbar and wife of Fazal Ullah.

The alleged culprits confessed their crimes during interrogation.

## 4 kg hashish seized

PESHAWAR (APP): Gulberg Police Station along with ladies police foiled a drug smuggling operation and arrested two suspects, including a woman here on Thursday. The arrested woman belongs to Hangu while the man belongs to Khyber district, Police said. The alleged accused are related to an organized drug trafficking network, Police said. The alleged accused were smuggling drugs through a vehicle and were arrested near Swati Pathak, Peshawar Cantt. Police recovered four kilograms of hashish from the suspects during the operation. Police have registered a case against the accused and started investigation.

# ICS Teaching Staff Cabinet organized farewell meeting

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: A heartfelt farewell meeting of the Cabinet Teaching Staff Association (TSA) Islamia Collegiate School was convened on September 07, 2023. The meeting, marked by a sense of appreciation and camaraderie, was presided over by Dr. Inayat-Ur-Rahman, the president of TSA, ICS.

All the cabinet members pay gratitude and admiration for the tireless efforts and dedication displayed by president of TSA, ICS.

The Secretary General Kafeel Ahmed Khalil and



the members of the association were effusive in their praise for President Dr. Inayat-Ur-Rahman's commitment to fostering a conducive and progressive environment for the teaching staff. They collectively

paid tribute to his unwavering leadership and vision.

As a token of appreciation and recognition, the principal of Islamia Collegiate School presented President Dr. Inayat-Ur-Rahman with a commemorative shield, symbolizing the high regard and esteem in which he is held by the entire teaching staff community.

This farewell meeting not only highlighted the remarkable achievements.

the members of the association were effusive in their praise for President Dr. Inayat-Ur-Rahman's commitment to fostering a conducive and progressive environment for the teaching staff. They collectively

# Positive reforms ensure sustainability and inclusivity of health card project

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: The Advisor to Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa on Health, Population Welfare, and Labor, Riaz Anwar, has emphasized that the Health Card Project is not being discontinued; instead, it is being revamped to better serve the economically disadvantaged populations. This critical initiative, aimed at ensuring healthcare access for all, has undergone substantial changes to enhance its sustainability. After six months of meticulous deliberation, the Health Department has formulated a proposal for the sustainable future of the Sehat Card, which received approval during the 10th Meeting of the Cabinet. This announcement was made during a media briefing held at the Itla'a Cell, Civil Secretariat Peshawar, where Riaz Anwar was joined by Health Secretary Mahmood Aslam, Chief Executive of the Health Card, Riyaz Tanoli, and Director of Health Card, Ijaz Khan.

Riaz Anwar stated that the cost of the Health Card Project had been steadily increasing year by year, with annual expenditures exceeding 42 billion rupees in the previous fiscal year. This fiscal burden, coupled

with the challenging economic situation, necessitated crucial modifications to make the project more accessible to the impoverished while ensuring its sustainability.

In line with the directives of Chief Minister Muhammad Azam Khan, the Health Department dedicated six months of continuous effort to devise recommendations for reform, ensuring uninterrupted access to healthcare for the province's impoverished populace. Under the reformed structure, Health Card facilities will be closely integrated with the Benazir Income Support Program and NADRA system. This means that free healthcare services will continue to be available for the poor and the middle class, while those with greater means will contribute a proportionate share of the costs.

The Benazir Income Support Program's five categories will determine the level of healthcare coverage. Categories 1, 2, and 3 will enjoy completely free health facilities, while categories 4 and 5 will receive services at a subsidized rate. Emergency services will remain free for all.

The goal of these reforms is to enhance transparency and ensure uninterrupted healthcare services for the economically disadvantaged, while securing sustainability of the Health Card Project.

Riaz Anwar further noted that the reforms would enable continued free healthcare services in public sector hospitals, while enhancing transparency in the private sector healthcare system.

Additionally, certain services, including C-section, tonsillectomy, gallbladder surgery, appendix

surgery, angiography, cataract surgery, and septoplasty, will be exclusively available in public sector hospitals.

Regarding the financial impact, Health Secretary Mahmood Aslam Wazir revealed that these reforms are projected to result in annual savings of approximately 11.5 billion rupees. He stressed that all structural changes have been meticulously executed within the legal framework to ensure the sustainability of the Health Card Project.

Riaz Khan Tanoli, Chief Executive Officer of the Sehat Card Project said that six months of relentless effort of the Health Department had fortified the project which ensures that the Health Card Project can effectively cover the underprivileged and continue to provide free healthcare services in an improved manner.

# Pesco launched operation against electricity theft

PESHAWAR (APP): On the instructions of the Prime Minister and the Minister of Energy, the operation against electricity theft has been launched by PESCO here on Thursday.

CEO PESCO Engineer Faisal Rabi has issued crackdown instructions against electricity theft. Electricity theft is the main cause of increasing electricity problems in the country, a spokesperson PESCO said. People have to bear the loss of electricity theft, spokesperson PESCO said. Formation of task forces by PESCO to eliminate power theft, he added.

Pesco task forces are taking action against electricity theft in the respective areas, the Spokesperson informed. Heavy fines and FIRs are also being registered against electricity thieves, he said.

In this connection a Task Force was also constituted. He said KP government's decision of operation against electricity theft and recovery of arrears.

KP Home Department's announcement of Task Force, District and Tehsil enforcement committees' reorganization continues with all the Committees will be established at district and tehsil level, a notification issued here said.

A grand operation will be conducted against electricity theft and illegal gang mafia and the Task force and committees will play a role in stopping electricity theft and recovery of arrears.

The head of the task

force at the provincial level will be the interior secretary, said the notification issued by the Chief Secretary Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

The task force includes Secretary Energy, Secretary Industries, Additional IG Special Branch and Divisional Commissioners. Illegal electricity connections will be removed with the help of police, besides the electricity theft reporting cell will be established in the Assistant Commissioner's Office with dedicated telephone lines so as to receive information from Public about culprits.

Names of the feeder along with losses and details about industrial, commercial, connections before launching of operation, enforcement teams comprising of local administration, police, concerned XEN, M&T Division of PESCO will ensure combining of industrial and commercial connection especially targeting high loss feeders (TEC), where-in electricity theft is detected. FIR will be registered against the culprit under relevant law (Electricity Act) with Pesco representatives will give an application and the police station will register FIR.

On spot removal of equipment to be ensured at the site of electricity theft and concerned XEN will also ensure that electricity supply is not resumed at the site illegally.

Police will provide necessary security to the field teams to avoid any mishap

or law and order situation.

Police to complete investigation of FIR registered by enforcement team within 14 days and submit a copy of Callen, report to REC.

Where departmental collusion is identified during the investigation, or any government officials involvement is identified, the same will be reported by DEC to Provincial Task Force as well as to the Chief PESCO for taking disciplinary action.

DEC will submit a weekly progress report to the Secretaries Home, Energy and Power Department, Head of Provincial Task Force on the specified format. The Secretary Home and TAs department will arrange bi-weekly meetings of the PTF to review the progress.

Provincial Govt and PESCO will launch a public awareness campaign on electricity theft through print and electronic media before launching of operation. The CEO Office will issue detailed instructions to its lower formations about the process.

# PHC adjourns hearing in IK disqualification

Humayun Khan

PESHAWAR: A divisional bench of Peshawar High Court (PHC) comprised of Justice SM Attique Shah and Justice Waqar Ahmad adjourned hearing in case seeking disqualification of former Prime Minister due to unavailability of Imran Khan lawyer, on Thursday.

The counsel Qazi Jawad Advocate informed PHC that Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Chairman's lawyer Qazi Muhammad Anwar didn't available and requested for adjournment

of the hearing in the case.

It is worthy to mention that Awami National Party (ANP) Khyber Pakhtunkhwa president Aimal Wali Khan filed writ petition against PTI chairman Imran Khan seeking his disqualification for didn't showing Tosha Khana gifts in income tax returns.

The petition argued that Imran Khan has covered-up facts regarding his wealth while he isn't Sadiq (truthful) and Amin (trustworthy). Meanwhile, the same bench ordered police to submit record of cases registered against former Member Provincial Assembly Zahir Shah Toru within three days and adjourned further hearing in this regard.

Additional Advocate General Farooq Afridi and petitioner's counsel Shah Faisal Ottomankhel appeared before PHC during hearing to argue the case.

PHC told that several departments had submitted report in this regard but police didn't admitted the record and requested for provision of time while court ordered police to submit report within three days.

# Conference to profound impact on KP politics

PESHAWAR (APP): Provincial Ameer, JUI-F Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Maulana Atta-ur-Rehman said that the historic conference in Peshawar on October 14 will have a profound impact on the politics of the province.

He was addressing a meeting of Central Districts at the residence of Center Dilawar Khan in Mardan on Thursday. Provincial General Secretary Maulana Atta Haque Darwish, Maulana Fazal Ali Provincial Information Secretary Haji Abdul Jalil Jan, former Provincial Information Secretary Asif Iqbal Dawoodzai attended the meeting. Maulana Amanullah Haqqani JUI District Amir Maulana Muhammad Qasim,

District General Secretary Maulana Amanat Shah Haqqani, Senator Haji Dilawar Khan, Maulana Qaiseruddin, Hafiz Akhtar Ali and others also spoke.

He said that the office bearers of the district level organizations should highlight the importance of the conference at the level of Village Councils (VCs) and Neighbourhood Councils (NCs) along with the preparations for the upcoming general elections. He said that those who had put the national economy at stake deserve no concessions in any circumstances.

He called for across the board accountability of all including politicians, so the people should know is responsible for the current economic situation of the country.

Maulana Attaur Rehman said that Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam is making efforts to implement the Islamic system in the country and resolve the problems faced by the people, saying the enforcement of Islamic system is only solution to it. He said that our workers are ready for the elections and they will defeat the Jewish agent badly in the upcoming elections.

He was critical of the economic policies of the previous PTI government, saying it had played havoc with the national economy. He said that the people are suffering the consequences of the agreements made by the PTI government with the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

## Meeting chaired by Commissioner:

# Mega operation against power pilferers decided

PESHAWAR (APP): To provide relief to the consumers in electricity bills and curb power pilferage, a meeting chaired by Commissioner Peshawar Division, Muhammad Zubair on Thursday decided to launch a mega indiscriminate operation against power pilferers and hook mafia from 8TH September.

The anti-power pilferage operation was decided under the instruction of the Federal Government at the meeting chaired by the Commissioner Peshawar Division, Muhammad Zubair and attended by the deputy commissioners of all the five districts of the division including Peshawar, Nowshera, Charsadda, Mohmand and Khyber.

The meeting that was also attended by the officers from power distribution companies, Pesco and Tesco devised a comprehensive strategy for a mega targeted operation against the power pilferers and hook mafia from 8TH September.

The meeting decided to seal the factories and industries indulged in power pilferage and take stern legal action against the owners. The deputy commissioners were directed to hold a jirga with the commercial consumer defaulters within 24 hours and devise a mechanism for recovery of dues from them on an urgent basis.

After expiry of the recovery deadline, a grand operation must also be

started against the defaulters, the DCs were directed.

Besides, the officers present at the meeting were directed to take stern departmental action against officials and officers involved in providing assistance to the Kunda Mafia and power pilferers.

The meeting further decided to launch a special awareness campaign against the power pilferage and its effects on economy and consumers.

Commissioner Peshawar Division, Muhammad Zubair told the meeting that he would himself monitor all the procedures of the anti-power-theft operation directly and sought a report on a daily basis in this regard.

# Training workshop conducted

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Pakistan's renowned photographer based in the US Nasir Rauf conducted two-day training workshop (6-7 September, 2023) at the Department of Art and Design, University of Peshawar.

Apart from the students of the university, those from other educational institutes of the city and general public also participated in the workshop in a large number. Nasir Rauf as the resource person explained various aspects of photography and the latest techniques being used in this particular field.

The participants of the workshop also asked him various questions about the techniques and mystique of this art. During the workshop Peshawar University Dean Qazi Naem graced the occasion with his presence and appreciated the support of Mr Nasir Rauf and the interested shown by number of students by attending this workshop.

On the concluding day of the workshop, chairperson of the department Dr Zill-e-Huma expressed her pleasure at having a photographer of international fame at the resource person. Not only our students but the faculty members too, attended the two-day event and learnt a great deal from Nasir Rauf, he said.



Dr Imrana Seemi, a member of the faculty viewed the training workshop a memorable event saying, "I learnt many new things about photography and hope more such events would take place."

While sharing his views, Rauf said it is true latest cameras, lens and types highly matter in photography but the real thing is how a photographer observes and sees things around him and how deeply he involves himself in his surroundings before capturing a scene or incident.

Pakistani youth, he said, was highly talented and during the two day event, he found in them an unending thirst for learning. "I am happy to join the Peshawar University at this particular event as the university is one of the oldest and highest seats of learning in Pakistan," he said.









# US targets leader of Sudan’s RSF over rights abuses

N'DJAMENA (Reuters): The United States is imposing sanctions on the deputy leader of Sudan's paramilitary Rapid Support Forces (RSF) over human rights abuses, the US envoy to the United Nations announced during a trip to Chad's border with Sudan. The move to target Abdelrahim Dagalo - brother of RSF commander Mohamed Hamdan Dagalo, known as Hemedti - is the highest profile use of sanctions since conflict between the RSF and Sudan's army broke out in mid-April and an apparent response to the dramatic violence seen in West Darfur, which the RSF is accused of perpetrating along with allied militias.

The RSF has denied the accusations by conflict monitors, rights groups and witnesses that it is behind the violence, while saying any of its soldiers found to be involved would be brought to justice. Dagalo is the first official on either side to be sanctioned since the start of the war. Reuters first reported the move. Previous sanctions, levied on companies, also targeted the army. "Today, the United States is taking action to hold bad actors accountable," US envoy Linda Thomas-Greenfield told reporters.

Dagalo is being targeted "for his connection to abuses by the RSF against civilians in Sudan, including conflict-related sexual violence and killings based on ethnicity," Thomas-Greenfield said. Thomas-Greenfield made the announcement after meeting Sudanese refugees who have fled worsening ethnic and sexual violence in Sudan's Darfur region, which she described as "reminiscent" of atrocities 20 years ago, also in Darfur, that Washington declared a genocide. Victims of the violence describe targeting of the Masalit ethnic group, razing of neighbourhoods, and widespread looting and rape that pushed hundreds of thousands into Chad. The International Criminal Court has announced an investigation into the violence.

"We will continue do everything in our power to prevent and respond to mass atrocities," Thomas-Greenfield said. The US Treasury Department in a statement accused RSF members of having engaged in "acts of violence and human rights abuses, including the massacre of civilians, ethnic killings, and use of sexual violence." Since war broke out in Sudan on April 15, the RSF and allied militias have been credibly accused of extensive human rights abuses in Darfur and elsewhere, the Treasury added.

War broke out four years after former President Omar al-Bashir was ousted by a popular uprising. Tensions between the army (SAF) and RSF, which jointly staged a coup in 2021, erupted into fighting over an internationally-backed plan to transition to civilian rule and integrate their forces. US Secretary of State Antony Blinken in a separate statement said Washington also barred RSF General and West Darfur Sector Commander, Abdul Rahman Juma, from entering the United States over his involvement in a gross violation of human rights. Blinken said that according to credible sources, forces led by Juma in June kidnapped and killed the Governor of West Darfur and his brother hours after the governor's public statements condemning the actions of the RSF.

In the capital Khartoum, the RSF has been accused of widespread looting, and, along with the army, of firing missiles into residential areas. The US measures freeze any assets held by Abdelrahim Dagalo in the United States and stop US citizens from doing business with him. Unlike the Sudanese army, the RSF's command structure is highly personalised, centred on Hemedti and his close relatives and associates.

While the sanctions carry political weight, it is unclear that they would have any impact on the course of the current conflict. The RSF has long cultivated its closest foreign ties with the United Arab Emirates and Russia. Unlike his brother, who served as deputy to army chief General Abdel Fattah al-Burhan on the country's ruling council from 2019 until the war, Abdelrahim Dagalo carried no official position in the country's government, but he played a leading role in developing the RSF's political relationships.

Having kept a lower profile prior to the war, he appeared in video messages early in the conflict surrounded by RSF troops, calling on Sudanese army soldiers to desert. In June, the US imposed sanctions on companies it accused of fuelling the conflict in Sudan. The US Treasury Department targeted two companies affiliated with Sudan's army and two companies affiliated with the RSF, accusing them of generating revenue from the conflict and contributing to the fighting. A Reuters investigation in 2019 showed that Abdelrahim Dagalo was listed as owner of Algunaide, a gold mining company that was sanctioned.

## Myanmar jails journalist for 20 years

YANGON (Agencies): A court in military-ruled Myanmar has jailed a photojournalist for 20 years, the longest-known prison term for a media professional since the 2021 coup. The Myanmar Now news outlet said the verdict and sentence were handed down - the first day of Sai Zaw Thaik's trial inside Yangon's Insein prison.

He was arrested in western Rakhine state while he was reporting for Myanmar Now on the fallout from Cyclone Mocha, which killed dozens of people in late May, and he faced four charges, including breaching a natural disaster law and a telecommunications law. Myanmar Now editor-in-chief Swe Win said all of Sai Zaw Thaik's colleagues were saddened by the lengthy sentence.

"His sentencing is yet another indication that freedom of the press has been completely quashed under the military [government's] rule, and shows the hefty price independent journalists in Myanmar must pay for their professional work," he said in a statement. Myanmar Now said it was not clear what charges Sai Zaw Thaik had been convicted of. He had been held without access to a lawyer or family visits ahead of the trial. Myanmar was plunged into turmoil after the military seized power in a coup in February 2021 removing the government of elected leader Aung San Suu Kyi. The power grab sparked a civil disobedience movement and mass rallies, which evolved into an armed uprising after the military responded to the protests with lethal force.

Thousands have also been imprisoned for opposing the coup, while independent media outlets such as Myanmar Now had their licences revoked soon after the generals seized power. Myanmar ranks 173 out of 180 in the latest World Press Freedom Index published by Reporters Without Borders. According to the watchdog's latest figures, 69 journalists are currently imprisoned in Myanmar.

## Japan PM speaks to China’s Li

TOKYO (Reuters): Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida said he explained Japan's stance on the release of treated radioactive water from the Fukushima nuclear plant to Chinese Premier Li Qiang on the sidelines of a regional meeting in Indonesia. Japan started releasing the water from the wrecked plant into the ocean last month, drawing strong criticism from China. In retaliation, China has imposed a blanket ban on all aquatic imports from Japan.

A massive earthquake and tsunami in 2011 triggered a nuclear meltdown at the Fukushima Daiichi power plant in the world's worst nuclear disaster since Chernobyl 25 years earlier. Kishida told reporters he spoke briefly with Li ahead of a session at the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) in Jakarta. "During the chat, I explained Japan's position on the treated water to Premier Li," Kishida said. He refused to say how Li had responded. Kishida avoided commenting directly on whether he had sought the ban on aquatic imports to be lifted during his talk with Li, repeating that he had explained Japan's position. He added nothing had been decided on whether he would talk with Li again on the sidelines of the Group of 20 (G20) summit later this week. The talk with Li marked the first time the two had met in person, Japan's foreign ministry said. It was also the first high-level talk between the two countries since the release of the water from the Fukushima plant.

A visit to China by the head of Japan's junior coalition party in late August was postponed amid worsening relations between Tokyo and Beijing following the water release. The water is treated to remove most radioactive elements except for tritium, a radionuclide difficult to separate from water, and then diluted to internationally accepted levels before being released into the ocean.

