

**Fawad handed over to NAB**  
**F.P. Report**

ISLAMABAD: An accountability court in Islamabad on Friday granted a four-day physical remand of former federal minister Fawad Chaudhry in a case about alleged irregularities in the dual carriage-way project. Accountability court Judge Muhammad Bashir heard the case while NAB Prosecutor Irfan Bhola and Fawad's counsel, Faisal Fareed Chaudhry appeared before the court.



@thefrontierpost

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

www.thefrontierpost.com

Vol. XXXIX

No. 349

Regd. No. 241

JAMADI-US-SANNI 24 1445 -- SATURDAY, JANUARY 06 2024

PESHAWAR EDITION

12 PAGES

PRICE. 30

# Senate passes resolution seeking delay in elections

**F.P. Report**

ISLAMABAD: Senate Friday approved a non-binding resolution seeking a delay in the general elections, set to be staged on February 8, drawing strong criticism from major political parties.

Senator Dilawar Khan, an independent lawmaker, moved the resolution in the upper house of the parliament, which got the approval during the presence of 14 senators — who were the only lawmakers present in the house of 100.

Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Senator Gurdeep Singh and Pakistan Peoples Party's (PPP) Behramand Tangi abstained from voting. Following the vote, the Senate chairman adjourned the session indefinitely. The elections are set to take place in 90 days when an assembly is dissolved, but the polls in all five legislative are yet to be held and they've already surpassed their constitutional limit.

Interim Information Minister Murtaza Solangi, representing the caretaker government which is appointed to over the country's affairs till the elections, opposed the move. Senator Dilawar, talking on the floor of the house, said most of the areas in the country were currently experiencing harsh cold weather, hence, the participation of voters in those areas was unmanageable.

Highlighting the law and order situation, the senator said attacks were carried out on National Democratic Movement leader Mohsin Dawar and Jamiat Ulama-e-Islam Fazl (JUI-F) members. Even security forces were attacked in Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, he added. He said Awami National Party (ANP) leader Aimal Wali also had reservations over elections. The senator said threat alerts were also issued by the intelligence

agencies during election rallies.

"The Senate says that elections should not be held without removing the hurdles, therefore, the February 8 elections should be postponed," he said, adding that the ECP should begin the process of postponing the polls. He also said the Senate trusted the electoral body.

The resolution was opposed by Senator Afnanullah Khan of Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N). Senator Afnanullah criticised the resolution, saying that the security situation in the country was worse at the time of the 2008 and 2013 general elections. Elections would never be held if an excuse for security was made, he added.

He asked if the United Kingdom and the United States deferred the elections during World War II, saying an excuse was being made to delay the polls on the pretext of weather. Senator Afnanullah likened the campaign for postponing elections to an act of 'boot-polishing'.

Balochistan Awami Party (BAP) Senator Samina Mumtaz Zehri said climate change was a rather new phenomenon. She said now the country was undergoing a change for the better. "We hold our armed forces in high esteem," she added. Independent lawmaker Senator Kauda Babar said there are parts of the country, where elections could not be held because of extreme weather conditions. "Are politicians the only ones left to die," asked Senator Babar. He demanded the government to come clear on the security measures taken for the safety of the candidates. He told the upper house that his uncle passed away today and instead of grieving he was debating in the Senate.

"You cannot just leave us to die. That's not going to happen. Who will ensure security steps for those who choose to run election campaign,"

Senator Babar said. He also stressed that issuing threat alerts was not enough and security should also be provided to election contestants. "The situation in the country was grim, the election contestants were not safe," he said.

ANP Senator Hidayatullah Khan said his party was not against the elections and wanted to contest the polls. "We want elections to be held without spilling of blood," he said. Extending full support for the resolution, BAP Senator Prince Ahmed Umar said their preparation was complete. However, he said, he was oblivious to the situation in KP and Balochistan.

Another BAP senator, Manzoor Kakar, said his party would not let the masses become victims of terrorism. Speaking to media, Information Minister Solangi said that he wasn't given a chance by the Senate chairman to present his views on the matter despite requesting him twice.

"I would've discussed [the said issue] in detail if he [senate chairman] had given me a chance [to speak]," the minister said. "The reason for my opposition [to the resolution] is that I cannot speak on my own behalf [but actually] can speak on behalf of the federal cabinet and government," Solangi noted, while reiterating his opposition to the rather controversial resolution. Commenting on any change in the poll date, the minister said it was the election commission's responsibility to announce the election dates, make changes to them, and conduct the polls. "We cannot interfere with the powers of the constitutional government and any other constitutional body," he said. "There are weather and security issues [and] these issues have been there before [as well]," Solangi said while terming the issues raised by Senator Dilawar's resolution as "real".

**SC reserves verdict regarding interpretation of Article 62(1)(f)**  
**F.P. Report**

ISLAMABAD: A seven-member larger bench of the Supreme Court on Friday reserved its judgment in the case pertaining to the interpretation of Article 62(1)(f) of the Constitution and disqualification tenure.

The bench headed by Chief Justice of Pakistan Qazi Faez Isa and comprising Justice Mansoor Ali Shah, Justice Yahya Afridi, Justice Amin Ud Din Khan, Justice Jamal Khan Mandokhail, Justice Muhammad Ali Mazhar and Justice Musarrat Hilali heard the case. The bench reserved the verdict after all the respondents concluded their arguments.

During the course of proceedings, the Chief Justice of Pakistan Qazi Faez Isa observed that the court would announce the short order soon.

Attorney General for Pakistan Mansoor Usman Awan and Jahangir Tareen's lawyer Makhdoom Ali Khan gave arguments before the bench.

The apex court had taken notice of the lifetime disqualification under Article 62(1)(f) in the appeal of former MPA Mir Badshah Qaisrani against his disqualification.

## Zardari pays rich tributes to Shaheed Zulfikar Ali Bhutto

**F.P. Report**

MULTAN: Former President of Pakistan and President Pakistan Peoples Party Parliamentarian Asif Ali Zardari addressing an event in Multan in connection with the 96th birth anniversary of Quaid-e-Awam Shaheed Zulfikar Ali Bhutto paid profound tributes to the founder of the party.

President Zardari said that he was aware of the situation of South Punjab hence he made Yousaf Raza Gilani the Prime Minister of Pakistan. He said that Pakistan Peoples Party has always served the people of Pakistan. We introduced Benazir Income Support program for the poor women of Pakistan. He said that during PPP's government 2008-13, the support price of wheat and cotton was increased to benefit the poor people of Pakistan.

Asif Ali Zardari said that during our government the export of cotton had exceeded 25 billion and in total it was 40 billion dollars. Unfortunately that progress after our government could not be sustained. The people of Pakistan are very strong and they are the real strength of the country. We will train our people and that will pay us dividend. This is our land and we will make it prosperous. I have sent a reference of Shaheed Zulfikar Ali

Bhutto's murder case to the Supreme Court which is being heard now. I promised that InshaAllah, we will be victorious and Shaheed Zulfikar Ali Bhutto will be proved innocent.

President Zardari said that he remembers everything about Shaheed Zulfikar Ali Bhutto. He stayed in the same cell in prison where Bhutto Sahib had stayed. The jail staff told him everything about Shaheed Zulfikar Ali Bhutto and he knows every bit of that history. He understands everything from the lens of Shaheed Zulfikar Ali Bhutto that is why he understood many things which other could not. I will make Multan, the South Punjab, all the four provinces prosperous. He promised the people to serve Shaheed Zulfikar Ali Bhutto and Pakistan till his last breath, President Zardari concluded.

Multan/Islamabad/Karachi, 5 January 2024: Former President of Pakistan and President Pakistan Peoples Party Parliamentarian Asif Ali Zardari addressing an event in Multan in connection with the 96th birth anniversary of Quaid-e-Awam Shaheed Zulfikar Ali Bhutto paid profound tributes to the founder of the party.

President Zardari said that he was aware of the situation of South Punjab hence he made Yousaf Raza

Gilani the Prime Minister of Pakistan. He said that Pakistan Peoples Party has always served the people of Pakistan. We introduced Benazir Income Support program for the poor women of Pakistan. He said that during PPP's government 2008-13, the support price of wheat and cotton was increased to benefit the poor people of Pakistan.