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ANKARA: Turkish Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan shaking hands with EU Commissioner for Neighborhood and Enlargement Oliver Varhelyi after a joint press conference.

# ‘SA didn’t know about US-curbed Russian ship’

JOHANNESBURG (AP): South African officials did not know a sanctioned Russian ship was assigned to deliver military equipment to the country until the vessel was nearing national waters, according to an inquiry into an incident that caused diplomatic tensions between South Africa and the US.

US Ambassador Reuben Brigety accused South Africa in May of having weapons intended for Russia loaded on to the Lady R when the container ship docked near Cape Town in December. The ship is under US sanctions for ties to a company that transported arms for Russia's war on Ukraine. South Africa denied there was a government-approved deal to ship weapons to Russia from the country, which officially has taken a non-aligned stance on the Ukraine war. South African President Cyril Ramaphosa appointed a three-person panel led by a retired judge to oversee an inquiry into the matter.

An executive summary of the panel's report released stated that the ship offloaded military equipment but no weapons were loaded onto it. The panel also said that South African officials had no say in how the equipment ordered from the United Arab Emirates

was shipped. Ramaphosa made the summary public but has said the full report would remain classified. "To reveal the details of the equipment offloaded would compromise important military operations and put our soldiers' lives at risk," he said. Brigety asserted during a May news conference that US intelligence showed ammunition and weapons were put on the Lady R in South Africa and carried to Russia. A bipartisan group of US lawmakers subsequently asked the Biden administration to punish South Africa and questioned the country's ability to receive trade benefits under a US law, the African Growth and Opportunity Act.

The secretary-general of South Africa's ruling African National Congress party, Fikile Mbalula, last month openly questioned why Brigety remained in the country after allegedly "lying" about South Africa supplying Russia with weapons. The panel's findings elicited calls from several quarters, including the ANC-aligned South African Communist Party, for the ambassador to be expelled. "We appreciate the seriousness with which the panel of inquiry undertook to investigate irregularities surrounding the Lady R's presence in South

Africa in December 2022," David S. Feldmann, a spokesperson at the US Embassy in Pretoria, said. "The US government shared certain information pertaining to the Lady R and its presence in South Africa in support of the investigation."

According to the inquiry report, the Russian ship was redirected to the Simon's Town naval base after shipping agents at the Ngqura-Port Elizabeth port, where it intended to dock, refused to service the ship due to the US sanctions. "This only became apparent as the ship was already approaching South African waters," the panel found, adding that the ship was redirected "to rescue the situation." The investigating panel accepted the nighttime work to offload the military equipment, saying it was loaded on pallets and would be visible to anybody within site of the Simon's Town dock. The vessel switched off its identification transponder because it was being tracked by foreign intelligence agencies, the panel said, without naming those agencies.

The panel also concluded that the US sanctions were not binding on South Africa because United Nations had not endorsed them.

## US: China’s stance on Fukushima discharge ‘unfair, ‘false’

TOKYO (Reuters): US House of Representatives Speaker Kevin McCarthy called China's position on the release of treated radioactive water from the Fukushima nuclear power plant "unfair" and "false" during a visit to Tokyo on Thursday. Japan started its discharges from the wrecked plant last month, provoking strong criticism from China. In retaliation for the release into the ocean, China has placed a blanket ban on all aquatic imports from Japan.

"I just view it as another way of the Communist Party of China putting fallacies out there, trying to divide," McCarthy told reporters. "And it's just an unfair position that they have and a false position that they have from the rest of the world's stance," McCarthy said, adding that he had no concern whatsoever about eating produce from Fukushima. Prime Minister Fumio Kishida said he explained Japan's position on the matter to Chinese Premier Li Qiang during a brief talk on the sidelines of a regional meeting in Indonesia on Thursday. He declined to say how Li had responded. The talk marked the first time the two had met in person, and was also the first high-level talk between the two countries since the release of the water.

The water from the Fukushima nuclear plant is treated to remove most radioactive elements except for tritium, a radionuclide difficult to separate from water, and then diluted to internationally accepted levels before being released into the ocean.

## Bongo ‘free’ to travel abroad

GABON (Agencies): Gabon's former president, Ali Bongo Ondimba, has been released from house arrest and is free to leave the country for medical treatment, the military which removed him from power last month has said. Bongo, who had been held under house arrest since a military coup on August 30, was toppled from power shortly after he was declared the winner of much-criticised elections that would have seen him extend his 14-year rule as president.

"Given his state of health, the former President of the Republic Ali Bongo Ondimba is free to move about. He may, if he wishes, travel abroad for medical checkups," Gabon's military spokesman Colonel Ulrich Manfoumbi said in a statement read on national television. The statement announcing Bongo's release from house arrest was signed by General Brice Clotaire Oligui Nguema, who was sworn in as Gabon's new head of state.

# UN chief says Myanmar crisis worsens

JAKARTA (Reuters): The world risks a "great fracture" of its economic and financial systems, UN Secretary-General António Guterres said on Thursday at a summit with Southeast Asia's ASEAN bloc, China, the United States and others in Indonesia. In a wide-ranging speech that touched on geopolitical tension, multilateral development finance and climate change, Guterres called on world leaders to find peaceful and inclusive solutions to the challenges facing the world.

"There is a real risk of fragmentation - of a great fracture in world economic and financial systems: with diverging strategies on technology and artificial intelligence and conflicting security frameworks," he said. He called for a mechanism to provide relief for debt-strapped developing economies, to include pay-

ment suspensions, longer lending terms and lower interest rates. He also voiced support for re-channeling an additional \$100 billion of International Monetary Fund's Special Drawing Rights through multilateral development banks to increase liquidity and support developing economies' needs.

Rich countries agreed in 2021 to re-channel the unused funds, an international reserve currency, to poor countries. At a Paris summit in June this year, world leaders backed a push for multilateral development banks like the World Bank to put more capital at risk to boost lending. World Bank president Ajay Banga outlined a "toolkit" at that summit, including offering a pause in debt repayments, giving countries flexibility to redirect funds for emergency response,

providing new types of insurance to help development projects and helping governments build advance-emergency systems. Guterres also said he remained "deeply concerned" over the "worsening political, humanitarian, and human rights" situation in Myanmar, a nation besieged by war since a 2021 military coup. "I reiterate my urgent call on the military authorities of Myanmar to listen to the aspirations of its people, release all political prisoners, and open the door to a return to democratic rule," he said.

In a statement, ASEAN chair Indonesia said regional leaders expressed "grave concern" over a lack of substantial progress on their five-point peace plan for Myanmar. ASEAN leaders are set to hold talks with the United Nations later on Thursday.

Ukrainian troops in the east told national television. He was referring to a village located on heights south of Bakhmut, seen as critical to recapturing the city. Yevlash said Ukrainian troops had withstood an onslaught further north near Lyman, a town they retook last year.

Russian forces had been dealt "a good kick" near the village of Novoyehorivka which halted their advance, he said. Ukraine's general staff, in its evening report, said its forces were moving towards Melitopol in the south - aimed at severing the land bridge Russian troops have established between Crimea, annexed by Moscow in 2014, and the occupied east. Russian Defence Minister Sergei Shoigu dismissed the offensive as a failure, while admitting that things were far from easy in parts of southeastern Zaporizhzhia region that Moscow controls. "Ukraine's armed forces have not achieved their goals on any front," the defence ministry quoted Shoigu as saying. "The most tense situation is that on the Zaporizhzhia front. The

enemy has engaged brigades from its strategic reserve whose personnel have been trained by Western instructors."

Ukrainian analysts said the drive to capture a succession of villages was paying off, but much would depend on pushing on for the next two months before wintry weather takes hold. Military analyst Serhiy Zgurets, writing on the website of Espresso TV, said the military had opened new fronts in the south with a strategy he dubbed "stretch, attrition and strike". Ukrainian officials have said in the past week that their forces have managed to push past Russia's first line of defences but now confronted further lines in areas where Moscow has had time to build up fortifications and minefields. "The enemy is trying to make the most of the 'dry period' to fortify themselves, redeploy and manoeuvre," Natalia Humeniuk, spokesperson for southern forces, told national television. "They can feel the degree to which we can secure fire control on the logistics routes so important to them."

# Any military cooperation with NK must stop: Yoon

SEOUL (Reuters): South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol said any attempt to cooperate with North Korea on military affairs in a way that damages international peace must immediately halt. Yoon made the comment at a summit meeting with Southeast Asia's ASEAN bloc countries in Jakarta, Indonesia, his office said.

The office did not elaborate but his comment comes amid reports that arms negotiations between North Korea and Russia are actively advancing and that the North's leader, Kim Jong Un, plans to visit Russia soon to meet President Vladimir Putin. "Attempt at military cooperation with North Korea that harms international peace must immediately halt," Yoon's office quoted him as saying at a meeting with the leaders of ASEAN

countries. North Korea and Russia have denied they were in arms negotiations.

A visit by Kim later this month to Russia's far-eastern port city of Vladivostok is partly to discuss supplying Moscow with weapons for the war in Ukraine, the New York Times reported this week. Russia's defence minister, Sergei Shoigu, said earlier the two countries planned to conduct joint military exercises. At a later meeting with ASEAN leaders, together with Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida and Chinese Premier Li Qiang, Yoon said South Korea would work closely with the two Asian neighbours with the goal of resuming their three-way talks on improving ties. An annual summit between the three has not taken place since 2019 because of tensions, largely over Japan's

wartime past. Yoon called for vigilance to help stop illicit North Korean activities that fund its nuclear and missile programmes, including sending workers abroad to earn foreign currency. Under a UN Security Council resolution adopted in 2017 and backed by China, UN member countries are required to send back all North Korean workers and not take them on again. North Korea, which maintained strict border restrictions during the COVID-19 pandemic, has been reopening slowly in recent weeks, with increased train crossings, and the resumption of flights, with China. Before the pandemic, China hosted the largest number of North Korean workers abroad, with as many as half of the estimated 100,000 people earning more than \$500 million a year.

# British soldier awaiting trial escapes from prison

LONDON (AP): An urgent manhunt has been launched for a British soldier awaiting trial on terror-related charges, who escaped from a prison in southwest London, the country's counterterrorism police said. Police said Daniel Abed Khalife, who has been accused of planting fake bombs at a military base and of violating Britain's Official Secrets Act, went missing

from Wandsworth Prison. "We have a team of officers who are making extensive and urgent enquiries in order to locate and detain Khalife as quickly as possible," said Commander Dominic Murphy, head of the Metropolitan Police's counterterrorism command. Murphy told Sky News that Khalife was dressed in a kitchen uniform of white T-shirt and red checkered

trousers at the time of his escape, adding that there is no evidence he is still wearing that outfit. No official explanation of how Khalife escaped was provided. Murphy said there is no information to suggest that Khalife poses a threat to the wider public but urged anyone who may see him to not approach him. Police have alerted ports and airports about Khalife's escape.



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## Energy crises and the ploy of special court

**A**FTER getting the cold shoulder from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) regarding the provision of relief to the public in the context of back-breaking electricity bills, the caretaker government has recently announced a mas-sive crackdown to stop electricity theft and against the low recovery to improve the energy sector and address the grievances of the affected consumers across the country. The interim rulers have conceived the idea of introducing a new elec-tricity theft control act, aiming to establish en-forcement of the new law by creating special courts for handling complaints and pen-alities.

Pakistan's system for electricity generation, circulation and distribution has inherited technical flaws, administrative loopholes and serious management problems from top executive bodies to bottom-level workers such as linemen and bill despatchers that have almost collapsed the entire setup. The problem further gets complicated due to mismanagement and malpractices at the power division and Ministry of Energy, while the public has been the sole victim of slackness and corruption of politicians and government servants throughout history. Neither the field offices, and Power distribution companies nor the power division, and ministry of energy were unaware of the real issues, including billions of rupees in electricity theft, huge line losses and corruption of the WAPDA staff but no one ever acted in the best interest of the institution, the government and the public, rather people sitting in big chairs tried to manage the things another way that was easy for the bureaucracy but humiliating and economically disastrous for the country.

Historically, the energy crisis is the creation of the Pakistani ruling elite who first created the issue through politically motivated policies, monetary kickbacks and commissions, later turning it into a catastrophe by relying on foreign loans instead of getting things in order, which ultimately resolved the issue permanently. The interim rulers previously claimed to scrap extraordinary incentives and free-of-cost energy quotas of lawmakers, bureaucrats and government employees that cost billions of rupees to the national exchequer. Later, the caretakers shifted priority to waging a crusade against power theft through the enactment of new laws, the establishment of new courts along with induction of new staff and judges that clearly illustrate a lack of interest and malicious intentions of the administrators. Otherwise, an extensive setup of the WAPDA Vigilance cell is already in place to control theft, reduce losses, and curb corruption of the employees that merits stern accountability for non-deliverance instead of wasting public money in the constitution of new institutions/ departments.

Pakistan has no scarcity of legal frameworks. Dedicated institutions have been created for specific felonies ranging from Police to deal with general crimes, an anti-corruption Department to handle bribes and corruption, an Anti-Narcotics Force to curb drugs, an FIA to deal with white-collar and cyber crimes, NAB to control money laundering and corruption, together with diverse types of civil courts, criminal courts, Consumers courts, ATC, Federal ombudsman, Shariat courts and multiple other judicial infrastructures exist in the country but the crimes grow unhindered, crooks roam freely and no government official ever acts out of his official duty, patriotism and loyalty to the country and public.

The reports suggest that power theft, line losses and unpaid bills amount to Rs. 589 billion per annum, which is a huge amount and shakes the entire system of power generation, distribution, billing and recovery while causing a colossal problem for the public as well as the government. The nation demands rapid and stern action against the corrupts, thieves and other wrongdoers whose misconduct and malpractices spoiled the national institutions and have darkened the future of our coming generations. This problem will not be resolved by any task force, committee, commission or court. All relevant institutions should be mobilized and a political figure must lead this crusade to initiate an instant drive and achieve immediate results otherwise those credos and promises will never come true until doomsday.

## Turk-Greece rapprochement

**R**ECENTLY, Turkey and Greece agreed to revive their high-level contacts to discuss new approaches that might work for improving their bilateral ties and resolving their mutual differences over a wide range of issues between their countries. Historically, both first-door neighbours, along-held adversaries and NATO allies had been at loggerheads over a string of centuries-old disputes. There had been little improvement in their relations triggered by Greece's relief assistance to Turkey following a devastating earthquake earlier this year, and Turkey's condolence messages after Greece witnessed a deadly train accident in recent months. As ice melts, both nations hope for a breakthrough and prepare to initiate talks to resolve long-standing disputes between Athens and Ankara.

Greece and Turkey are at odds over territorial claims in the Aegean Sea, energy exploration rights in the eastern Mediterranean and ethnically split Cyprus, among other issues relating to Turk monitory in Greece and Cyprus. Tensions flared in 2020 over exploratory drilling rights in areas of the Mediterranean Sea where Greece and Cyprus claim their rights over Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZ), which led to a naval standoff between Ankara and Athens. Presently both neighbours agreed on a roadmap which paves the way for high-level contacts including a meeting between Greek Prime Minister, Mitsotakis and President Erdogan, along with a series of confidence-building measures and re-operationalization of a light-level cooperation council between the two nations.

Historically, interstate rivalries, territorial disputes, religion, and ethnic and linguistic clashes have greatly reduced the pace of cooperation among nations, resulting in an overall depletion of mankind in this world. Only, those nations could realize their economic and social manifestos that believe in teamwork, joint endeavour and shared growth which not only guarantee their territorial sovereignty but also speed up their journey toward prosperity. After the Israel-Lebanon joint venture in the Medetarenean Sea a year ago, Turkey and Greece also prepared to settle their hostility and open a new chapter of dialogue and cooperation, that will surely have better prospects for them in the future.

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## Why a G20 without Putin and Xi could be a fantastic opportunity

David A. Andelman

**T**HIS might have been an opportunity for world leaders to bridge a host of chasms that are opening up, as G20 conferences have in the past. But now, this upcoming weekend's G20 gathering in New Delhi seems more likely to widen the gulf between the blocs - east and west, north and south - than at any other point since the Cold War.

Unless this opportunity is well and deftly played. With Russian President Vladimir Putin skipping the meeting and sending his Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov instead, and China's Xi Jinping sending Premier Li Qiang in his place, this could be an opportunity for greater unity on key issues for those world leaders still attending. Under an arrest warrant issued in March, following his indictment for war crimes by the International Criminal Court (ICC), Putin is subject to seizure if he sets foot in any of the court's 123 member states. That said, India is not an ICC signatory. Who knows how Prime Minister Narendra Modi might have reacted to a drop-in from the Russian president - it seems Putin preferred not to find out. There had been considerable hope in some circles that Presidents Joe Biden and Xi would be able to pick up the dialogue the two had begun in Bali, Indonesia, at the last G20 summit in November.

The US has been making a major effort over the last three months to patch up a relationship between the two countries that appeared to be on a downward spiral since a Chinese surveillance balloon flew over America early this year. Over the past three months, the US has sent a blitzkrieg of senior administration officials - three cabinet secretaries and its top climate envoy - in an effort to right the ship.

Yet only Secretary of State Antony Blinken got an audience, albeit brief, with Xi, and then he was shunted to the side as Xi occupied the head of the table, alone. Xi certainly understands optics, of which he is a master. Yet this will be the first G20 that Xi has skipped in the decade he's served as China's president. And this demonstrates several huge failings for China and its otherwise astute president.

First, China has not reciprocated with a single significant visit to Washington since the spring. Blinken invited his counterpart, but he's still waiting on a response. On the other hand, Xi does not like to be snubbed himself.

Around the same time word leaked last week that Xi would not be attending the G20, officials close to Biden told NBC that he had no plans to meet formally with Xi at the summit anyway. Hardly an encouragement for Xi to show up and send a message of comity he is not yet ready to convey - but should for a host of reasons. Second, there's the question of how firmly Xi is casting his lot in with Putin. With the ICC arrest

**Still, there does remain so much baggage between India and China that a single session could hardly dispel it all. Just last week, China inflamed matters by publishing a national map that included India's far north Arunachal Pradesh state, territory also claimed by Beijing. India lodged a "strong protest." China dismissed the claims.**

warrant hanging over him, Putin also skipped the in-person BRICS meeting of emerging nations in Johannesburg, South Africa, last month, opting instead for a virtual address (and yet again, sending Lavrov to stand in for him). South Africa, unlike India, is an ICC signatory. But Xi did attend that meeting. His decision to shun the G20 in New Delhi, which could be taken as a direct affront to the host, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi, has had some of that edge taken off by the deep tête-à-tête the two had at the BRICS summit.

Still, there does remain so much baggage between India and China that a single session could hardly dispel it all. Just last week, China inflamed matters by publishing a national map that included India's far north Arunachal Pradesh state, territory also claimed by Beijing. India lodged a "strong protest." China dismissed the claims. Is Xi

skipping the G20 in order to avoid a face-to-face conversation with Biden? The US President on Sunday said, "I am disappointed ... but I am going to get to see him," without elaborating on when that would be. There is still another opportunity for a one-on-one meeting at the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) forum in San Francisco in November - though there's no guarantee Xi will show up for that, either. But the G20 is about far more than simply China-US relations. India, as G20 host this year, would like the summit to focus on the environment and sustainable development, along with a leveling of the playing field between

make inroads in parts of the world with resources it covets and where it might otherwise face competition from other developed countries. (China has dismissed these claims.) Even without the leaders of China and Russia, there is still a laundry list of critical issues to discuss at the G20. One.org, the global movement to end extreme poverty, highlighted in a dramatic report for the G20 that much of Africa, drowning in a 500% increase in debt service payments from rising interest rates, needs urgent relief. In some respects, it's pretty shortsighted for Xi to skip this session - coming at the moment China and its economy need desperately to open up more markets and ties with the world. In July, China's exports plunged 14.5% from over a year ago, their biggest drop since the initial Covid-19 outbreak. The hope is that, without distractions from the presence of Xi and Putin, the G20 will be able to focus more directly on just such urgent issues. The flip side is whether that leaves the world any safer a place. Certainly, it removes an opportunity to pressure Xi into restraining shipment of technology and equipment to Russia that could help its war in Ukraine.