Asif Ali Zardari said that during our government the export of cotton had exceeded 25 billion and in total it was 40 billion dollars. Unfortunately that progress after our government could not be sustained. The people of Pakistan are very strong and they are the real strength of the country. We will train our people and that will pay us dividend. This is our land and we will make it prosperous. I have sent a reference of Shaheed Zulfikar Ali Bhutto's murder case to the Supreme Court which is being heard now. I promised that InshaAllah, we will be victorious and Shaheed Zulfikar Ali Bhutto will be proved innocent.

President Zardari said that he remembers everything about Shaheed Zulfikar Ali Bhutto. He stayed in the same cell in prison where Bhutto Sahib had stayed. The jail staff told him everything about Shaheed Zulfikar Ali Bhutto and he knows every bit of that history.



ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's permanent representative in UN Munir Akram called on Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar.

## Most wanted terrorist gunned down in operation

**F.P. Report**

TANK: A most-wanted terrorist with Rs2.5 million reward on his head was gunned down along with an accomplice by security forces during an operation in Tank district of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

According to an ISPR statement released on Friday morning, most-wanted terrorist Gul Yousaf alias Toor was neutralized in a gunbattle with troops during an intelligence-based operation which was conducted on the night between January 4 and 5 in Tank district. "During the conduct of operation, after an intense fire exchange, two terrorists, including HVT (high-value target) Gul Yousaf @ Toor, were sent to hell," the ISPR said, adding "Terrorist Gul Yousaf remained actively involved in numerous terrorist activities against security forces including high-profile terrorist attacks in Tank and DI Khan districts as well as extortion and target killing of innocent civilians."

ISPR said local residents commended security forces' efforts to maintain peace and stability in the region. ISPR said that security forces were committed to eliminate terrorism from the country 'in step' with the people. Only three days ago security forces had killed four wanted terrorists, including a suicide-bomber, in an intelligence-based operation in North Waziristan. The intelligence-based operation was carried out on Tuesday in the North Waziristan tribal district bordering Afghanistan. After an intense exchange of fire, four terrorists, including a suicide-bomber, were killed by the security forces.

Those killed were wanted by law enforcement agencies for various terrorist activities and were also planning a major terror attack in the district. Large quantity of arms and ammunition were recovered from their possession, according to the ISPR.

A few weeks back, three policemen had embraced martyrdom and five terrorists were killed during an attack on Police Lines in Tank City. Five terrorists including a suicide bomber attempted to launch attack but were offered stiff resistance by brave policemen. "Security forces in the vicinity were immediately mobilised to support the police force and in the ensuing operation," the statement said, "All five terrorists were sent to hell."

## PM flays Indian atrocities in Kashmir

**F.P. Report**

ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar on Friday reiterated that Pakistan would continue to extend its full political, diplomatic, and moral support to the valiant Kashmiri people in their just struggle for their rights including the inalienable right to self-determination, by the relevant resolutions of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC).

"Today, Kashmiris around the world are observing the 75th anniversary of the Resolution adopted by the United Nations Commission for India and Pakistan (UNCIP), providing that the Jammu and Kashmir dispute will be decided through the democratic method of a free and impartial plebiscite under the UN auspices, the prime minister said in a message on the occasion of Self-Determination Day.

In essence, he said it was a reaffirmation of the inalienable right of Kashmiris to self-determination, which is enshrined in international law and upheld by international human rights instruments. He regretted that despite more than seven and a half decades, the oppressed people of Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK) have not been able to exercise this fundamental right. India continues to oppress the people of Jammu and Kashmir to break their will.

Since August 5, 2019, the prime minister said India was engaged in a vicious exercise, aimed at altering the demographic structure and political landscape of IIOJK, to turn Kashmiris into a disempowered community in their own land. The Indian Supreme Court's recent verdict on the status of IIOJK is yet another step towards the denial of the Kashmiri people's right to self-determination. The genuine aspirations of the Kashmiris cannot be wished away through domestic legislation and engineered judicial verdicts, he added.

He pointed out the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) annually adopts a resolution on "Universal Realization of the Right of the People to Self-Determination" that draws international attention towards the plight and rights of people living under situations of forced occupation. The international community, especially the United Nations, is responsible for ensuring that the people of IIOJK exercise their inalienable right to self-determination, he added.

## N Korea supplied Ballistic missiles to Russia: Kirby

**Jalil Afridi**

WASHINGTON DC: White House National Security Spokesperson said that the US has gotten intelligence reports that North Korea (DPRK) had supplied Russia with ballistic missiles and that Russia used these missiles against Ukraine in the recent days and weeks.

John Kirby shared images of Russia striking Ukraine with ballistic missiles and stated that these missiles had the capacity to target five hundred miles in distance and that North Korea in return was expecting Russia to improve the air defence

systems of North Korea.

John Kirby also shared plans of the United States and its allies to approach the United Nations against Russia for violating international laws. Kirby urged the US Congress to "act now" with regard to providing Ukraine with more military aid and support.

John Kirby did loose his balance of replies a little when a reporter asked him why Russia needed North Korean missiles when the Russia defence production had enough of their own supplies, according to their own reporting.

Regarding yesterday's

blast in Iran which claimed more than one hundred lives, Kirby said that he did not have any other report except that ISIS K (Khorasan) claimed the responsibility of this blast and that ISIS K was mostly operating from Afghanistan at the moment. Regarding the civilian deaths in Gaza and Israel violating international laws, John Kirby said that the US is seeing improvement from Israel side with regard to less civilian deaths, less air strikes and more humanitarian aid but he also said that Israel has the right and responsibility to eliminate Hamas terrorists.

## KP govt accords approval to campaign to enhance literacy rate

**F.P. Report**

PESHAWAR: In a bid to enhance the literacy rate in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa particularly in the newly merged districts to the desired level, the provincial government has accorded approval to KP Literacy Campaign titled as "Ilm Tolo Da Para" in a meeting of the Provincial Task Force on Merged Districts held here on Friday with the Caretaker Chief Minister Justice (R) Syed Arshad Hussain Shah in the chair.

Initially, the campaign would be launched in merged districts, and would be extended to those settled districts having low literacy rate. Under the campaign, a comprehensive plan has been chalked out for admitting out of school children of merged areas to schools. Moreover, under the campaign, children belonging to merged districts with age group



of five to sixteen would be specifically targeted for enrolment.

Besides Caretaker Provincial Ministers Dr. Qasim Jan, Dr. Aamir Abdullah, Barrister Feroz Jamal Shah Kakakhel, Corps Commander Peshawar Lt. Gen. Hassan Azhar Hayat and other civil & military high ups attended the meeting.

The forum decided to upgrade the public sector schools on need basis in

merged districts while teachers belonging to merged districts but posted in other districts would also be repatriated to the districts of their domiciles. In the meeting it was also decided that an inquiry would be conducted regarding missing facilities in public schools while action would be taken against contractor in case of non-construction of facilities mentioned in the PC 1 of any school. The

meeting also decided to constitute a committee for aligning the academic curriculum with market needs and requirements of modern era.

Briefing about the various aspects of literacy campaign "Ilm tolo da para", the participants were informed that the campaign has been designed jointly by the Pak Army and education department Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. It was disclosed in the meeting that currently, 55 % i.e 10,00,000 children are out of schools in the merged districts adding that only 44 % i.e around 8,00,000 children are enrolled in the schools in merged areas.

It was further informed that at current, 74 % girls are out of schools in those districts. The authorities told that under the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Literacy Campaign, initiatives would also be taken to ensure availability of teaching staff and missing facilities in

the government schools. Apart from this, rationalization of schools in merged districts would be carried out and all the surplus schools would be converted into Technical and Vocational Centers. Similarly, initiatives would be taken to identify the ghost schools and teachers in those districts. As an effort to increase literacy rate in merged areas, special incentives would also be given to the teachers and students.

The plan also include the initiatives for introducing formal education in seminaries (Deeni Madaris) whereas cooperation would be sought from Ulema, elected public representatives, civil society and all other stakeholders in order to make this literacy campaign successful. Besides, an effective monitoring mechanism would be placed to ensure implementation of the plan in its latter and spirit. Addressing the par-

ticipants, the caretaker Chief Minister said that the literacy campaign would prove to be a milestone towards increasing literacy rate in the province, particularly the merged districts. He appreciated the role of Pak Army in devising this campaign adding that the provincial government has always commended and recognized the efforts of Pak Army in bringing the merged districts into mainstream.

He maintained that addressing the deprivations of the people of NMDs was the top most priority of the government; civil administration and military institutions must continue jointly working for this purpose. "It was only education that can pave the path of sustainable development in the merged areas", he remarked and said that all of us have to work hard for making this campaign a success story.