Moreover, the added perception that China is throwing in its lot with an increasingly isolated Putin does little to boost confidence in China as a trading and manufacturing partner. Biden's planned visit to Vietnam on his way home can only highlight the alternatives that global businesses have in Asia. This visit is only one part of what appears to be an American effort to paint China ever more firmly into a corner in its own backyard of Southeast Asia. China's absence from the G20 can only further imprint that perception. So, this G20 - uniquely absent Xi and Putin - is an important opportunity to showcase China's failings, confirm Russia's status as a pariah and ratify America's place as a global leader. It will take grace and a deft hand from Biden. But if successful, he will have solidified his position and that of America as a global leader - and perhaps helped preserve the primacy of democracy.

CNN

## Glimmer of hope for Eastern Mediterranean as tensions ease

Talmiz Ahmad

**T**HE Eastern Mediterranean, for years a zone of competition and conflict, is witnessing the first signs of bonhomie among the principal regional states. In August last year, Türkiye and Israel announced they would exchange ambassadors after a gap of four years. In February, Israel was a high-profile presence in relief efforts in Türkiye following the earthquake there. And Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu is expected to visit Ankara shortly.

Türkiye and Egypt, estranged since 2013, reestablished diplomatic ties in July this year. Engagements had commenced in 2021 and the positive trend was cemented in late 2022, when Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan shook hands with President Abdel Fattah El-Sisi during the FIFA World Cup in Qatar. In August, Egyptian Trade Minister Ahmed Samir Saleh visited Ankara and agreed with his Turkish counterpart to target an increase in bilateral trade from \$10 billion to \$15 billion over the next five years. Again, in July this year, the presidents of Türkiye and Greece met each other on the sidelines of the NATO Summit in Vilnius, Lithuania, shortly after their respective electoral victories. Following naval confrontations in the Eastern Mediterranean from 2020 and even threats of war, ties plummeted in May last year, when Greece lobbied the US Congress to block arms supplies to Türkiye. In Vilnius, however, the two leaders welcomed the "positive climate" in their relations, with much goodwill having been generated by Greece's immediate response to the earthquake in Türkiye. To complete the positive scenario, Cyprus has indicated an interest in reopening dialogue with Ankara, through the UN and the EU, on the long-standing issue of the division of the Eastern Mediterranean island state. In 1974, Cyprus was split into the internationally recognized Republic of Cyprus and the so-called Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus, which is recognized only by Türkiye and where 30,000 Turkish troops are based.

These developments could herald good news regarding the development of the Eastern Mediterranean's gas potential. Gas was first discovered in Israel's Tamar and Leviathan offshore fields in 2009 and 2010, respectively, transforming an energy-poor country into a possible exporter. Cyprus' Aphrodite field was the next to be discovered in 2011, followed by Egypt's Zohr field in 2015. The combined proven reserves of recoverable gas in the Levant basin, including Israel, Cyprus, Egypt, Lebanon and Syria, is 3.5 trillion cubic meters, with Egypt having an additional 6.2 trillion cubic meters of gas potential.

In May 2012, Greece and Cyprus proposed the EastMed gas pipeline that would transport their gas to Europe. Though initially welcomed by the EU as a

way of reducing European dependence on Russian gas, the project floundered due to high costs and the limited quantity of gas available. However, besides the problems relating to gas economics, the full development and marketing of the region's substantial gas reserves have been stymied by political disputes over the last decade. After a long rift in its bilateral ties with Israel, Türkiye also fell out with Egypt in 2013 following the fall of the Morsi government.

Ankara then reached out to Libya's Tripoli-based administration and, in 2019, concluded a security agreement that led to the deployment of Turkish officers and mercenaries from Syria to protect the government. In return, the Tripoli government agreed to demarcate the waters of the Eastern Mediterranean to Türkiye's advantage by encroaching on the claims of Greece and Cyprus to the natural gas in their exclusive economic zones. Following this encroachment on Greek and Cypriot claims, these two countries joined Egypt, Israel, Jordan, the Palestinian Authority, Italy and France in setting up the East Mediterranean Gas Forum in 2020, pointedly excluding Türkiye. This set the stage for naval confrontations in the Eastern Mediterranean, in which France also joined in on the Greek side. However, due to internal rivalries among the principal partners, the forum has not delivered anything tangible to the member states. Clearly, the only panacea for the Eastern Mediterranean is inclusive regional cooperation. Some signs of this have emerged recently. In October 2022, Israel and Lebanon signed a final demarcation agreement for their shared maritime border, ending a decade-long dispute that had prevented the exploitation of Lebanon's gas potential. In January, it was reported that QatarEnergy would join France's TotalEnergies and Italy's ENI in developing Lebanon's offshore blocks.

Another development took place last month, when Israel announced it would export an additional 38.7 billion cubic meters of gas to Egypt over the next 11 years. As production from the Zohr field has fallen, Egypt last year imported a record 6.27 billion cubic meters of gas from Israel, almost 50 percent more than in the previous year. Egypt plans to utilize its domestic production and imports to provide a surplus for export (its gas exports last year were valued at \$8.4 billion). Israel is also said to be working with Egypt and the PA to develop a gas field off the Gaza coast, but this is obviously a long-term project. Thanks to Türkiye's positive engagements with its neighbors in recent times, the stage is set for its integration into the Eastern Mediterranean gas scenario, meaning that the rich resources in the seabed can be used cooperatively for the benefit of the entire region.

Arab News

## World has run out of time and must act on climate change now

Ranvir S. Nayar

**T**HE UN this week released a document, "General Comment No. 26," which highlighted children's rights and the environment, with a special focus on climate change. The document, which has been in the making for years, as is the norm at the UN, stated that the extent and magnitude of the triple crisis of climate emergency, the collapse of biodiversity and pervasive pollution is an urgent and systemic threat to children's rights globally.

The observations were made by the Committee on the Rights of the Child, part of the UN Human Rights Commission, which emphasized the obligation of governments around the world to address environmental harm and climate change and added that children around the world have a fundamental right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment. While GC26, as it is known, did not raise

anything revolutionary or new, it did underline a very important principle and fact, which often gets lost in the cacophony surrounding climate change.

Numerous leaders, both political and business, from around the world, as well as activist organizations and institutions, have spoken about the need to hand down a sustainable, clean and healthy planet to future generations. Unfortunately, it is the norm that such statements, at least from people like political and business leaders, have turned out to be little more than yet more hot air to add to global warming. The vast gap between statements and actions and the all-round failure to meet numerous commitments, especially by the developed nations, which are essentially at the root cause of the climate emergency that we face today, mean that the planet being uninhabitable and safe, not just for humans but all living beings, in the near

future is now in doubt.

With its repeated missed targets on cutting carbon emissions and funding poor countries' adaptation and mitigation of the impacts of climate change, the global community has put the world on a steep downhill slope toward climate catastrophe. This has put a very serious question mark over what the next generation will inherit, let alone the generations that may follow. With the world hurtling toward missing, by a huge margin, the targets for climate change and sustainable development set for 2030, the future appears to be getting bleaker by the day.

The share of children and youths in populations across the world is rising, driven largely by the growing populations in the developing world, notably South Asia and Africa, particularly sub-Saharan Africa. According to various estimates, the population of under-14s is

set to rise from 1.98 billion in 2020 to 2.6 billion by 2050. And, if one considers the population of under-25s, then the number will be close to 3.5 billion. The global population is expected to peak at about 11 billion by the turn of the century, which means that Earth will be inhabited by many more people, with more than two-thirds or even 75 percent living in poor countries. This puts their fate under a cloud, as the current trends indicate that global temperatures are set to rise by 2.5 degrees Celsius above the pre-industrial era, even on a moderate assessment. The more severe projections, which seem to be far more realistic in the current situation, state that the temperature will be catastrophically 3.5 C higher.

This is certain to have cataclysmic impacts on everything on Earth, ranging from water, food and habitat to health, employment and the general well-being of

humans. And the less said about the fate of other living beings, the better. Biodiversity, forests and oceans could all be decimated and the entire planet could become uninhabitable for all forms of life. This may seem like an extreme scenario, but there are enough indications and even evidence that the world is certainly headed that way unless global leaders - meaning the billionaire business leaders and the mighty political leaders of the rich world - need to wake up now or at least pretend that they are no longer asleep. It is no longer enough just to have more agreements, more declarations and more promises. The time for action - concerted, concentrated action - is here and now. It cannot wait a year or even a few months. The West needs to take its responsibilities seriously and start doing the things that are needed, such as making at least \$1 trillion a year available for developing countries to allow them

to take mitigation and adaptation measures. The West also needs to act today to cut its own emissions - and in dramatic fashion - so that it can compensate for its excesses of the past.

Both of these actions by the West are certainly going to be painful and will hurt their economies and people. But that is short-term pain; they will be able to overcome it in a few years. But if they fail to make these sacrifices, mainly to atone for their excesses of the past 150 years, they, along with the rest of the world, are set to pay a price that is far more painful and long-lasting. UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres has already derided world leaders - i.e., the Western leaders - for lying about their commitments toward climate protection. Unfortunately, there is no more scope, space or time for lying. They will put the world, their own children and future generations at the most severe risk of decimation if they do not act now.



# At the scene of the annual graverobbing of Dr Martin Luther King Jr

Yannick Giovanni Marshall

**I**T is always an awkward moment, finding yourself emerging from the fugitive hideouts of Black anticolonial thought just to come upon the scene of the annual graverobbing of Dr Martin Luther King Jr. Awkward not chiefly because it is a macabre scene: stealing from a murdered man's messages and memory whatever can advance the political system he was killed for opposing. But because, as part of that segment of the Black population who is not smiling - the unfriendly "Black folk" birthed of the intellectual tradition of slave revolts, marronage and anticolonialism - you get the sense that you are trespassing.

The digging up of King's meaning, the tug-of-war battle over who has the right to say what he meant, is really none of the Black anticolonialists' business. It is a lovers' quarrel between, on one side, the colonists who are liberal and say that Dr King's dream was a racially harmonious America and on the other, the colonists who are conservative and say Dr King fought for a world where Black people should not benefit from affirmative action or any civil rights efforts directed against inequity. It is none of your business what happens between those lovers. Still, you get the popcorn out and watch the bitter but often disingenuous battle play out. An inheritance fight over Dr King's philosophical estate.

A man who even Black anticolonialists - who do not believe, as liberal colonists do, that colonialism is a thing that with enough tender loving care can perhaps educate itself into multiracial utopia - must admit was as complex as he was genuine. A man who put his body on the line and was on the cusp of discovering that the burning house of settler colonialism was not worth integrating into. See, the liberals had him first. He marched with them almost until the end. And using this historical fact they claim first rights to him and push forward on his patriotic dreams of peaceable coexistence on stolen land. Colonialism is dreamed up to one day be just. A place where people of all races could put their differences aside and develop a slave master-designed society into one which lives up to the ideals of the slave-master framers: freedom for all slave masters. The liberal colonists (they seem to prefer the term "critically patriotic") pull the string at the back of their customised Dr King puppet and it utters: "America has given the Negro people a bad cheque, a cheque which has come back marked insufficient funds." They then quickly tape the mouth over just in case the doll arises and speaks, as Dr King did nearing the end of his life, doubting the possi-

bility of justice in a colony and rushing past the scam of the peaceful protest into a defence of rioting.

"The language of the unheard" he called it. A particularly interesting phrase considering the liberal historians' silencing of the slave revolts which are not only older than the so-called "Long Civil Rights Movement", but have proven to be more effective than attempting to persuade oppressors to treat the oppressed humanely through open dialogue. But then, descending like vultures on the funeral parade to pick at whichever parts of Dr King's message could be repurposed for anti-Civil Rights actions, land the conservatives. Conservatives, who have lost the battle of ideas at least twice. First, in the 19th century, they lost their pro-slavery argument: the idea that the Africans must be kept in chains and violently beaten in order to keep them in subjection to "the superior race".

Then, a hundred years later, in a second major blow, conservatives lost the apartheid: the idea that Black people need to be kept from the better things in public life, that they should be restricted from swimming pools and neighbourhoods and consigned to dirty water fountains, kept from voting, their books banned and their thinkers imprisoned. As you will note this is still the conservative position. Although today that position must - almost entirely due to the success of Dr King and the "Civil Rights Movement" winning the ideological battle - be presented in code.

Apartheid can now only be executed through Karens demanding proof of residence from Black folks at that swimming pool rather than the Southern Sheriff. One justice for a white supremacist president and another for those framed by police who plead guilty to reduce the sentence and legal fees is not "segregation now, segregation forever!" but "our imperfect system". No "black codes" outlaw Black insolence but "his being disrespectful to an officer explains his death".

It is no longer said that Black students should be working on farms and not filling their heads with dangerous ideas. It is said that Black book bans are necessary to keep children safe from the harms of knowing what was done to Black people. Dr King won. But in a colony, all "victories" for racial justice are superficial. The starting pistol goes off. The race to the grave begins. Political columnist Ed Kilgore, delicately, as if with gloves used to handle archival material, makes the routine, obligatory call to return to King's message. "We Still Need Martin Luther King Jr's Aspirational Patriotism."

But wait, here rides in the con-

servative Texas senator Ted Cruz who snatches the marionette: "Today, Dr King would be ashamed of how profoundly [the NAACP] have lost their way," he says, angered that the kindly Civil Rights organisation issued a travel warning to Black people visiting Florida during the state's recent bid to be the anti-Black capital of the United States. Enters Ibram X Kendi, author of the white liberal swooned over How To Be An Antiracist. Perhaps angered at his own misuse, he grabs Dr King's legacy back. Right alongside Dr King's dream, he warns, "Historians must reclaim [Dr King's] nightmare as a symbol of the progression of racism."

GOP presidential hopeful Vivek Ramaswamy intercepts the football. He says Kendi is actually like a modern grand wizard of the modern KKK and anti-racism is the real racism". The charge of "reverse racism", of course, being a staple of white supremacist ideology since at least the campaign for the abolition of chattel slavery. The abolitionist intellectuals, the Indigenous, white, and Black people who harboured runaways, the freedmen and women dedicating their lives to advocating for the end to racial incarceration were the "real racists". Black people free, they say, is anti-white. Ramaswamy quotes King, selecting the anti-Civil Righter's favourite "I hope my four children grow up in a country where they are judged not on the colour of their skin, but on the content of their character." Favourite because the quote can be stolen away from its criticism of white supremacy and redirected, judo-style, to silence the critic.

The student pointing out, "White supremacists burned down a Black orphanage in Tulsa ..." is quieted with "Hush, hush now, Dr King said not to see colour. Also, you are not allowed any more to say white supremacy has led to bad things. Tulsa was about something else. Eighteenth-century Southern plantation life was teamwork between gentlemen and their agricultural helpers. And maybe, when you really think about it, the Holocaust didn't happen." Indeed, during his "diversity is not our strength" town hall, Ramaswamy suggests that white supremacists did not exist. Less than 24 hours after that speech, a white supremacist murders Black people in "DeSantis Country".

At this point the show becomes dark - the popcorn is put away. It is almost your business now, this manhandling of Dr King. This way and that, he is pushed and pulled by every shade of colonist. Forcibly ventriloquised here. Misquoted, made dogma there. Dressed in, and used along with Indian background to be the obsequious water-carrier

for white supremacist ideas. The person of colour turned white supremacist surrogate forever, trapped in the purgatory of over-compensation. Flung here, flung there, spun around, the colonists' chew toy. Two warring ideals tearing at one misused body, the dogged strength of the fiction of a better colonialism alone keeping him from being torn asunder. You flee from the festival of his grave-robbing back to where you belong. To the intellectual tradition of the runaway slave, and marronage. The fugitives and escapees whose raison d'être is the building of a future world unlinked to slave-mastering. Away from the patriots and flag-wavers. Far from the maddening mob of Eichmanns who consider four centuries of anti-Black and anti-Indigenous killings as "stains" on the otherwise valiant project of settler republicanism.

You run on towards the outskirts of the colony, terrifying to plantation master and plantation-state apologist alike. You retreat to Malcolm X and the others who do not see any American dream, but an American nightmare. You stay with those who resist the coupling of Malcolm and Martin as a dyad "necessary for Black America" - who know the grave robbers have come for X as well. And with an aggrieved "so long King", you turn your back as his memory is batted, his body - a suit entered into by people who cheered on the police and dogs siced at the protests for Black life in 2020 as much as they did in 1965. And in 1865. And in 1776. But there are limits to your sympathy.

Malcolm X tried to warn you, doctor, that America would turn out like this. As did David Walker. And now the thin Blue line rises over the spectre of Black freedom - as fecklessly as the Confederate battle flag before it - with you now impaled atop it and waved when useful to white supremacists. "Martin Luther King would be turning in his grave!" The grave they put you in. You, sir, used as a scarecrow to keep the opposition to white supremacists in its place like the heads of rebels and runaways planted on fence posts to terrorise the enslaved population into plantation patriotism. You should have known. Ask the maroons, the slave revolt, long-escaped from the History patrols. Passed on through whispers so the College Board can't pick up the scent. Begin with the runaways turned troops who burned down the White House in 1814. Or ask that other Black preacher - less celebrated by the colonists - who also had a dream in Virginia. Black anticolonialists will tell you: that was no way to march on Washington.

Aljazeera

# Netanyahu's call to deport Eritreans shows Israel's racism is global

Neve Gordon

**WHEN the Eritrean community in Israel, currently comprising an estimated 18,000 asylum seekers, heard that their country was planning a celebratory festival in Tel Aviv, they were up in arms. Most of them had fled Eritrea 15 years ago due to the repressive policies implemented by the authoritarian leader Isaisa Afwerki, who has ruled the country with an iron fist since it gained independence from Ethiopia in 1993.**

Their mistake? In Israel, they thought that they were in a democracy that would listen to, and respect, their concerns. They have by now been disabused of that notion - by racist policies and a prime minister for whom the Eritreans are merely a "problem". While Canada, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom cancelled the 30-year-anniversary celebrations planned by the Eritrean embassies in their capitals, Israel's police cited freedom of expression and decided not to call off the party.

When both Eritrean asylum seekers and supporters of Afwerki's regime gathered outside the event hall, the police also arrived at the scene. Despite warnings voiced by community leaders, however, the officers failed to come sufficiently prepared in terms of numbers and anti-riot gear. Clashes first ensued between the two Eritrean groups, and, when the police tried to impose order, the protesters collided with them as well. Over 100 people were reported injured, including some 19 seriously.

During the clashes, the police also fired live bullets, which explains why several protesters are currently in hospital in intensive care. Not since the October 2000 protests - when police killed 13 Palestinian citizens of Israel - have police fired live ammunition at demonstrators inside the pre-1967 borders. Following the clashes, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu convened a special ministerial team to assess the situation and to determine how to handle "infiltrators who violate the law". Indeed, after over half a year of failing to come up with a strategy for dealing with the mass (overwhelmingly Jewish) demonstrations against his judicial reforms, Netanyahu was back in his element.