## Crackdown on harmful beauty products

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Minister for Primary and Secondary Health, Dr. Jamal Nasir has announced a crackdown on harmful beauty creams and cosmetics. Operations will be conducted against unqualified individuals administering beauty injections or performing any kind of surgery. Joint teams from the Punjab Healthcare Commission (PHC) and the Drug Control Directorate are being formed for this purpose. The Drug Control will determine the registration status of beauty creams and cosmetics, while experts from the PHC will assess clinical practices.

This information was shared by the minister in a press conference held here on Friday.

He stated that non-standard creams claiming to lighten skin are causing diseases, adding that the use of substandard beauty creams is causing severe damage to the skin of hundreds of individuals. He said that some cosmetics contain dangerous amounts of lead, toxins, and other harmful chemicals, leading to life-threatening diseases such as liver and kidney cancer. Dr. Nasir revealed that drug testing is being conducted on 24 well-known brands in a laboratory, and strict action will be taken against them if harmful chemicals are found.

Emphasizing health preservation principles, Dr. Jamal Nasir mentioned the screening of beauty parlors to ensure compliance with health standards. He expressed concern about the increasing use of harmful cosmetics in Pakistan and urged a zero-tolerance approach against damaging beauty creams and cosmetics. A survey of beauty parlors will also be conducted concerning hepatitis control, with 70,000 barber shops surveyed in Punjab. DG Health, Dr. Ilyas Gondal, DG Drugs Muhammad Sohail and relevant officials were present.

## ‘Bhutto is a prominent figure in political history of Pakistan’

F.P. Report

KARACHI: People's Party leader Sharjeel Inam Memon has stated that Shaheed Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto is a prominent figure in the political history of Pakistan. As the founder of the Pakistan People's Party, Shaheed Bhutto aimed to establish a political platform that would advocate for the rights of the common people.

In his message on the occasion of Shaheed Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto's birthday, PPP leader Sharjeel Inam Memon expressed that Shaheed Bhutto's approach went beyond traditional politics and represented a passionate commitment to socio-economic justice and the empowerment of the people, the progressive reforms introduced by Shaheed Bhutto were targeted at uplifting the backward sections of society.

Sharjeel Inam Memon emphasized that Shaheed Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto's commitment to the common man was not mere rhetoric; he reshaped the socio-economic

landscape of Pakistan and fostered a sense of national unity, bridging the urban-rural divide. Sharjeel Inam Memon highlighted that Shaheed Bhutto played a crucial role in clarifying Pakistan's position on the world stage, despite the challenges. Shaheed Bhutto's legacy has endured and continues to inspire future generations.

He mentioned that Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari is carrying forward Shaheed Bhutto's commitment to democratic values and social justice, Chairman Bilawal Bhutto's efforts for democracy, human rights, and inclusive governance reflect the principles of Shaheed Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto. He said that the country needs leadership like Bilawal Bhutto Zardari to address the complex political scenario, regional tensions, and socio-economic problems. The legacy of Shaheed Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto lives on in the form of Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari. He said that the People's Party, founded on the principles of justice, equality, and democracy, continues to play a significant role in the political scenario of Pakistan.

## Amer Tufail appointed as MD by SNGPL Board of Directors

F.P. Report

LAHORE: The SNGPL Board of Directors has appointed Mr. Amer Tufail as Managing Director of Sui Northern Gas Pipelines Limited (SNGPL) for a period of three years. The decision was taken in the meeting of SNGPL Board of Directors at its meeting today (Friday).

Mr. Amer Tufail is a



Chartered Accountant by profession.

He has been part of Sui Northern Gas for the last 20 years and has held various key management positions. Prior to joining SNGPL, he remained associated with large national and multinational organizations in Pakistan and abroad featuring over 32 years of rich experience in a large variety of disciplines.

## Blood donation campaign

F.P. Report

KARACHI: Blood Donation Camp-2023 was organized by Pak Suzuki on 7th December 2023, in collaboration with Indus Hospital. Employees extensively participated in Blood Donation Campaign; total 80 donors donated their blood voluntarily. Mr. Muhammad Ali Lodi-Head Operations, Mr. Omer Butt-Head Procurement Pak Suzuki & members of CSR Managing Committee & Dr. Shabneez Hussain



Country Head Blood Services Indus Hospital visited the Blood Donation Camp & appreciated the facilities setup by Pak Suzuki & Indus Hospital.