First, he characterised the asylum seekers as criminals and said that "the massive illegal infiltration into Israel from Africa con-

stituted a tangible threat to the future of Israel as a Jewish and democratic state". He then patted himself on the back for building a fence on Israel's southern border with Egypt which he claimed stopped "hundreds of thousands, if not millions, of Africans who would have again stormed the State of Israel". Pointing out that "there remains the problem of those who entered before the fence was completed", he went on to rally his base against the Supreme Court and all those who have been protesting against the government's efforts to introduce judicial reforms. "We wanted [to do] more," he said.

"We proposed a series of steps ... but unfortunately all of them were rejected by the High Court of Justice." Finally, echoing language used by leaders of other dark regimes, he referred to the Eritreans as a "problem" that needed to be resolved and instructed the ministerial forum to "prepare a complete and updated plan to repatriate all of the remaining illegal infiltrators from the State of Israel".

Netanyahu's latest comments fit neatly with his efforts to portray himself as Israel's saviour from Armageddon, but whereas in the past the culprits had been Iran, Hamas, Hezbollah, and Palestinians more generally, the new existential threat emanates from several thousand Eritrean asylum seekers. But who are the people that Netanyahu wants to expel? Often characterised as Africa's North Korea, Eritrea has institutionalised "forced labour" where mostly men and unmarried women are conscripted into military or civil service indefinitely for low pay - with no say in their profession or work location. Discharge from national service is arbitrary, procedures are opaque, and as Human Rights Watch reports, conscripts are often subjected to inhumane and degrading punishment, including torture.

Disappearances, extrajudicial executions and prolonged detention are also common, and any resistance to Afwerki's rule is dealt with harshly. That's why an estimated 580,000 Eritreans have sought asylum in other countries. Moreover, asylum seekers have been targeted for abuses by Eritrean authorities and security forces, both while abroad and in the wake of forced returns from countries like Egypt. Western countries

acknowledge the plight of Eritrean asylum seekers, and according to Shira Abu from the Hotline for Refugees and Immigrants in Tel Aviv, "over 80 percent have been recognised as refugees [in other countries]", only Israel's dysfunctional asylum system refuses to examine their applications in accordance with the UN Refugee Convention and internationally accepted standard". Israel, a country established to house Jewish refugees from Europe, has, as the Palestinians know full well, always resisted extending the cover of international law to non-Jews. Even after Saturday's clashes, the government does not have a ready-made solution to the Eritrean "problem". So far, the prosecutors have decided to drop criminal charges against the 50 Eritreans who were arrested in the protests, and they have been moved to administrative detention.

The logic of these moves is clear: the government can imprison the Eritreans without proving criminal wrongdoing, while a criminal record would harm the asylum seeker's chances of being accepted in another country in a process of "voluntary departure". The idea is to pressure the Eritreans to leave Israel on their own. Yet, even if the imprisoned protesters were to agree to "voluntary expulsion", no Western country will easily accept Eritrean asylum seekers who have been living in Israel for 15 years, and there is no clarity on the solutions that the ministerial committee is currently cooking. Perhaps, like the UK's plan to ship asylum seekers to Rwanda, Israel will enter some kind of nefarious agreement with another African country in exchange for a promise of Israeli weapons or military training, that may or may not be used against that country's own citizenry.

While within Israel, an apartheid system is used primarily to violate the rights of Palestinians, when it comes to asylum seekers, particularly those from Africa, the logic of apartheid operates on a global scale. The tragic reality is that in this scenario - imprisoning refugees and treating them like criminals - Israel is in no way an outlier on the international scene. We have seen this in the UK's efforts to deal with its own African migrants. The legal standards pertaining to asylum seekers would not allow repatriation, but this is how global apartheid works in a world divided by haves and have-nots.

# Why street interviews in Russia aren't your regular Vox Pops

Taisia Bekbulatova

**I** usually bite my tongue when it comes to criticizing fellow journalists. Let's face it, we're not short on critics. But it's hard to stay silent when I see them relying on street interviews, time and again, to tap into Russian sentiments about the war. Why are they still doing it?

Also known as "vox pops," these might be great for getting opinions on the new neighborhood playground or the latest summer blockbuster. But when it comes to complex issues like war, it's a different ballgame. The stakes are higher, the nuances are deeper, and the potential for misrepresentation is vast. Back in August 2022, in response to a video tweeted by Current Time, I argued that vox pops are possibly the worst format for covering war-related topics. The perspectives they represent are skewed, and the focus is often on the most outrageous opinions to ensure maximum views and shares. Anti-war sentiments from Russia are almost non-existent in these clips. The worst part is that these individuals are being filmed without consideration of the legal repercussions they might face.

Nowhere is this more clear than with the story of Yuri Kokhovets. In July 2022, he was one of the few brave souls who voiced their opinions to journalists from Radio Svboda. He boldly said that the Russian government instigated the war and should be the one to end it, and said the Russian army killed "peaceful people" for "no

reason" in Bucha. Fast forward to March 2023, and Kokhovets is in court facing criminal charges for spreading "fake news" about the army. All it took was a brief interview on the streets of Moscow, and he is looking at a potential 10 years behind bars. Radio Svboda said it wasn't sure how Kokhovets' identity was determined since his comments were anonymous. But let's be real. Personal data is traded like candy in Russia. Even the average person can identify someone from a photo, let alone special services. The FSB has access to the latest surveillance technology, which it is wielding to monitor citizens and crack down on dissent. So, why do media outlets persist with street interviews in Moscow and other cities? Firstly, old habits die hard. Why change a method if it worked in the past? There's also a certain apathy toward the fate of Russians who might end up in prison because of these videos. It's easy for journalists to say they were "just doing their job." But is it morally right if they know the potential consequences?

Lastly, these videos are effective at attracting attention. They're simple, easy to produce, and they generate lots of traffic. The less balanced and more provocative the report, the better it seems to perform, especially when it feeds into the narrative that all Russians support the war. But are these interviews truly representative of public opinion in Russia? They

can't be. Most people are aware of the consequences of speaking out and would avoid doing so on camera. Moreover, in a country where the older generation vividly remembers the Soviet era, there's a natural inclination for them to be wary and avoid foreign correspondents. Who does that leave to interview? The misinformed, the uninformed, and a tiny fraction of brave anti-war citizens. The result is a montage of pro-war sentiments that is shared eagerly online, furthering the stereotype that all Russians are warmongers. Journalists working in Russia need to innovate. Relying on old, familiar methods in a rapidly changing political and technological landscape is a recipe for disaster. In the past, you could have a chat with a person in a crowd and never see them again. Today, with facial recognition and other technologies, anonymity is a myth.

Over time, journalistic methods and formats can become obsolete. Some, upon reflection, were never ideal to begin with. Street interviews, loved by many for their candor and spontaneity, only work under conditions where people feel free to speak. In Russia's current climate, these conditions simply don't exist. Journalists must ensure that people feel safe and confident to answer, that a variety of opinions are represented, and that viewers aren't misled into believing these views represent the majority. It's time for a change.

The Moscow Times

# UK had safe water. Then Brexit allowed Tories to flush away our environmental standards

Stella Creasy

**T**HIS week politicians have again been talking crap - the kind that ends up clogging our waterways and streams and making them toxic. Nutrient neutrality sounds like something a health food drink promises. In layperson's terms, these policies ensure that the materials leaching into our natural water sources help to maintain a healthy oxygen balance so that all - fish, fowl or human - can imbibe it safely. This can be put at risk by sewage discharges into our rivers. In political terms, however, these debates are proof that this government is happy to sell our precious environmental standards down the river.

As a result of farming and development, phosphates and nitrates get discharged into the soil and then to rivers, leading to eutrophication - waterways choking with algae. The "conservation of habitats and species regulations" is one of thousands of pieces of retained EU law (REUL) copied on to the statute book after Brexit. It set out rules on how to prevent this contamination, by requiring local authorities to refuse development of sites that could lead to such dirty water; or by making polluters either pay for their behaviour or offer mitigating measures, such as creating new wetlands.

When, earlier this year, the government sought to abolish all retained EU law, ministers assured

parliament seven different times that any subsequent rules they introduced around ecological standards would not only protect standards but enhance them. But, as surely as night follows day, this government shows it cannot be trusted with our natural world.

The same secretary of state who pledged in 2017 that Brexit would "strengthen environmental protections" has now put forward plans to scrap these nutrient neutrality rules altogether. Michael Gove claims jettisoning these measures would unlock the development of about 100,000 new homes. His team loudly proclaims it is on the side of the builders - and so presumably not that of the birds whose habitat could become lethal as a result. When reminded of the government's promise, ministers argue it still stands - yet their own advisers differ. The Office for Environmental Protection, which this government set up, has warned that the proposed changes are a "regression". Ministers refuse to confirm if Natural England - their own agency that oversees the implementations of these regulations - thinks this is a good idea. Respected environmental groups are aghast, with the normally discreet RSPB outright calling ministers liars. The Wildlife Trust describes these plans as disgusting, highlighting that the UK is already

one of the worst countries for water quality in Europe. Only housing developers are delighted - not least by the increase in their share prices that accompanied the governments proposals.

No law is beyond review, to see if and how it is affecting housing development. That could have been done without seeking to ram through these proposals with minimal consultation and at the last minute in parliamentary terms. Others sense a more sinister pattern. During the RUEl bill Labour MPs raised the alarm about the lack of scrutiny built into how replacement laws would be written. Ministers dismissed this out of hand, because of their hatred of being held to account by collective EU lawmaking processes. These escapades show that not only were such concerns about their lack of respect for democracy reasonable - they were well founded.

Despite these rules around neutrality being law for four years, and multiple public interventions into housebuilding, the sudden decision that it's nutrients that are blocking development - and not the cost of materials, council administrative processes or labour shortages - smacks of short-term panic about being seen to do something, not long-term sense on land management. Although there is opposition in the House of Lords, where this

will be debated next week, unless all those Conservative MPs who pledged to protect the environment honour their commitments, the government's Commons majority means this legislation will become law. Attention should therefore turn to what other promises made to get the retained EU law bill passed by parliament may similarly now be abandoned. With so much of it concerned with natural habitat, there are fears that many more conservation protections will be sacrificed. Indeed, the REUL legislation allows the government to do this directly, through statutory instruments, doing away with even a pretence of robust parliamentary scrutiny.

As Labour Movement for Europe, we know a closer relationship with Europe after Brexit strengthens both our ability to protect the environment and provide predictability for businesses as regulation. REUL represents thousands of laws that formed the basis of our level playing field with Europe and the post-Brexit trade agreement; having left the EU, being seen to uphold our international obligations is critical to being considered trustworthy. We also know that sorting out the myriad problems Brexit has created must be an urgent priority for a future Labour government - not least because this debacle shows the Conservatives are perfectly capable of making a bad situation worse.

The Guardian

# Sturgeon's comeback show wasn't the sellout we expected

Alan Cochrane

**E**VEN though she's been away for seven months, Scotland's politicians can't get used to losing their old boss Nicola Sturgeon. Making her first speech from the backbenches - and limited to only half the speaking time she'd been accustomed to - she was still addressed, wrongly, as "First Minister" by the Deputy Presiding Officer, while a Tory MSP called her "minister".

However, for a party that's been struggling without her, it might have been assumed that the SNP's foot soldiers would have turned out in droves for what was being billed as her big comeback bid. Not a bit of it. Nicola Sturgeon's first parliamentary performance since her arrest and subsequent release in June, pending further enquiries in the matter of the Missing Six Hundred Thousand, was delivered to an

almost empty Holyrood chamber. To this observer, it suggested that in spite of all that's happened to her and her party this year, she hasn't given up on the idea of maintaining a serious political career. It was quite a performance, especially as here we had one of Britain's hardest-nosed politicians appealing for less "acrimony and stalemate" in politics but also still insisting that she wants independence for Scotland.

Mind you, she did ask Tories and Labour if they could spare some more powers short of the actual break up of Britain. Overshadowing Wednesday's events, as it has for two years, has been Police Scotland's Operation Branchform - its investigation into what happened to all that money donated by SNP members but which has now van-

ished. As well as Sturgeon, her husband, Peter Murrell was also arrested and then freed, as was the SNP's former treasurer. Nobody has been charged and Scotland's prosecuting authority, the Crown Office, has not yet received the police report. The former first minister chose a debate on equality and child poverty for her return to the lectern and, like all backbenchers, was strictly limited to a six-minute speech, whereas the government front bench is allowed double that.

The debate came twenty-four hours after Humza Youf announced his programme for government - ridiculed by his opponents as more of a "tribute act" to Sturgeon, his former boss and mentor, than for any new measures it contained. Sturgeon was kept wait-

ing by the Deputy Presiding Officer, Annabelle Ewing, before being allowed to speak but the latter made up for her mistake by initially referring to the lady who was used to being obeyed as "First Minister". In her speech, Sturgeon said this was the first time in 17 years that she hadn't been involved in her party's programme for government as either first minister or deputy first minister, and added: "To say that my perspective on politics has altered would be an understatement." And she went on in the same vein when she said: "Certain things look different - perhaps clearer - from here than from the trenches of the political frontline." When we think of all that's happened to her, as well as the astonishing drop in her party's fortunes since she resigned as first minister in February she can say that again.





# Rupee gains Rs2.03 against US Dollar

ISLAMABAD (APP): Corrective measures taken by the government have started yielding results as the Pakistani Rupee on Thursday gained Rs2.03 against the US dollar in the interbank trading and closed at Rs304.94 against the previous day's closing of 306.97.

The buying and selling rates of the dollar in the open market came down to Rs305 and Rs308 from Rs313 and Rs316 respectively, according to the Forex Association of Pakistan (FAP).

The price of the Euro decreased by Rs2.81 to close at Rs326.67 against

the last day's closing of Rs329.48, according to the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP).

The Japanese Yen came down by 02 paisa and stood at Rs2.06, whereas a decrease of Rs5.25 paisa was witnessed in the exchange rate of the British Pound, which traded at Rs380.20 as compared to the last closing of Rs385.45.

The exchange rates of the Emirates Dirham and the Saudi Riyal decreased by 55 and 53 paisa to close at Rs83.02 and Rs81.30 respectively.

To prevent smuggling and hoarding of dollar, the government launched a

massive crackdown against the elements involved in dollar smuggling, hoarding and organized crime cartels, causing loss to the national economy.

Strict action is being taken after the identification of facilitators and patrons of government officials indulged in illegal economic activities.

Accordingly, complete lists of the elements involved in illegal economic activities have been prepared; and an extensive crackdown is underway.

Considering the constant devaluation of the rupee against the US dollar, the government initiated and

implemented administrative measures against the elements involved causing a dent in the national economy.

In line with its strategy, the government has ordered to take strict action against unauthorized money changers and other mafias operating in the country. "Major policy reforms are underway. Commodity/currency trading will be changed."

Surveillance systems at land routes, sea and airports are being upgraded after the government decided "Illegal movement of goods and currency will not be allowed."

## PSX witnesses bearish trend, sheds 50.34 points

ISLAMABAD (APP): The 100-index of the Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) witnessed a bearish trend on Thursday as it lost 50.34 points and closed at 45,757.23 points against 45,807.58 of the previous trading day, showing a decline of 0.11 percent.

A total of 177,062,657 shares were traded during the day as compared to the last day's 139,710,712, whereas the trading value of shares was recorded at Rs7.581 billion against Rs4.813 billion on the last trading day.

As many as 320 companies transacted their shares in the stock market, out of which 139 gained and 159 sustained losses, whereas the share price of 22 companies remained unchanged.

The three top-trading companies were Pak Petroleum with 13,140,382 shares at Rs69.980 per share; WorldCall Telecom with 10,994,899 shares at Rs1.15 per share and Kot Addu Power with 10,981,843 shares at Rs25.97 per share.

Pak Tobacco witnessed a maximum increase of Rs37.00 per share price, closing at Rs707.00, whereas the runner-up was Reliance Cotton with Rs36.75 rise in its per share price to Rs526.75.

Lucky Cement witnessed a maximum decrease of Rs15.04 per share closing at Rs538.47; followed by Khyber Tobacco with a Rs11.61 decline to close at Rs344.38.

## Gold rates decline by Rs5,800 to Rs216,500

ISLAMABAD (APP): The per tola price of 24 karat gold decreased by Rs5,800 on Thursday and was sold at Rs216,500 as compared to its sale at Rs222,300 the previous day.

The price of 10 grams of 24 karat gold also decreased by Rs4972 to Rs185,614 from Rs190,586 whereas the rate of 10 gram 22 karat went down to Rs170,146 from Rs174,704, the All Sindh Sarafa Jewellers Association reported.

The price per tola silver decreased by Rs50 to close at Rs2650 and that of ten-gram silver also declined by Rs42.87 to Rs2271.94.

The price of gold in the international market decreased by \$5 to \$1,921 from \$1,926, the Association reported.



ISLAMABAD: American Ambassador Donald Blome meeting with Caretaker Federal Minister for Commerce, Industries and Production, Dr. Gohar Ejaz at Ministry of Commerce.

## Sugar crisis:

# CCP remains vigilant in fulfilling its role

### F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: The Competition Commission of Pakistan (CCP) is monitoring the ongoing sugar crisis in the country. If any indications of anti-competitive activities are found, CCP will take appropriate enforcement and policy actions.

It is important to highlight that CCP carried out dawn raids on Pakistan Sugar Mills Association (PSMA) in 2021 and imposed substantial penalties of Rs. 44 billion on PSMA and its member sugar mills for cartelization.

However, CCP's decision was appealed against in the High Courts of Sindh and Punjab, and in

Competition Appellate Tribunal (CAT) and recovery of penalties has been stayed. The Appellate Tribunal is dysfunctional since 14th July 2023 due to expiry of term of its Chairman whilst cases of sugar mills and similar important cases are pending. It is important to note that CAT has been dysfunctional for 7.5 years since 2010 leading to a huge backlog of cases. The sooner the Government appoints its Chairman, the quicker the Appellate Tribunal can finalise the appeals.

CCP has taken proactive measures against cartelization in the sugar sector, demonstrating its commitment to ensuring fair com-

petition. Whilst CCP acknowledges the due legal processes associated with judicial review, expediting the resolution of cartel cases is crucial for delivering effective relief to consumers. Protracted delays in resolving cartel cases will negatively impact both consumers and the overall economy.

It is important to realise that cartelization, market abuse, and abuse of dominance prevents new entrants in the industry and discourages foreign investment. The lack of competition results in higher prices for consumers. CCP is fully cognisant and vigilant in safeguarding consumers and promoting fair competition.

# EFU General Insurance wins award 2023

### F.P. Report

KARACHI: EFU General takes great pride in announcing its recent achievement as the recipient of the esteemed 20th Annual Environment Excellence Award 2023 by National Forum of Environment and Health (NFEH). This accom-

plade recognizes EFU General Insurance's unwavering commitment towards incorporating sustainable practices and environmental stewardship within its operations.

The company has consistently strived to develop innovative solutions that not only meet the needs of

its clients but also align with the broader goal of protecting and conserving the environment.

The company remains committed to driving meaningful change, spreading ecological awareness, and fostering a greener and healthier environment for future generations.



# Funds cut on education

### Umm e Fizza

As a parent of two students in our schools, I am deeply worried about the impact that these cuts will have on the quality of education that my children are receiving.

I understand that the district is facing difficult financial situation. However, I believe that cutting funding for education

is the wrong way to address this problem. Education is the foundation of our society, and it is essential that we invest in our schools.

The cuts that have already been made have had a real impact on our schools. We have seen smaller class sizes, fewer extracurricular activities, and less support for special education students. These cuts are only going to get worse if the

district does not receive additional funding.

I urge the school board to take action to address the funding crisis. I believe that there are a number of things that the district can do to raise additional revenue, such as increasing property taxes, passing a bond measure, or seeking state and federal funding.

I also believe that the district can find ways to

reduce spending without cutting essential programs. For example, the district could consolidate some administrative functions, renegotiate contracts with vendors, and eliminate unnecessary positions.

I am confident that the school board can find a solution to the funding crisis. I urge you to take action now to protect the quality of education for our children.

# Defence Day: Salute to our heroes of past and present

### Muhammad Aftab Alam

Pakistanis celebrate Defence Day on September 6 every year as a national day to commemorate the sacrifices offered by Pakistani soldiers on the altar of defending the borders of its motherland. However, the day also has special significance for commemorating the life-long struggle of countless individuals and organizations working

round the clock in an endeavor of making the defense of this country impregnable.

Pakistan Atomic Energy Commission (PAEC) is one such organization that is teeming with numerous unsung heroes who deserve recognition on this day of national pride. Having made the defense of Pakistan invincible on May 28, 1998, PAEC has now developed into the topnotch Research and Development (R&D) organization of the country. Besides, PAEC has also assumed the lead role in efforts to ensure sustainable development of the country in all spheres of life.

According to United Nations (UN): "The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, adopted by all UN Member States in

2015, provides a shared blueprint for peace and prosperity for people and the planet, now and into the future. At its heart are the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which are an urgent call for action by all countries - developed and developing - in a global partnership. They recognize that ending poverty and other deprivations must go hand-in-hand with strategies that improve health and education, reduce inequality, and spur economic growth - all while tackling climate change and working to preserve our oceans and forests."

PAEC is making a steady progress in achieving 11 out of the 17 Global Goals or SDGs on national level by using nuclear technology for peace and prosperity. Among these goals, 'SDG-7: Affordable and Clean Energy' is crucially important, as many areas of national growth are directly dependent on it. PAEC is diligently striving to meet the target set by the government of producing 8,800 megawatt (MW) of nuclear power by 2030 and 40,000 MW by the year 2050, for the country.

In this connection, the groundbreaking of the country's largest Nuclear Power Plant (NPP) was performed on July 14, 2023 in a step towards making nuclear energy the key source of power in the energy mix of the country. The 1200 MW Chashma-NPP will start generating electricity by 2030. This year, PAEC also gifted the nation with a 1100 MW of

clean, reliable and cost-effective electricity by inaugurating the much-awaited Karachi Nuclear Power Plant Unit-3 (K-3), in a giant leap to revolutionize the energy sector of the country. K-2 and K-3 are the maiden Generation-III NPPs in Pakistan with generation capacity of 1100 MW each and their addition to the national grid has contributed in reducing load shedding especially during summers.

Inauguration of K-3 is a memorable moment for Pakistan and its civil nuclear power program. It is the result of collaborated and continuous efforts of PAEC and China National Nuclear Corporation (CNNC), which culminated in a successful nuclear power program for Pakistan. The history of Pakistan's civil nuclear power program goes back to 1965 when construction of the first NPP namely Karachi Nuclear Power Plant (KANUPP) of 137 MW capacity commenced in Karachi. KANUPP started supplying electricity to national grid in 1972 and has now successfully entered the decommissioning phase after successful operation of over 5 decades.

Since then, PAEC has so far constructed four Nuclear Power Plants at Chashma with the assistance of China. These plants have total generation capacity of 1330MW. The first plant of Generation-III technology, Karachi Nuclear Power Plant Unit-2 (K-2) went into commercial operation on 21st May, 2021. Both

K-2 and K-3 possess evolutionary design with improvements based on rich experience and extensive Tests and Analyses satisfying National and International Safety Codes, Standards and Practices.

All six NPPs of Pakistan, including K-2 and K-3, are under International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) safeguards. As far as efficiency of the PAEC-operated NPPs is concerned, Chashma Nuclear Power Plant Unit-2 (C-2) made a national record in the country's history in 2020 by running for a year continuously, becoming the second electricity generation plant of the country to achieve this milestone. Previously, Chashma Nuclear Power Plant Unit-4 (C-4) had made the record of running for continuous 365 days, on July 1, 2020. These records of efficient and safe operations speak volumes of the acumen and hard work of PAEC's teams of technicians, scientists and engineers. Currently, Chashma Power Plants (C-1 to C-4) are operating at above 95% of Capacity Factor.

PAEC gives highest priority to the Safety and Security of its nuclear installations and that is why it has adopted "Safety First" as a slogan for the nuclear power plants. PAEC is cognizant of the fact that a country requires affordable and reliable energy to prosper. Pakistan's Nuclear Power Program is an important component of our quest for reliable, cost-effective and clean energy with zero car-

bon emission. Nuclear Power Program can also contribute significantly in mitigating effects of the climate change thus helping the country achieve 'SDG-13: Climate Action'. Furthermore, PAEC power plants also play an important role in the uplift of surrounding areas by improving infrastructure, creating jobs, imparting education and providing modern health facilities thus covering other SDGs. Nearly 75% employees working in Chashma are locals. Similarly, K-2/K-3 projects have given employment to over 2,000 skilled local workers.

In its quest to achieve 'SDG-3: Good Health and Well-Being', PAEC has so far established 20 Atomic Energy Cancer Hospitals (AECHs) sited in all provinces and major cities of the country. Gilgit Institute of Nuclear Medicine, Oncology and Radiotherapy (GINOR) sited in Gilgit and Diagnostic Centre in Narowal (DCN) are the latest addition, while the construction of 21st AECH has also commenced in Muzaffarabad. These hospitals are providing diagnostic and therapeutic facilities to Cancer patients at subsidized rates by dint of support from Patient Welfare Society (PWS) of the hospitals and Pakistan Bait-ul-Mal (PBM).

Nuclear Medicine, Oncology & Radiotherapy Institute (NORI) in Islamabad whereas KIRAN in Karachi and INMOL in Lahore, are among the flagship cancer hospitals

being run by PAEC. Role of these 20 hospitals in the health sector is commendable as over one million cancer patients get diagnostic and treatment facilities at these hospitals every year.

In pursuing 'SDG-2: Zero Hunger', PAEC is also taking lead in utilizing nuclear technology to improve productivity of agriculture sector through the introduction of new crop varieties, pest control technologies, plant nutrition, water management, animal health and productivity and food decontamination and preservation. Four PAEC agriculture research centres have been established in the three provinces of Pakistan having major share of the cultivatable land in the country. Nuclear Institute of Agriculture (NIA) in Tando Jam, Sindh, (1962), was the first such institute. Nuclear Institute for Agriculture and Biology (NIAB), Faisalabad, Punjab (1972), Nuclear Institute for Food and Agriculture (NIFA), Peshawar, KPK (1982) and National Institute for Biotechnology & Genetic Engineering (NIBGE), Faisalabad, Punjab (1994) were established and have contributed by developing and introducing over one hundred and fifty (150) varieties of different crops.

These centres also have a fair share in human resource development through training courses, workshops and internships, aiming to achieve 'SDG-4: Quality Education'. Different courses are rou-

tinely arranged at these centres every year for hands-on-training of latest techniques and technologies in various fields of agriculture research. These courses equally benefit researchers, students and academia from various research organizations and universities. NIAB and NIBGE in Faisalabad are also affiliated with Pakistan Institute of Engineering and Applied Sciences (PIEAS). On national as well as international level, PIEAS is the top-ranking university of the country for award of M.Phil and PhD degrees in various disciplines of engineering and other fields related to advancement in science and technology. Besides, Karachi Institute of Power Engineering (KINPOE) and Chasnup Centre of Nuclear Training (CHASCENT) are other two important centres of PAEC established for developing and training of qualified manpower for its NPPs.

Covering 'SDG-17: Partnerships for the Goals' and in the sphere of international cooperation and promotion of the culture of sharing and learning from fellow scientists' research, PAEC started conducting annual meeting of researchers and scientists in Pakistan. A brainchild of the Noble Laureate of Pakistani origin, Dr Abdul Salam, the idea of holding this annual meeting of scientists from all over the world, was adopted by the then Chairman PAEC Munir Ahmad Khan and the successive chairmen of the Commission.

## Court Notice

In the court of additional district judge and session judge/Azafi district Qazi kabal Swat. Case No.8/CR institution 07/03/2023. Hearing date 13/09/2023. Abdul Aziz etc.VS Bakht Raja etc. Notice to Respondents 1.Mst. Bakht Raja d/o sher Alam khan w/o Bakht Rawan r/o Nangolai 2.kishwar jamal 3.Abdul Hameed 4. Nisar 5. Haider ali sons Madar Afridi 6. Ikram 7.Ubaid ullah 8. Kabir Manzoor 10. Mst. Begum d/o Faramoz 11. Adalat khan 12. Sarfaraz khan 13. Akhtar Ali sons Muzafar khan r/o Bara bandai tehsil kabal district Swat 14. Rahmat ali 15. liaqat ali son's 16. Mst .shagufta 17. Mst. Farhat d/o sher Alam khan r/o Dagai tehsil kabal district Swat. Whereas the above named cannot be served in ordinary manner it is therefore proclaimed or through dually authorized agent or pleader in the court on 13/09/2023. at 8.00 am. Ex-parte proceeding will be initiated against you. Seal of the court.

## Court Notice

In the Court of Iram Aisha Civil Judge-XIII Bannu, Suit No. 28/FC institution 08.05.2023 Next date of hearing is 09.09.2023. Title: Sumaira Gul vs Murad Muhammad To: Murad Muhammad Son of Sardar Ali Khan R/O Village Ahmad Abad Tehsil Takht-i-Nusrati District Karak presently Damam KSA Phone No. 00966581523500. The defendants are informed through this notice to appear in this court on 09.09.2023. After this no excuse would be accepted and ex-parte proceedings shall be initiated against you. Given under my hand and seal of this court.





In brief

**Zone-VI Whites moved in to semi finals**  
**KARACHI** (APP): Eight more matches decided in the A.S.Natural Stone Under-13 Inter Zonal Cricket Tournament at various cricket grounds. Summarized Scores : At Landhi Gymkhana Ground Zone-IV Whites beat Zone-II Greens by 8 Wickets in the Morning match. Ateeb Wasif 3/6, Arshaman Riaz 3/6. Zone-IV Whites 77/2. Fakhar Sialvi 33. In the second match, Zone-V Whites beat Zone-III Blues by 112 runs. Zone-V Whites 190/4. M.Aqeel 53, M.Mehdi 48. Zone-III Blues 78/9. Danish Rehman 3/16. At Young Fighter Ground in the Morning Match Zone-I Whites beat Zone-VI Blues by 13 runs. Zone-I Whites 96. M.Yaseen 4/9, Mohaad Khatri 3/13. Zone-VI Blues 83. Areeb Noor 34. Azzam Abbasi 4/6. In the evening match Zone-VII Blues by 13 runs. Zone-VII Blues 117/6. Ejlal Tariq 39, M.Ahmed 31. Zone-II Whites 80. Shan e Baqar 4/10, Yahya Aslam 3/20. At TMC Ground in the morning Zone-VII Whites beat Zone-II Blues by 7 Whites. Zone-II Blues 75. Asim Shah 41. Hasan Siddiqui 4/11, Saghir Ahmed 3/15. Zone-VII Whites 76/3. In the evening match Zone-V Blues beat Zone-III Whites by 32 runs. Zone-V Blues 156/4.

**Starc eyes return to IPL in 2024**

**MELBOURNE** (INP): Australia paceman Mitchell Starc is eyeing a return to the 2024 edition of the Indian Premier League after an eight-year absence from the lucrative Twenty20 tournament. The left-armed last played for Royal Challengers Bangalore in the 2015 competition but has skipped the IPL in recent years to lighten his playing load and focus on national team duties. Starc said the IPL would be good preparation for the T20 World Cup in the United States and West Indies. "Look it's been eight years. I'm definitely going back in (next) year," the 33-year-old told the 'Willow Talk' podcast. "Amongst other things, it's a great lead-up to the T20 World Cup. "And it's somewhat of a quiet winter next year ... in comparison to this winter, so I think a perfect opportunity to put my name in." Starc is currently sidelined with a groin strain while the Australia team warm up for the 50-overs World Cup with a one-day series in South Africa. However, he has been named in Australia's provisional 15-man squad for the tournament in India starting next month.

**Alex, Jonny to start Rugby World Cup**

**NEW YORK** (BBC): Alex Mitchell and Jonny May will start for England in their World Cup opener against Argentina despite initially missing out on the 33-man squad. Scrum-half Mitchell and wing May were late additions to Steve Borthwick's squad after Jack van Poortvliet and Anthony Watson withdrew with injury. George Ford will start at fly-half with captain Owen Farrell banned for the first two pool games. Flanker Tom Curry starts his first game since the Premiership final in May. Open-side Curry, who started the 2019 World Cup final defeat by South Africa, is yet to feature for England this summer after recovering from an ankle injury. Ben Earl replaces Saracens team-mate Billy Vunipola, who is suspended for the opening game following his red card against Ireland in England's penultimate warm-up game, at number eight.

## Women’s ODI series against South Africa to begins today

**PESHAWAR** (APP): Pakistan women’s team will aim to continue their good run in the three-match ODI series against South Africa after sweeping the touring side 3-0 in the T20I series played at the National Bank Stadium in Karachi. The three ODIs, which are also part of the ICC Women’s Championship 2022-25, will be played at the National Bank Stadium on September 8, 11 and 14. The first ODI between both sides will mark skipper Nida Dar’s 100th ODI, and she will be eager to make it a memorable one. All-rounder Nida has played 16 ODIs against South Africa, scoring 246 runs, including three half-centuries and has taken 18 wickets with 4-15 her best against the opposition. The three ODI matches will be broadcast live on PTV Sports/PTV National, while in Pakistan Region, they will be live-streamed on ARY ZAP. The toss will take place at 1500, while the first ball will be bowled at 1530 PST. To encourage fans to come to the ground, affordable ticket prices have been fixed for the three championship matches. The tickets for the matches have been put on sale on bookme.pk. Additionally, physical tickets will be made available to fans on match days at the stadium’s box office. All VIP enclosures of Fazal Mahmood, Hanif

Mohammad, and Javed Miandad will be open for spectators. Pakistan currently ranked fourth in the ICC Women’s Championship with 10 points from nine matches, will aim to get maximum points in the forthcoming ODI series. This will be Pakistan’s third ICC Women’s Championship series at home in just over a year. Last year, Pakistan defeated Sri Lanka by 2-1 in Karachi and later clean-swept Ireland in a three-match ODI series in Lahore. In an away series against Australia in January this year, Pakistan women’s team lost 3-0. On the other hand, South Africa, ranked ninth in the ICC Championship 2022-25, has played and won their only series in the ICC Women’s Championship to date, defeating Ireland 3-0. They are currently third in the ODI rankings, while the hosts are ranked 10th. South Africa’s captain Laura Wolvaardt, who was named player of the series in the T20I series with 157 runs from three matches, will be looking to continue her rich vein of form in the ODIs. Meanwhile, the home side will be banking on Sidra Amin, Fatima Sana and Ghulam Fatima, all of whom figure prominently in the ICC Women’s Championship 2022-2025 run-scoring and wicket-taking charts. Right-handed batter Sidra, to date has made 535 runs from nine

ICC Women’s Championship 2022-25 matches, occupying the second spot in batting charts. She was also among the runs in the three-match T20I series, scoring 133 runs at a strike-rate of 116.67. In the bowling, right-arm fast Fatima Sana leads the ICC Women’s Championship table with 16 scalps from nine matches. 21-year-old Fatima will aim to significantly contribute to the team’s cause in front of the local crowd. Leg-spinner Ghulam Fatima, is also among the wickets for the home side. She has featured in six ICC Women’s Championship matches and has taken 12 wickets, including her maiden five-wicket haul against Ireland in the third ODI in Lahore last year. In head-to-head encounters, Pakistan and South Africa have faced each other in 25 matches to date. South Africa have won 19 matches, while Pakistan have won in four outings. One match was tied, while one ended in a no result. Left-arm spinner Nashra Sundhu, who has bowled economically against South Africa in the T20I series and bagged four wickets said: “Our recent 3-0 victory in the T20I series against South Africa was a fantastic confidence booster for the team. We have been working tirelessly on our skills, and it’s clear that our hard work is paying off.

## PM talent hunt badminton trials takes place

**LAHORE** (APP): Prime Ministers Talent Hunt Youth badminton Sports League trials for men and women concluded on Thursday successfully in Rawalpindi, showcasing an impressive array of players who displayed their remarkable skills. Ammara Rubab the organizer of the trials said here that the trials, attracted a substantial number of participants. “The event was graced with the presence of esteemed selectors who

diligently assessed the participants’ abilities. Notably, high-ranking officials from the Higher Education Commission attended the trials and engaged in conversations with the aspiring athletes, further uplifting the significance of this initiative”, said Ammara who is the head of Kinniard college for women Lahore. The University of Sargodha and Kinnaird College for Women, Lahore, joined hands to organize the trials for male and female players, respec-

tively. This collaboration underscores the commitment to nurturing talent and promoting gender equality in sports, she said. “The journey of discovering exceptional talent continues as the next leg of trials is set to take place in Sialkot on the 12th and 13th of September at the Sports Gymnasium”, said Ammara adding “This event promises to bring forth more outstanding athletes who aspire to make their mark in the world of Badminton”.

## Pakistan team reach Colombo for Super Four game against India

**ISLAMABAD** (APP): Pakistan team has landed in Colombo to play their second match of the Super Four of Asia Cup against India on September 10. Pakistan cricket team left for Colombo after win-

ning the Super Four match against Bangladesh in Lahore, said a press release. Pakistan team would rest on Thursday and Friday. The team will participate in the training session on September 9 and

play the second match of the Super Four against India on September 10 in Colombo. Meanwhile, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka teams have also reached Colombo along with the Pakistan team.

## Pakistan to host Asian Open Taekwondo C’ship

**ISLAMABAD** (APP): The 5th COMBAXX Asian Open Taekwondo Championship will be held in Islamabad in November. The Executive Office and General Assembly of the Asian Taekwondo Federation was held in Beirut, Lebanon. Delegates from 30 Asian countries participated in the general assembly chaired by AFC President Kyu Seok Lee. Pakistan Taekwondo Federation President Col (R) Waseem Janjua and Secretary General Murtaza

Bangash represented Pakistan in the meeting, said a press release. On the occasion, AFC President Lee Kyu Seok announced the hosting of the 5th COMBAXX Asian Open Taekwondo Championship in Pakistan. Assuring full support to the Pakistan Taekwondo Federation for the championship, Prof. Kyu Seok Lee said that the 4th Asian Open Taekwondo Championship was successfully organized in Pakistan last year under the

auspices of PTF. “I am looking forward to seeing the talent of Pakistani taekwondo players”, he said. Waseem Janjua termed the hosting of the Asian Championship as an honour for Pakistan. While thanking AFC President Lee Kyu Seok and other officials, he said that the Asian Championship would be held in November this year in Islamabad and will be attended by top class Taekwondo players from around the world.

## Dr. Marwat announces to start sports competitions soon

**PESHAWAR** (APP): Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Caretaker Minister for Sports and Science and Information Technology Dr. Najeebullah Khan Marwat has said that steps have been taken to keep the ground activities all across Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and soon competitions would be organized at Tehsil, District, Provincial and National levels. Talking to a group of journalists from the Sports Writers Association, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, he said that they would manage sports affairs on merit in consultation with all stakeholders. Sports fields should not be empty, competitions will be held in districts including Peshawar, he added. They will try to get people out of despair by organizing large-scale sports activities, the

Caretaker Sports Minister told reporters and expressed happiness over the talent that exists in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Dr. Najeebullah said that sports affairs will be run on merit in consultation with all stakeholders, and corruption will not be tolerated, and whatever time there is for sports. The youth will be guided in the right direction, sports is an effective medium through which the youth can be kept away from negative activities, he said. He said that in countries like Pakistan, youth can be kept in balance through sports, mental strength comes from sports, and they will try to prepare for leadership by using sports as a tool, parents and youth should be realised that sports activities are good for mental strength besides it teaches us tolerance and brotherhood.

## Medvedev douses Rublev to reach US Open semis

**NEW YORK** (AFP/APP): Daniil Medvedev defeated fellow Russian Andrey Rublev 6-4, 6-3, 6-4 in scorching conditions Wednesday to reach his fourth US Open semi-final and set up a possible meeting with defending champion Carlos Alcaraz. Third seed Medvedev, the 2021 US Open champion, rallied from a break down in all three sets as he condemned a frustrated Rublev to a ninth straight Grand Slam quarter-final loss. Medvedev will play Alcaraz or German 12th seed Alexander Zverev for a place in Sunday's final after an energy-sapping duel against the eighth-ranked Rublev as the temperature hit 95 degrees Fahrenheit (35 degrees Celsius) in New York.

At one point during the third set Medvedev muttered to a nearby TV camera "one player is going to die and they're going to see" as he grabbed a towel mid-game. "The conditions were brutal. The only good thing is that both players suffer, so it's tough for both of us," Medvedev said after the 2hr 48min encounter, during which the extreme heat policy was in effect. "At the end of the first set I kind of couldn't see the ball anymore. I kind of just played with sensations." Medvedev overturned a 3-0 defeat in the opening set in a repeat of their 2020 quarter-final here. He dropped serve twice in the second set but hit back for a 4-3 lead before summoning the trainer complaining of breathing difficulties. Medvedev resisted three break points the very next game and broke once more to claim a two-set lead. Both players repeatedly packed towels with ice around their necks at changeovers, hunching over at times after draining rallies, while Medvedev took puffs from an inhaler. Rublev surged in front in the third set only for Medvedev to respond on both occasions, sealing victory in a marathon final game courtesy of his nine break of the match. "I know he never gives up.



The thing is he knows I never (give up) too," said Medvedev. "A few moments in the third set he was up a break. "I couldn't wait to go to the cold shower, but the thing about that is when you come out either you can't move because your body blocks or you feel better. "I just thought I don't care, I'm just going to do it, but I didn't need to, so I am going to do it now."

**Alcaraz defeats Zverev to reach US Open semi-finals:** Top seed Carlos Alcaraz defeated Alexander Zverev in straight sets on Wednesday to cruise into the US Open semi-finals and keep his title defence on track. The Spaniard will play third seed Daniil Medvedev on Friday for a place in the final after sweeping Zverev aside 6-3, 6-2, 6-4 in another clinical performance. Alcaraz was not at his spectacular best but dominated at critical moments with Zverev perhaps feeling the effects of a 4hr 41min outing in the last 16 in the tournament's longest match so far. The world number one converted all four of his break points, while Zverev failed to take any of his five chances. "I'm feeling really comfortable playing on this court, playing in New York," said Alcaraz, who has dropped just one set en route to the last four.

"I'm feeling strong. I think I'm ready for a great battle against Medvedev." The 20-year-old Alcaraz is now 24-1 in his last four Grand Slams going back to the start of last year's US Open. His only loss in that time came to Novak Djokovic in the French Open semi-finals. Zverev sensed an opportunity when he twice brought up break point in the seventh game, but Alcaraz held firm and then rubbed salt in the wound by smashing a volley at the net to dart 5-3 ahead.

A comfortable service game earned Alcaraz the set and he didn't wait long till to hammer home his advantage, whipping a crunching backhand to break for a 2-1 lead in the second set. The top seed punished a Zverev double fault by breaking once more for 5-2, cemented with a one-two combination of blistering forehands. Alcaraz snuffed out a break point in the second game of the third set, thwarting Zverev twice more two games later -- continuing the theme of raising his game throughout when it mattered most. He needed no second invitation when another opening presented itself on Zverev's serve at 4-all, slashing a wicked forehand to close in on victory before serving it out for a spot in the semi-finals.

## Babar, Shadab on ICC Men’s Player of the Month shortlist

**ISLAMABAD** (APP): The International Cricket Council (ICC) on Thursday revealed the latest list of names that comprise the nominees for the ICC Men's and Women's Player of the Month awards.

Following a number of competitive white-ball fixtures that took place during August, five nations are represented among the candidates vying for the accolades as voting commences among the panel and global cricket fans.

The nominees for the ICC Men's Player of the Month award features two stars of Pakistan's recent One Day International (ODI) success, as well as the Player of the Series in the West Indies' T20I triumph over India.

As Pakistan continue their preparations ahead of the ICC Men's Cricket World Cup in India, skipper Babar Azam enjoyed a fine spell with the bat in August, scoring valuable runs as his side claimed a whitewash series victory over Afghanistan, and posting a three-figure score in their opening Asia Cup fixture. At the other end of the crease, Shadab Khan was also prolific, demonstrating his bowling threat with wicket-taking spells in the same fixtures. Completing the lineup is West Indies' short format hero Nicholas Pooran, who was named the star man for spearheading his side's 3-2 T20I series victory against India on home soil. The shortlist for the ICC Women's Player of the Month Award features three first-time nominees; a dynamic Malaysian all-rounder, a skilful Irish seamer and a firing Dutch opener.

Ainna Hamizah Hashim was a key figure for Malaysia, chipping in with valuable runs and taking vital wickets against the likes of Kuwait and Nepal, before registering a good performance in their opening fixture in the ICC Women's T20 World Cup Asia Qualifier. Also on the shortlist is Ireland's Arlene Kelly, who blitzed the Netherlands batting lineup with a host of wickets in their recent T20I series victory. Providing some resistance for the Dutch was opener Iris Zwilling, who posted half-centuries atop the order against Ireland and Jersey during her successful month.

An independent ICC Voting Academy and fans around the world will now be invited to cast their votes to decide the winners, which will be announced next week. Fans registered at icc-cricket.com/awards will be able to vote for their favourite performers until Sunday.

ICC Men's Player of the Month Nominees for August: Babar Azam (PAK) While collective success at the

upcoming ICC Men's Cricket World Cup will be in focus, Babar has celebrated several personal accolades in recent months, not least the Sir Garfield Sobers Trophy for ICC Men's Cricketer of the Year for his performances last year. He now sets his sights on becoming the first men's cricketer to win three ICC Men's Player of the Month Awards after scores of 53 and 60 helped secure a 3-0 ODI series victory over Afghanistan, and a mammoth 151 ensured Pakistan routed Nepal in the Asia Cup opener last month.

Shadab Khan (PAK): Shadab is nominated for the first time in the Player of the Month awards as his notable contributions with bat and ball in August set Pakistan up for success against Afghanistan and Nepal. The first two fixtures against Afghanistan heralded just a solitary wicket, but he clicked in the final fixture, taking three for 42 to secure the whitewash. Like Babar, Shadab then reserved his best display for the last outing in the calendar month, launching their Asia Cup campaign with a spell of four for 27 in the win against Nepal.

Nicholas Pooran (WD): With 176 runs across his five T20I outings against India which led to a vital 3-2 series victory, Nicholas Pooran is also a strong contender for this month's prize. Following defeats in the Test and ODI showdowns in the weeks prior, Pooran inspired the West Indies' resurgence in the shortest format with two forty-plus scores book-ending a match-winning 67 in 40 balls in the second dual in Guyana. For his exploits, Pooran was named Player of the Series, and earns the islanders' first nomination in the Men's Player of the Month awards since Gudakesh Motie was shortlisted in February 2023.

ICC Women's Player of the Month Nominees for August:

Ainna Hamizah Hashim (MAL): The all-rounder has been a regular fixture in Malaysia's growth in the T20I format, and thanks to her performances with bat and ball in August, she becomes her country's first ever nominee in the Player of the Month awards. As well as topping the run-scoring charts, Hamizah Hashim also chipped in with key wickets during the Malaysia Women's Quadrangular T20I Series and subsequently the ICC Women's T20 World Cup Asia Qualifier, most notably in winning causes against Kuwait and Nepal. Throughout the month, she recorded 105 runs at an average of 52.50 with six wickets.

Arlene Kelly (IRE): Kelly enjoyed a prolific month with the ball in August, and orchestrated much

of the success that saw Ireland sweep Netherlands 3-0 in Amstelveen. Her ten wickets included a Player of the Match performance in the first T20I thanks to a spell of five wickets for 12 runs. Three for 11 and two for 20 followed in the final two duels, leaving Kelly with a spectacular average of 4.30 from the series. She will hope to follow in the footsteps of Laura Delany, who last won the Women's Player of the Month prize for Ireland in October 2021.

Iris Zwilling (NED): With fine performances across series with Ireland and Jersey, young Netherlands' opener Zwilling is shortlisted for the Women's Player of the Month awards, following in the footsteps of men's compatriot Bas de Leede who was nominated in July. Zwilling scored 178 runs from her six outings during the calendar month, registering half-centuries against both opponents from atop the order. Strengthening her claim for the prize is also an impressive strike rate of 102, and economical bowling spells.

The ICC Player of the Month Voting Process:

The three nominees for either category are shortlisted based on performances from the first to the last day of each calendar month. The shortlist is then voted on by the independent ICC Voting Academy and fans around the world. The ICC Voting Academy comprises prominent members of the cricket fraternity including well-known journalists, former players, broadcasters and members of the ICC Hall of Fame. The Voting Academy submit their votes by email and hold a 90 per cent share of the vote. Fans registered with the ICC can vote via the ICC website, accounting for the remaining 10 per cent. Winners are announced every second Monday of the month on ICC's digital channels.

Voting Academy for ICC Player of the Month August 2023:

Afghanistan: Hameed Qayoomi and Javed Hamim; Australia: Scott Bailey and Lisa Shalekar; Bangladesh: Mohammad Sekander Ali and Md Ariful Islam Roney; England: Elizabeth Ammon and Lydia Greenway; Ireland: Ger Siggins and Clare Shillington; India: S Gomes and Irfan Pathan; New Zealand: Merryn Anderson and Craig Cumming; Pakistan: Sawera Pasha and Sana Mir; South Africa: Zaahier Adams and Ashwell Prince; Sri Lanka: Azzam Ameen and Farveez Maharoof; West Indies: Daren Ganga and Stacy Ann King; Zimbabwe: Daniel Nkhaniso and Grant Flower; Others: Ajit Vijaykumar and Dirk Nannes.

## Adviser to CM Punjab announces cash award for Olympian javelin thrower

**LAHORE** (APP): Acknowledging the remarkable achievement, Adviser to Chief Minister Punjab on Sports and Youth Affairs Wahab Mohsin Naqvi.

"No doubt, Arshad has accomplished a great feat and created history by winning Pakistan's first-ever medal in World Athletics Championships," he added. He said Punjab Sports and Youth Affairs Department is working for the welfare of all national male and female athletes. "Punjab government will patronize all those players who will

give a cash award to javelin thrower Arshad Nadeem on the instructions of Punjab Chief Minister Mohsin Naqvi.

"The future of sports and athletes is bright in Punjab. Punjab Sports and Youth Affairs Department is working effectively on strengthening the sports sector on the directions of Punjab Chief Minister Mohsin Naqvi".

work hard with great amount of passion and dedication and win laurels for the country," he explained.

Adviser to Chief Minister Punjab on Sports further said that Punjab Endowment Fund is being launched soon.





## In brief

### 'Religious needs of minorities'

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Capital Development Authority (CDA) has taken all possible steps to fulfill the religious needs of minority communities in the federal capital. "The CDA has allocated two cremation grounds, measuring 0.49 acres and 0.50 acres, for the Hindu and Buddhist communities respectively in Sector H-9," an official in the authority told APP. Moreover, the official said that graveyards have been provided for Christians (9.01 acres), Bhais (1.70 acres), and Qadianis (3,424 acres) in Sector H-9 and Sector H-8 of the capital. He said this move aims to ensure that all communities have access to appropriate facilities for their burial rites. The CDA has also addressed the issue of sewage treatment and water recycling, highlighting its commitment to environmental sustainability.

### 48 FIRs, registered for violating dengue SOPs

RAWALPINDI (APP): The District Health Authority (DHA) registered 48 FIRs and sealed 11 premises on violations of anti-dengue SOPs during the last 24 hours. District Coordinator Epidemics Prevention and Control (DCEPC), Dr Sajjad Mehmood on Thursday said that the health department in collaboration with concerned departments, issued tickets to seven and imposed a fine of Rs 176,000 on violations of dengue SOPs during the last 24 hours. At that time, the health officer said that 76 patients were admitted to various health facilities in the district, out of which 46 have been confirmed while 270 have been discharged after treatment. Dr Sajjad added that after 15 more positive cases were diagnosed in the last 24 hours, the total number of confirmed cases in the district rose to 316. The health officer said that most of the cases have been reported from Rawalpindi Cantonment and Potohar Town areas where necessary response activities are being carried out to eradicate the larvae. He urged the residents to remove stagnant water, especially after rain in outdoor and household settings to stop mosquitoes from breeding.

### Police arrest 16 drug peddlers

RAWALPINDI (APP): Rawalpindi police in an action against suspected drug peddlers conducted raids in different areas and rounded up 16 accused on recovery of over 16 kg charras and other items. According to a police spokesman, Naseerabad police netted Ghulam Rasool with 1400 grams charras and Naeem for having 1320 grams charras. City police held waqar and recovered 1250 grams charras from his possession. Saddar Wah police in their operation managed to recover 1200 grams charras from Danish and 1150 grams charras from the possession of Shehbaz. Similarly, Sadiqabad, Saddar Baroni, Race Course, Wah Cantt, R.A.Bazar and Westridge police nabbed Aqib, Jannat Gul, Jahangir, Jaffar Hussain, Rizwan, and Jamshaid and recovered 2200, 2050, 1800, 1160, 1250 and 1200 grams charras respectively. Separate cases have been registered against all accused while further investigations are underway. City Police Officer, Rawalpindi had directed the police officers to accelerate ongoing operations against drug peddlers, bootleggers and other law-breakers, he added.



ISLAMABAD: President Dr. Arif Alvi and Begum Samina Alvi offering condolences and Fateha over the demise of the wife of Air Chief Marshal (r) Asghar Khan.

## Pakistan Air Force pays homage to its Martyrs

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Air Force observed 7th September as 'Day at all PAF Bases throughout the country. The day commenced with a solemn observance, including special Du'aa and Quran Khawani, dedicated to the martyrs of the 1965 & 1971 Wars, as well as those who made the ultimate sacrifice in the line of duty since the establishment of Pakistan.

Air Chief Marshal Zaher Ahmed Baber Sidhu, Chief of the Air Staff, Pakistan Air Force was the Chief Guest during a Martyrs' Day Ceremony held at Air Headquarters, Islamabad. Addressing on the occasion, the Air Chief said that PAF

has a proud history of sacrifice, valour and professionalism. He highlighted that the Martyrs' Day is an embodiment of exceptional bravery, flawless professionalism, and an unparalleled spirit of sacrifice of the Armed Forces of Pakistan. Hailing the glorious deeds of heroism displayed by the Martyrs of Pakistan Air Force, the Air Chief said, "We owe our heroes an eternal debt of gratitude for what they have done for us, setting a supreme example of sacrifice for generations to come. On this solemn occasion, we extend our heartfelt tributes to those heroes who made the ultimate sacrifice for our motherland."

Chief of the Air Staff also expressed solidarity

with Kashmiri brothers and sisters in their indigenous and just struggle for self-determination. In his concluding remarks, he reiterated his resolve to make all-out efforts for the progress and development of Pakistan in the constantly evolving global landscape and pledged that Pakistan Air Force would continue to strive hard for the advancement in space, electronic warfare, cyber, niche technologies and indigenous defence capability to ensure sovereignty and territorial integrity of Pakistan. Later, to pay homage to the martyrs, the Air Chief laid floral wreath at the Martyrs' Monument and offered Fateha.

## PR spends Rs.1862 M for rehabilitation of track between Kotri-Khanpur

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan Railways is spending Rs. 1862.84 million for the rehabilitation of 518 kilometers of track between Kotri-Khanpur under the project of Immediate Track Safety Works (ITSW-I).

Despite financial constraints, the management of Pakistan Railways is putting maximum effort into improving infrastructure including tracks, bridges, and stations, an official in the Ministry of Railways told APP.

Under the project of rehabilitation of Karachi Port tracks, 24-kilometre tracks, 17 level crossings, and seven bridges have been

rehabilitated, along with the replacement of turnouts.

The official said that Railway Dry Ports at Lahore (Mughalpur), Badami Bagh, and Azakhel have been upgraded.

He said under the Immediate Track Safety Works (ITS W-II & IMTS W-III), the railway track between Tando Adam Khanpur covering 456 kilometers would be rehabilitated at a cost of Rs. 4830.437 million and Rs.4875.461 million, respectively, by replacing the US components of the track and ensuring the safety of train operation. A PC-I amounting to

Rs.4930.22 million for the rehabilitation of track machinery has been approved, which would ensure the quality of track maintenance work.

Meanwhile, 11 stations have been upgraded, including Peshawar, Hassan Abdal, Rawalpindi, Gujranwala, Lahore, Narowal, Nankana Sahib, Raiwind, Okara, Sahiwal, and Bahawalpur, under PSDP projects.

The project of up-gradation of Main Line-I at a cost of \$6.683 billion has been negotiated with the Chinese side for completing the ML-1 in two phases consisting of four packages, he added.

## Chairman WAPDA for ensuring completion of diversion scheme in upcoming low-flow season

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chairman WAPDA Engr Lt Gen Sajjad Ghani (Retd) has directed the contractor to ensure completion of the diversion system during the up-coming low-flow season for diversion of River Swat. The Chairman visited various construction sites of the project to review the progress achieved so far, said a press release. He witnessed concrete works on upper stilling basin of the spillway; also observed construction activities at left and right abutments of the dam and various components of the diversion system including the diversion tunnels. GM and PD Mohmand Dam Project, the

consultants and the contractors were also present during the visit.

Later in a briefing, schedule for diversion scheme, resource loaded programme for quarry development, stock piling and dam filling as well as activity-wise resource loaded programme for the whole project were discussed. The Chairman said that achieving the key milestones on time is inevitable for completion of Mohmand Dam Project in accordance with the schedule. He emphasized upon the project team, the contractors in particular, to make concerted efforts in this regard.

## ADC East reviews anti-Polio campaign, issues instructions for further improvements

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Additional Deputy Commissioner (ADC) East of Islamabad, Usman Ashraf, chaired a review meeting on the performance of the third day of anti-polio campaign on Thursday. The meeting was attended by Assistant Commissioners, Magistrates, Health Department officials, and other stakeholders.

The Assistant Commissioners and representatives of the Health Department briefed the meeting on the progress of the campaign. They said that a total of 1.2 million children under the age of five had been vaccinated in the East District so far.

They also said that there had been no reports of any adverse reactions to the vaccine. The Additional Deputy Commissioner East expressed satisfaction

with the progress of the campaign, but he also issued instructions for further improvements. He directed the Assistant Commissioners to ensure that all children under the age of five are vaccinated, even in the most remote areas.

He also directed them to increase awareness about the importance of polio vaccination among parents and the general public. The Additional Deputy Commissioner East said that polio is a serious disease that can cause paralysis and death.

He urged all parents to get their children vaccinated against polio to protect them from this devastating disease.

The meeting concluded with a renewed commitment to eradicate polio from Pakistan. All the stakeholders agreed to work together to achieve this goal.

### AIOU to celebrate Golden Jubilee

ISLAMABAD (APP): Vice Chancellor of Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU), Prof. Dr. Nasir Mahmood on Thursday said that the university would celebrate its Golden Jubilee in 2024.

It was decided during a meeting in which discussed plans for the Golden Jubilee celebrations of the university, said a news release. As AIOU will mark its 50th anniversary next year, he instructed the Deans, Professors and Principal Officers to ensure the participation of students in the celebrations. Various committees have been formed by the university administration to finalize preparations for the event.

## PM directs measures to address issues confronting overseas Pakistanis

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar on Thursday directed the authorities concerned to take all-out measures to resolve the problems being faced by the overseas Pakistanis.

The prime minister, talking to his Special Assistant for Overseas Pakistanis Jawad Sohrab Malik who called on him, said the expatriates were a precious asset for Pakistan.

In the meeting, they discussed the matters pertaining to the Ministry for Overseas Pakistanis.

The prime minister said the welfare of the overseas Pakistanis was among the government's priorities.

He said the expatriates had been making a positive contribution to the nation-

al economy through their remittances.

**Health minister calls on prime minister:** Federal Minister for Health Dr Nadeem Jan Thursday called on Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar. In the meeting, they discussed the matters pertaining to the Ministry for National Health Services, Regulations and Coordination, according to a PM Office statement.

**Foreign Minister Jilani calls on PM Kakar:** Interim Minister for Foreign Affairs Jalil Abbas Jilani on Thursday called on Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar here.

In the meeting, they discussed the matter pertaining to the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, according to a PM Office statement.

## DC visits Chehlum procession route, reviews security arrangements

ISLAMABAD (APP): Deputy Commissioner (DC) Irfan Nawaz Memon Thursday visited the designated route of chehlum procession of Hazrat Imam Hussain and reviewed the fool-proof security arrangements.

He was accompanied by SSP Operations, Additional Deputy Commissioners (ADCs), concerned SPs, Assistant Commissioners (ACs) and Magistrates, and stakeholders of all relevant departments.

The DC inspected the security arrangements along the procession route and directed the police officers to ensure that no stone is left unturned to ensure the safety of the participants.

He said that the police officers on duty would not leave their point until the end of duty. Senior police officers would periodically check and brief the duty officers.

Moreover, walk-through gates have been installed at the entry point of the procession and participants will be

allowed to enter after a body search. Specialist snipers will be deployed on rooftops for the security of the procession. Roads, bridges and other public places have been blocked.

The implementation of the code of conduct and SOP issued regarding Hazrat Imam Hussain has been ensured in every case. The DC said, "Islamabad Police is using all resources to ensure foolproof security arrangements."

Deputy Commissioner (DC) Irfan Nawaz Memon further said, "Protecting the lives and property of the citizens is the primary responsibility of the ICT Administration, and they are fully committed to it."

"The procession of Chehlum will enter the street No 30, after which the Maghrib prayer will be offered at the Martyrs Square," he informed.

Deputy Commissioner (DC) Irfan Nawaz Memon appealed to the participants to cooperate with the police and maintain law and order.

## China, a land of ancient traditions and modern marvels has long been a fascination for travelers: Wasi

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Minister of State for Tourism Syed Wasi Shah has said that Pakistan and China Year of Tourism celebrations 2023 would pave the way to further enhance the journey to promote the country's tourism industry.

Addressing a ceremony of Pakistan and China Year of Tourism-2023 organized by Pakistan-China friendship association of Khyber in collaboration with Pakistan Tourism Development Corporation (PTDC), the minister said the friendship of Pakistan with the brotherly nation of China was stronger than mountains, deeper than oceans and sweeter than honey, whereas Pakistan welcomed its Chinese friends to invest with open arms in the country.

The organiser of the event and Secretary General of Pak-China Friendship Association - KP Chapter, Syed Ali Nawaz Gillani thanked the honourable guests.

State Minister Wasi Shah said that China, a land of ancient traditions and modern marvels has long been a fascination for travelers around the world. "With a population exceeding 1.4 billion, in recent years, Chinese citizens have demonstrated an increasing appetite for travel, both domestically and abroad," he added. He apprised the participants that before the global pandemic, China's outbound tourists spent more than 255 billion dollars on tourism. It showed the enthusiasm of the Chinese people for exploring the world. In connection to Pak China Year of Tourism, PTDC had organized several webinars to connect the tour operators of China and Pakistan to enhance B2B linkages. A training seminar on Tourism promotion for developing countries was also being held in Beijing China from 22nd August to 11th September, 2023 in which two officers from PTDC and one from Tourism Department of Gilgit



Baltistan were participating, he added. He said, "We have also developed our publications on Pakistan and Buddhist Heritage Trail in Chinese language for the promotion of bilateral tourism. They are now available in printed form and also as e-publications on our website. We are also closely working with our Embassy in Beijing and they are doing their best to promote tourism in China."

Chinese Tourists can also now apply for tourist visa online via our E-portal for visa, he maintained. The minister said that it was his immense pleasure to announce that in November 2023, PTDC is also sending a delegation of tour operators to participate in China Outbound Travel and Tourism Mart in Beijing. "It will be greatly helpful to build B2B linkages between the tour operators of both the countries and as result tourist traffic between the two countries will further increase," he added. However, he said that numerous opportunities were expected to emerge significantly in the next decades due to the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) and other business ventures.

The event was attended by Senior Anchor Person, Journalist and

Analyst Mr. Saleem Safi, Member Federal Public Service Commission of Pakistan Mr. Akbar Durrani, Federal Secretary Religious Affairs Dr. Aftab Akbar Durrani, Director MOFA Mr. Bilal Shah, General Secretary Pak China Friendship Association Punjab Mr. Usman Shahjehan, Mr. Mehmood Ahmad Khan ABID, Vice President CPNE Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Mr. Tahir Farooq & President Khyber Union of Journalist Peshawar Mr. Nasir Hussain. Senior Journalist and Analyst Saleem Safi while speaking on the occasion said that Pakistan-China friendship was exemplary and time-tested as CPEC was a gift of our brotherly country China. Pakistan was trying its best to ensure peaceful environment at tourist sites to attract foreign tourists, he added.

Cultural Consular China Zheng Heqing thanked Pakistan for celebrating Pakistan and China Year of Tourism-2023 that would pave the way to promote bilateral tourism between two nations. China is showing keen interest in investing in Pakistan's tourism industry, he added.



ISLAMABAD: Saudi Ambassador to Pakistan H.E. Nawaf Saeed Al Malki called on the Caretaker Federal Health Minister Dr. Nadeem Jan.



10 uplift projects completed

JALALABAD (Agencies): The Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development announced the completion of ten different development projects in the Momandara district of Nangarhar. The projects have been completed and put into operation at a cost of 19.5 million Afghanis with the financial assistance of UNOPS, the technical cooperation of DAKAR Organization, and under the umbrella and supervision of the Rural Rehabilitation and Development Department.

Art gallery reopened

HERAT (TOLOnews): The head of the Behzad Gallery in Herat province of Afghanistan, Mohammad Ibrahim Habibi, told TOLOnews that the gallery that was barricaded by armed employees of Herat's Department of Vice and Virtue, reopened. Habibi said that the gallery was blocked because two little girls were learning there, and the department of Vice and Virtue said that teaching girls and face-painting should be avoided.

## 20m in Afghanistan experiencing hunger

KABUL (TOLOnews): A paper written by Abdulkader Sinno and originally published on devpolicy.org was republished by the Australian National University, and it says nearly 20 million people are experiencing hunger in Afghanistan and that the imbalance between the world and Kabul must be broken.

According to the report, it is possible that a number of Afghan citizens will face famine in the coming winter.

"The collapse of Afghanistan's economy after the US withdrawal in 2021 has led to the current food shortage. The shortage partly stems from the end of Western funding support, severe drought, and the rise in wheat prices due to the Ukraine war. But damaging policies pursued by the Taliban on the one hand and the United States and its European allies on the other have also played a

part," the paper said.

Fahim is busy working in the corner of Kabul city. He said that he earns less than 100 Afghanis a day and has not made any preparations for winter. "When winter comes, problems will increase and more help will be needed, if aid is not provided, problems will increase," said Fahim.

Meanwhile, the United Nations Humanitarian Aid Coordination Office says that they have earmarked \$125 million for countries that need help, of which \$20 million have been allocated to Afghanistan.

The United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs in Afghanistan said that they have earmarked \$125 million for countries that need help, of which \$20 million have been allocated to Afghanistan.

"This brings to 10 million the number of people cut off from its support this

year in the country due to a massive funding shortfall going forward," said Farhan Haq, Deputy Spokesperson for the Secretary-General.

The Ministry of Economy said that the imposition of sanctions in the past two years has caused more economic challenges in the country.

"Restrictions should be removed as soon as possible and help to the people of Afghanistan should be continued more strongly so that our dear compatriots do not face problems in the winter season," said Abdul Latif Nazari, deputy of the economy ministry.

This is while the United Nations Security Council has said in a report that fifty-six humanitarian aid programs in Afghanistan have been stopped due to the intervention of "the Taliban," an issue that has always been denied by the Islamic Emirate.

## Freedom Now Org stands with women

KABUL (Khaama Press): Seven days have passed since women's rights activists in Afghanistan began a hunger strike in protest against gender apartheid, and an organization called "Freedom Now," based in the United States, has declared solidarity with the protesting Afghan women.

This organization has posted images of women's rights activists who are on a hunger strike in Cologne, Germany, and said, "We stand in solidarity with the courageous Afghan women who are fighting for their rights, and we call on the international community to take immediate action in response to the human rights crisis in Afghanistan."

According to the statement by Freedom Now, "Since August 15, 2021, the Taliban has issued more than 64 orders that have excluded women from society."

Tamana Zaryab Paryani and her companions Naira Kohistani, Vahida Amiri, Roqiya Saai, and Saberak Akbari continue their hunger strike on the seventh day in Cologne, Germany. They are protesting against the "Taliban's oppression of women" and gender apartheid in Afghanistan, demanding meaningful actions from the world.

On the fourth day of their hunger strike, Khaama Press News Agency interviewed Ms. Paryani. Their health condition was unsatisfactory due to the hunger strike on the fourth day, but they are determined to continue this planned twelve-day strike.

Ms Paryani, on the fourth day of the strike, told Khaama Press News Agency that the world has been unsuccessful in defending Afghan women's rights. While women are fighting and sacrificing for their freedoms, the world has adopted a stance of engagement with the Taliban regime.

It is worth mentioning that Afghan women's rights activists in Pakistan have also welcomed the women's strike in Germany in a gathering. They have said that if the global community does not pay attention to the demands of Afghan women, they will expand this strike.

## Muttaqi, Tariq confer on relations with Islamic world

KABUL (Agencies): Acting Foreign Minister, Mawlawi Amir Khan Muttaqi, met with Tariq Ali Bakheet, Special Envoy of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC).

According to a statement released by Foreign Affairs Ministry, the two sides discussed on security situation in Afghanistan, economic development, fight against illegal armed groups and drug eradication.

The two sides also talked about strengthening Afghanistan's relations in cultural, political, economic and educational fields with the Islamic world as well as realization of common interests and finding solutions to common challenges.



Tariq Ali Bakheet added that the Organization of Islamic Cooperation believes in positive interaction with Afghanistan and will continue to support Afghanistan in various fields.

Mawlawi Amir Khan Muttaqi, Acting Minister of Foreign Affairs, said that the Islamic Emirate seeks

to strengthen relations with Islamic countries and respects common interests of the members of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation.

## Fluctuations of Afghani against foreign currencies raise concerns

KABUL (TOLOnews): The Union of Money Exchangers of Sarai Shahzada said that the recent fluctuations of Afghan currency against foreign currencies have occurred due to the ban on the use of Pakistani rupees in the eastern parts of the country.

These fluctuations have created concerns among investors and businessmen in the country.

The value of the US dollar dropped against Afghan currency from 88 Afghani to 72 Afghani in the last month. But in the last five days, one US dollar became equal to 81 Afghani.

"Sometimes there are fluctuations against any currency, including the Afghani. The Afghani is one of the monetary units that has maintained its stability well. We do not see any particular problem or cause in this regard, and my request to the people is not to make a mistake and not to spend their Afghan money," said Abdul Rahman Zarak, a spokesman for the Union of Money Exchangers of Sarai Shahzada. Meanwhile, the Chamber of Commerce and Investment said that efforts to maintain Afghan stability against foreign currencies

are ongoing with the coordination of the country's central bank.

"Any currency in the world that fluctuates up and down is a negative for trade," said Khan Mohammad Sarfraz, an official of the Chamber of Commerce and Investment.

Some economic experts said it is possible that large sum money exchange investors in Pakistan, Iran, and Afghanistan are involved in creating exchange rate fluctuations, and they said that the purpose of these fluctuations is to get more profit. "They are emptying the

pockets of small money changers and medium money changers by means of big money changers who take the money from them - and when they get it, they slowly increase the value of the dollar to the first point and even higher," said Sayed Masoud, an economist.

Due to these fluctuations, the citizens of the country asked the municipalities to seriously manage the price of groceries in the markets.

Meanwhile, the Central Bank of Afghanistan auctioned sixteen million US dollars on Tuesday to maintain Afghan stability.

## Afghan Minister met Pak Ambassador



KABUL (Agencies): The Acting Minister of Industry and Commerce, Al Haj Nuruddin Azizi, met with the Ambassador of Pakistan in Kabul, Obaid-ur-Rahman Nizamani, to discuss the concerns of Afghan businessmen and request that the country take care of the clearance of transit goods delayed in Karachi port.

According to a statement

released by the Ministry of Mines and Commerce, the Acting Minister of Industry and Commerce talked about the transit property of Afghan businessmen included in the sensitive list of Pakistan and the clearance of transit property delayed in Karachi port.

He asked the ambassador to address these issues with Pakistani officials.

Obaid-ur-Rahman

Nizamani emphasized the importance of strengthening Afghanistan-Pakistan trade relations and assured that he would share these concerns with Pakistani authorities to solve the problems.

To follow up on this issue, Nouruddin Azizi is planning to talk with officials from Pakistan's Ministry of Commerce to find a solution.

## Expired medicine sales fuel concerns in Helmand

LASHKARGAH (Pajhwok): A number of residents of southern Helmand province are complaining about sales of spurious medicines as their side-effects.

Naqibullah, a resident of Marja district, told Pajhwok Afghan News: "Two days ago, I took an ailing relative to the doctor, who handed us a prescription."

"I bought the medicines worth 5,000 Afghanis. But

they did not have any effect on the health of the patient due to their inferior quality," he claimed.

Naqibullah urged public health officials to control the sales of poor-quality medicines in the market.

Gul Agha, hailing from the 2nd police district of Lashkargah, also grumbled about side-effects of substandard medicines.

Haji Mohammad Amin, an inhabitant of the 1st

police district, told Pajhwok ordinary people did not know much about the quality of medicine and most of the time they were sold drugs of poor quality.

Dr. Ahmadzai Habibi, an internal medicine specialist in Lashkargah, said: "An expired medicine given to a patient with a particular disease enhances the risk of causing him/her other illnesses. It may cause even death."

He asked the officials concerned to monitor the quality of medicines in the market and bring sellers of substandard drugs to justice.

Public Health Director Dr. Syed Ahmad Saeed acknowledged the presence of low-quality medicines. However, he said they had launched an investigation and those involved in the sordid business would be prosecuted.

## Relatives of Karzai ban to travel abroad

KABUL (TOLOnews): Former president Hamid Karzai's relatives confirmed there is a ban on Karzai's travel abroad.

The relatives of Hamid Karzai confirmed to TOLOnews that three official invitations from other nations were sent to Karzai when he returned from the UK, but the Islamic Emirate has not yet let him travel abroad.

In the meantime, a source told TOLOnews that Hamid Karzai was not permitted to meet a delegation of seven persons who came to Kabul from Iran.

"Karzai had received official invitations from three countries when he returned to Afghanistan from England, but he was not allowed to travel. As far as internal visits are concerned, Afghans come daily and their documents are checked by the security forces, then they are allowed to enter," said Shahzada Masoud, a relative of Karzai.

On Karzai's X social media platform, posts on his meetings with residents and foreign officials were often published, but there was a period of eight days between Karzai's meeting on Wednesday with the Japanese ambassador in Kabul, Takashi Okada, and previous posts of meetings. "The imposition of restrictions on Hamid Karzai's political activities indicates the restriction of political and civic activities in the Taliban government," said Sayed Javad Sajadi, a political analyst.



recently, but it could not be promoted in the market due to the presence of imported dairy products.

Mohammadi, said the lack of cold stores in the province also caused local dairy products not to last for long time.

Hamid Qawami, one of the dairy products sellers,

said until the import of dairy products is not stopped, their dairy products market condition will not improve.

Bashir Ahmad Noori,

another seller of dairy products, said the import of dairy products left negative impact on their business.

He said if government pay attention to the construction of cold stores, it would help all the sellers, orchard owners and farmers get economically.

They could supply their dairy products when there is demand in the market.

Local agriculture officials in the Agriculture Department also believed that increase in the tariff

on imported dairy products could help promote market condition for local products.

Mohammad Jawad Tawalsi, General Director Dairy Products Department, said local government strived to explore fair market for local dairy products.

He said currently tariff on imported dairy products was high and comparing to the past less dairy products were imported in the country.

## Use of rupee causing us losses: Ghazni farmers

GHAZNI CITY (Pajhwok):

Some farmers and orchard owners in southern Ghazni province complain the widespread use of the Pakistani rupee has caused them losses. The nose-diving Pakistani currency has been damaging their business, the say, stressing the need for immediate remedial measures.

Grower Noor Ahmad told Pajhwok Afghan News the rupee was commonly used in markets. In the harvest season, they are selling vegetables and fruits in rupees.

Additionally, he explained, there were no cold storage facilities to preserve their produce. If they do not supply their produce to markets, they go rotten.

Ahmad added: "Farmers usually suffer losses during the harvest season due to rain-induced floods, political changes and the closure of crossings by neighbouring countries.

As a result, he continued, farmers had to sell their produce at dirt-cheap prices to prevent them from going rotten.

losses.

Samiullah, an orchard owner, said residents of Ghazni were poor and could not afford to purchase chemical fertilizers, fuel and other items.

They usually purchase these items on credit. Now that the rate of the rupee has dipped, farmers are facing huge losses.

Growers and orchard owners have suffered losses running into millions of Afghanis due to the low value of the rupee this year, he said.

Samiullah added: "I have sold my produce in Pakistani rupees, whose rate is very low. All farmers have suffered losses and we want the government to pay attention to the issue."

Rafand Afghan, an economist, said the unjust division of resources was an important economic issue, fuelling frustration among the people. In a situation like this, he noted, traders were usually happy and made good profits because they have commodities and sell them at rates and in a currency of their choice.

Rafand said: "Inadequate awareness among farmers is another problem. They make transaction in an unstable currency. If that

currency loses value, they suffer losses and face trouble."

Abdul Matin Qalandari, head of the Ghazni Chambers and Investment, confirmed most people used the Pakistani rupee. If the rupee depreciates, the people using it suffer losses.

In the absence of cold storage, they have no option but to supply their produce to the market at low prices, according to the business leader.

Vehicles, land, domestic animals, agricultural products and other items were still sold in Pakistani rupees in Ghazni, he said, asking the government to prevent the use of foreign currencies. When approach by Pajhwok, agriculture and livestock department officials refused to comment on the issue.

However other official acknowledge the continued use of the Pakistani currency in Ghazni.

Hafiz Omar, spokesman for the governor, said the afghani had special value for them and they would take measures to prevent the use of other currencies.

Ghazni is an agricultural province where 80 percent of residents are reliant on farming.



TAOQAN (Pajhwok): On the eve of apple, potatoes and other agriculture products harvest, farmers in northern Takhar province have asked government to construct cold stores in the province.

They said due to the non-availability of up to the standard cold stores, deteriorated market condition and non-availability of medicines for crop they are forced to sale their products at low rate and by doing this they could not earn profit and even could not compensate the amount

they spent.

Haji Abdul Qayyum, the resident of Warsaj district, told Pajhwok Afghan News: "Apple yield is satisfactory this year, but there is no cold store for to store our products, we have to sale our products at low rate and by doing this we earn no profit, we have apple orchard on one and half acre of land and it may produce over four tonnes of apple."

He said due to the lack of cold stores seven kilograms of apples are sold from 100 to 150 afis while

after some months the same quantities of apples are sold against 500 afis.

Fakhruddin, one of the farmers in Warsaj, said it was time for apple and potatoes harvest but farmers are facing problems and there is no place and facility to protect our yield.

"The transfer of apple to the centre are also not easy, most of the products get rotten on its way, we sell seven kilograms of potatoes against 100 afis and the same quantity of apple against 70 afis now due to the lack of cold stores,

when it is needed we pay two times higher."

He demanded the government to address these problems.

Sadrudin, another farmer who cultivated nearly eight and a half tonnes potatoes, said he was unable to get satisfactory yield due to the lack of attention by the agriculture department in term of medicines distribution for crops.

He said: "I have no place to protect my yield, the Agriculture Department did not distributed medicines timely to protect our crops from natural disasters, our transportation routes are not good and we have sell our product at low price."

Abdul Ala Radmar, deputy agriculture director, said apple products surged from 30 to 40 percent comparing to last year while the potatoes yield is satisfactory in the Warsaj and Farkar districts despite the fact that weather was very cold during winter.

He said in the past at least 300 cold stores had been constructed in the provincial capital and district where farmers could store their products.



# IMF ‘approves’ Rs15bn relief in electricity bills

ISLAMABAD (NNI): In a significant development, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) has given the green light to a relief plan of Rs 15 billion which aimed to give financial relief to electricity consumers in Pakistan.

Sources close to the matter revealed that the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) played a pivotal role in securing this relief from the IMF, adding that the FBR has exceeded expectations by collecting an impressive amount of Rs 20 billion in excess taxes. The IMF's decision to grant the relief of Rs15 billion – aimed at relieving the financial burden on electricity consumers – is a testament to the commendable performance of the FBR.

It underscores the tireless efforts of key figures in the caretaker government, including Caretaker Prime Minister Anwarul Haq Kakar, Caretaker Finance Minister Dr. Shamshad Akhtar, and Caretaker Energy Minister Muhammad Ali. The relief package is expected to provide substantial benefits to consumers with up to 200 units of electricity consumption. Sources suggest that consumers falling within this category can anticipate relief ranging from Rs 3 to Rs 4 per unit on their electricity bills.

Furthermore, there will be provisions for delayed payments, ensuring that these consumers do not face penalties for late payments. However, the IMF set a condition that the consumers exceeding 400 units of electricity consumption will not be eligible for this relief.

Sources claimed that the final approval for deferred payments and the relief package will be granted by the Federal Cabinet.

It is pertinent to mention here that the relief in electricity bills will be applicable exclusively to bills for the month of August. Sources estimated that from this relief at least 64 per cent of those using up to 200 units of electricity across the country will get benefited, moreover, the late payments of the consumers falling in the category will not get the usual 10 per cent penalty. Earlier to this, the caretaker government in its communication with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) has suggested a new relief plan for electricity bills. The government has decided to utilize over Rs 15 billion allocated for the independent power producers (IPPs), to offer relief on the inflated electricity bills, sources said.

“The finance ministry has dispatched fresh relief proposal for electricity bills to the IMF,” according to sources.

“Over Rs 15 billion were additionally allocated for payment to the IPPs in current fiscal year’s budget,” sources said. “This amount can be adjusted to provide relief on bills,” sources added.

“This over Rs 15 billion will be allocated for the IPPs after recovery of installments of bills,” sources said.

“The finance ministry officials will hold talks with the IMF on the new plan, in which the lender will be assured of not providing relief out of the budget parameters,” sources added.

## Trump may seek to move Georgia election case to federal court

WASHINGTON (Reuters): Donald Trump may seek to move a Georgia criminal case accusing him of conspiring to reverse his 2020 presidential election loss from state to federal court, according to a Thursday court filing.

The former U.S. president and front-runner for the 2024 Republican presidential nomination was indicted along with 18 others in August on charges that he pressured Georgia election officials to overturn Democratic President Joe Biden's election victory in the state. Trump has denied wrongdoing and pleaded not guilty, along with the rest of the defendants.

Federal court would be a more favorable venue for Trump because he would face a more politically diverse jury pool than in Fulton County, Georgia, the Democratic stronghold where the case was filed.

A federal trial would also allow him to argue that he is immune from prosecution for actions he took as part of his official duties as president. Several of Trump's co-defendants, including his onetime Chief of Staff Mark Meadows, have already filed petitions to move their cases. A judge is expected to rule on those petitions in the coming weeks.

## IHC serves notices in plea against appointment of DG PSB

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Islamabad High Court (IHC) on Thursday accepted the petition for hearing against the appointment of Director General (DG) Pakistan Sports Board (PSB) Shoaib Khoso and served notices to respondents. Justice Babar Sattar of IHC heard the case filed by Amjad Farooq through his counsel.

The petitioner's lawyer adopted the stance that among the list of first five shortlisted candidates against the post. He said that appointment of DG PSB was against the merit and prayed the court to terminate the notification in this regard. The court served notices to respondents and sought comments in next week.

## ‘Notification banning of Rs5000 currency note is fake’

ISLAMABAD (NNI): Caretaker Information Minister Murtaza Solangi has termed the notification of Finance Division regarding banning of five thousand rupee currency note as fake. In a tweet on Thursday, he said the notification, circulating on social media, is untrue and the government shall act against the people spreading this kind of fake news to create chaos. Meanwhile, the Federal Ministry of Finance Dr Shamshad Akhtar has also denied any ban of Rs5,000 currency notes, saying a notification a notification circulating in this regard is fake.



**TORKHAM:** Loaded cargo trucks are waiting of pak afghan border , due to clouser of border trade is stop and large number of passengers are in trouble.

# Naval Chief pays tribute to sacrifices of officers, men on Navy Day

**F.P. Report**

KARACHI: Pakistan Navy celebrates 8th September as the Navy Day to pay tribute to the sacrifices of its Officers and Men who demonstrated self-belief, grit-n- guile and absolute faith in Allah SWT to venture into enemy waters and bombarded coastal town of Dwarka. On this day, we acknowledge the sacrifices of our Shuhadas & Ghazis and honour their bravado and valiant spirit which lifted the morale of the nation against a sinister enemy during the 1965 War.

During Operation Dwarka, code-named ‘Operation SOMNATH’, Pakistan Navy's seven major warships proceeded on an audacious mission into enemy territory and destroyed significant shore installations including Indian radar station and a radio beacon at Dwarka. PN Flotilla's attack took the enemy by surprise and dealt a severe blow to the morale of the Indian Navy that not only rattled its defences but paralysed its response. Furthermore, PN Submarine GHAZI posed an ominous threat to the Indian Navy severely restricting its operations and confining it close to the coast.

Pakistan Navy besides ensuring own maritime defence also maintains round the clock presence in the inter-



national waters and engages with regional navies to foster interoperability and promotes maritime security at high seas. Therefore, Pakistan Navy is acquiring state of the art capabilities to meet emerging security challenges and augmenting indigenous capabilities to transition into a strong, agile and reckonable force in the region.

In the present environment, Pakistan Navy has also embarked on nation building initiatives particularly to uplift coastal communities and is making vigorous efforts to prop up Blue Economy. In this regard, Pakistan Navy organised Pakistan's first ever Pakistan International Maritime Exhibition & Conference

(PIMEC) in February this year, in collaboration with Ministry of Maritime Affairs. PIMEC witnessed participation of 22 foreign and 121 local exhibitors which is reflective of overwhelming interest towards exploitation of the vast untapped potential of Pakistan's maritime sector. Furthermore, Pakistan Navy has launched the pilot project of Pakistan Maritime Science & Technology Park (PMSTP) at Bahria University Karachi Campus, earlier this month. PMSTP aims to focus on maritime education, research, innovation and technology development by bringing together academia, industry, foreign technology firms and state institutions. These efforts are focused on the development of Blue Economy which holds enormous prospects and given the attention it deserves; it can provide a significant boost to our national economy.

As we observe Navy Day today, let us pay tribute to our Shuhadas and Ghazis for their supreme sacrifices to the nation. The Officers, CPOs/ Sailors and Civilians of Pakistan Navy reaffirm our resolve to defend our motherland and protect maritime interests against all threats and challenges.

May Allah SWT be our Guide and Protector (Ameen)

# Ashrafi urges G20 leaders to condemn Indian atrocities in IIOJK, protect minority rights

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan Ulema Council Chairman, Hafiz Muhammad Tahir Mahmood Ashrafi, on Thursday appealed to the leaders of G20 nations to raise their voices against the Indian atrocities committed against minority communities and urge India to end the cycle of injustices against the people residing in Indian Illegal Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK), which is currently the world's largest prison.

Talking to Local and Arab media here, he said the entire Muslim Ummah was closely watching the Organization Islamic Cooperation, currently led by the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, with hopes that it would continue to play a leading role in advocating for the rights of oppressed Muslims in India and the occupied Kashmir.

Ashrafi emphasized that Kashmir remained a long-standing issue where India, for the past seven decades, had forcefully occupied the region, subjecting it to the worst human rights abuses. He noted that India, under the guise of democratic rule, was systematically erasing the self-determination

rights of Kashmiri people and settling extremist Hindus and Pandits from other regions to change the demographic makeup of the region. He said more than 150,000 Kashmiris had fallen victim to the Indian military's brutality and oppression, with young Kashmiris becoming victims of heinous acts by the Indian armed forces daily.

He stressed that not only Kashmiris but any religious minority living on Indian soil was no longer safe, as extremist Hindu organizations supported by the Modi government had made the lives of minorities unbearable. Ashrafi said in a society plagued by religious fanaticism, religious minorities were no longer secure in India as Muslims, Christians, Sikhs, or anyone from any religious background who did not adhere to the extremist Hindu ideology was at risk.

In such dire circumstances, the G20 nations should become the voice of the oppressed and raise their voices against the injustices committed against minorities in India and occupied Kashmir, he added.

He reiterated that Saudi Arabia, currently leading the Organization Islamic Cooperation, held a central position in the eyes of the entire Muslim Ummah.

“The Muslim world expects Saudi Arabia to play a decisive role in advocating for the rights of oppressed Muslims in India and the occupied Kashmir,” he said urging Saudi Arabia to continue to champion the just cause of the oppressed Muslims and fulfill its leadership role.

He also mentioned that Pakistan had consistently supported dialogue with India to resolve all outstanding issues, including the Kashmir dispute, in accordance with United Nations resolutions.

He made it clear that India should resolve the occupied Kashmir issue according to the United Nations resolutions for the peace of the region.

He said, “If Saudi Arabia takes up this role, it will provide reassurance to Pakistan and the entire Islamic world, bringing hope for a peaceful resolution to the Kashmir conflict through dialogue between Pakistan and India.”

# LHC orders establishment of special units to investigate rape cases

LAHORE (PPI): Lahore High Court Thursday ordered the provincial government to establish special units in all districts to investigate rape cases in Punjab. A 9-page court order was issued by LHC judge, Justice Tariq Saleem Sheikh while conducting the hearing of a petition filed by a female rape victim. The victim woman challenged the police's action to change the provisions of rape with Zina in the FIR.

In his judgment, the LHC judge directed the Punjab government to constitute special units in all the districts in order to impart training to the police officers for the investiga-

tion of rape cases.

According to the court order, in many cases, the accused have escaped punishment due to faulty investigation. During the case hearing, the court was told that no special units under the Anti-Rape Act were established in many districts. If this is the case, then the government must establish special units and impart training to the police officers. The LHC ruling further directed that it is mandatory to include a woman police officer in the special unit because the female victim would feel comfortable in the presence of a woman police officer during the rape investigation. In cases involving

children, the inclusion of a female police officer becomes even more important. A thorough investigation must be made in the rape and sexual assault cases on the pattern of criminal cases.

The case becomes weak if medical tests or DNA samples are not sent to the laboratory on time and the accused gets the benefit of the weak case, the judgment reads.

During the hearing, the Sialkot DPO informed the court that a special unit completed its investigation into the aforesaid rape case under Section 9 of the Anti-Rape Act.

The court disposed of the case.

# Sania Nishtar records her statement to NAB

ISLAMABAD (NNI): Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Senator Sania Nishtar recorded her statement to the National Accountability Bureau's (NAB) Combined Investigation Team in 190 million pounds corruption case (AI-Qadir Trust case) at the bureau's Rawalpindi office on Thursday.

After recording her statement, the senator left the NAB office. Sania stayed at the office for over an hour.

AI-Qadir Trust case of 190 million pounds graft case basically centers round former prime minister and PTI

Chairman Imran Khan, who had been arrested in this connection on May 9 this year. As per the charges, Imran and other suspects in the case had allegedly adjusted Rs50 billion, 190 million pounds at the time, sent by Britain's National Crime Agency (NCA) to the Pakistani government as part of the agreement with property tycoon Malik Riaz. They are also accused of getting undue benefit from Riaz in the form of over 458 kanals of land at Sohawa for establishing AI-Qadir University.

During the PTI government, the NCA had seized

assets worth 190 million pounds from a property tycoon in Britain.

The agency said the assets would be passed to the government of Pakistan. Subsequently, then prime minister Imran got an approval of the settlement with the UK's agency from his cabinet on December 3, 2019, without disclosing details of the agreement. PTI chairman and his aides, including his former special assistant Sania Nishtar, have denied any wrongdoing. The developer, too, has denied the charges.

# British High Commissioner calls on Air Chief

**F.P. Report**

ISLAMABAD: H.E. Ms. Jane Marriott, British High Commissioner to Pakistan, met with Air Chief Marshal Zahoor Ahmed Baber Sidhu, Chief of the Air Staff, Pakistan Air Force, in a highly significant meeting held at Air Headquarters today. The discussion focused on key areas of mutual interest, with a special emphasis on the contemporary geopolitical situation and emerging regional security challenges. High ranking military dignitaries from British Armed Forces were also present during the meeting.

The Air Chief accentuated the cordial relations that exist between the two nations while emphasizing his steadfast determination to elevate the existing synergistic partnership between the two key allies. He briefed the British High Commissioner on the PAF's ongoing modernization efforts and highlighted the significant progress made in recent years. Chief of the Air Staff also reiterated PAF's commitment to developing indigenous solutions to meet its operational requirements. Highlighting the historic partnership between the two nations, the Air Chief further said, "The existing global security scenario coupled with the evolving dynamics of air warfare calls for an enhanced partnership between Pakistan and the United Kingdom. Both the countries share strong strategic and historical bonds, firmly rooted in mutual consensus on all important issues of regional peace



and stability."

The visiting dignitary commended Pakistan Air Force for its dedication to modernization and its focus on indigenization under the current leadership. Recognizing the achievements of Pakistan Air Force and the latest advancements in training & infrastructure development, the High Commissioner expressed admiration for PAF's efforts in enhancing its defence capabilities. She also assured to play her role to further enhance the existing cooperation in the training domain so as to ensure a highest degree of training for PAF personnel, enabling them to meet the evolving challenges of modern warfare.

Both sides concurred to further optimize the existing military ties

between the two countries, with a specific focus on emerging technologies and strengthening operational competencies. The dignitaries also discussed the potential for joint military training exercises and exchange programs with an aim to facilitate the exchange of expertise, enhance interoperability and foster closer ties between Pakistan Air Force and Royal Air Force.

The meeting concluded with a mutual commitment to explore avenues for sustained cooperation in the defence aviation sector. This high-profile meeting stands as a testament to the commitment of the United Kingdom and Pakistan in upholding the aim of a safer and stable region.

## Ukraine is gaining ground in its counter offensive, NATO chief says

BRUSSELS (Reuters): Ukraine is making progress with a counter offensive started in June to reclaim territory seized by Russia, NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg said on Thursday, even though it was slow going due to Russian fortifications and minefields. "The Ukrainians are gradually gaining ground...They have been able to breach the defensive lines of the Russian forces, and they are moving forward," Stoltenberg told lawmakers in remarks at the European Parliament.

Since launching its offensive, Kyiv has struggled to break through entrenched Russian lines and has faced growing criticism in Western media of concentrating forces in the wrong places.

With Moscow's stretched military resources and dissent in the ranks, however, both sides have measured recent successes by taking control of tiny villages or small pockets of land.

# Torkham border crossing closed for 2nd day after clashes between border forces

TORKHAM (Agencies): The Torkham border crossing between Pakistan and Afghanistan was closed for a second day on Thursday, leading to a build-up of trucks laden with goods, after clashes between security forces from the two countries.

The busy border crossing had closed on Wednesday after Pakistani and Afghan Taliban forces started firing at each other, according to local officials. Officials in Pakistan had blamed the other side for starting the midday firefight, which lasted for around two hours and came after the Afghan authorities started building a checkpoint on their side in a prohibited area, close to the main border crossing.

The officials said the Afghan authorities already had a checkpoint in the vicinity, commonly known as the Larram Post, but they started building another post over a small hill with-

out discussing it with the Pakistani side.

They said border security officials had also held a meeting minutes before the crossfire began. However, it could not be ascertained what the meeting's agenda was and what prompted the both countries' border forces to open fire.

Apart from the FC official, a Customs clearing agent had also been critically injured when he was hit by a speeding vehicle pulling back to safety after the firing started.

Abdul Basir Zabuli, a spokesman for the Taliban-led police in Afghanistan's eastern Nangarhar province, where the crossfire lies, said today that authorities from both countries were trying to determine the reason for the clash. The Torkham border point is the main point of transit for travellers and goods between Pakistan and Afghanistan. Ziaul Haq

Sarhadi, director of the Pakistan-Afghanistan Joint Chamber of Commerce and Industry, said hundreds of trucks laden with fruit, vegetables and other goods were stuck due to the closure. "The traders are suffering heavy losses after the border in Torkham was closed on Wednesday following a firing incident there," he told Reuters.

The entire flow of trade had been affected and the loading of goods in the southern port of Karachi had been disrupted. Disputes linked to the 2,600-kilometre border have been a bone of contention between the neighbours for decades.

Sabir Khan, a resident of the Bacha Maina residential compound near the border, had told Dawn that people had sent their families to safer locations in Landi Kotal when some projectiles fired from the Afghan side landed inside some homes.