## OGDCL to support establishment of 45 Mammography camps, procure radiation machine for cancer treatment

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: While demonstrating unwavering commitment to healthcare, the Oil & Gas Development Company Limited (OGDCL) has made a significant donation to the Cancer Care Hospital & Research Centre for the establishment of 45 free Mammography camps in its operational areas. Additionally, the company's support includes the procurement of a cutting-edge radiation machine for treating cancer patients nationwide, with a particular focus on its operational districts.

Cancer remains a significant health challenge in Pakistan, and OGDCL recognizes the critical role that advanced medical equipment plays in ensuring timely and accurate treatment for patients. The



three-year program will concentrate on the need for Mammograms and Ultrasound through free mammography camps at 45 locations. This strategic approach aims to identify breast cancer patients, offering them free lifelong treatment supported by OGDCL and the Cancer Care Hospital & Research Centre Foundation (CCH&RCF). The

Mammography Camps are expected to cater to approximately 1500 patients annually, contributing significantly to early detection and intervention. Meanwhile, the state-of-the-art radiation machine is anticipated to provide treatment for 800,000 patients over its 20-year lifespan.

Ahmed Hayat Lak, MD/CEO of OGDCL,

expressed enthusiasm about the partnership, stating, "OGDCL believes in promoting community awareness about cancer prevention, early detection, and treatment.

This contribution underscores OGDCL's commitment to corporate social responsibility and its dedication to making a positive impact on the health and well-being of communities. We believe that this donation will contribute to the advancement of medical technology and, more importantly, improve the lives of individuals facing cancer." OGDCL's proactive involvement in advancing healthcare underscores the company's commitment to corporate social responsibility and its determination to be a force for positive change in the communities it serves.



PESHAWAR: Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Haji Ghulam Ali in a group photo with the visiting faculty members from different universities of Afghanistan.

## CM inaugurates Special Initiative Police Stations

RAWALPINDI (APP): Chief Minister Punjab Mohsin Naqvi here on Friday inaugurated the Special Initiative Police Stations of Cantt and Saddar Baroni. Inspector General of Police (IGP) Punjab Dr. Usman Anwar, Regional Police Officer, Rawalpindi Syed Khurram Ali, Commissioner, Rawalpindi Division, Liaquat Ali Chatta, City Police Officer, Rawalpindi Syed Khalid Hamdani and other senior officers were present on the occasion.

Talking to the media, the chief minister said that police stations across Punjab were being renovated under the Special Initiative Police Station program.

Two days ago, 36 police stations of 36 districts were inaugurated, he said adding, today, in the second phase, 36 more police stations were inaugurated.

The objective of the initiative is to provide the best service delivery in the best environment to the citizens, the CM added.

Mohsin Naqvi appreciated the RPO, CPO Rawalpindi and their team for the excellent work under Special Initiative Police Stations of Cantt and Saddar Baroni.

He directed the authorities to complete the Safe City project and CPO office in one month.

The CM also announced to provide Rs 180 million for the completion of the CPO office project.

He instructed to complete the Safe City Project and CPO Office Rawalpindi by January 30. 30 per cent reduction in crime was recorded across Punjab, he informed. All possible measures were being taken for the convenience of the citizens and to ensure the best service delivery.

## Sindh 'first time initiative to provide 55 electric bikes' to female vaccinators

ISLAMABAD (APP): Almost 55 female vaccinators are set to benefit from the historic initiative of the Sindh government to use 'Electric bikes' which will not only align with environmental sustainability goals but also enable them to easily move during the national vaccination drives and ensure that vaccines reach their intended destinations promptly.

This strategic decision aims to overcome logistical challenges, ensuring timely and widespread vaccination coverage throughout the province, said a report aired by a private news channel. While acknowledging the importance of empowering these vaccinator women in their roles, the government of Sindh would provide training sessions to recipients of the electric bikes, said a female vaccinator who hailed the groundbreaking step of the government.

The provision of specific uniforms for these women will also foster a sense of identity but also contribute to a more professional and organized approach to vaccine distribution, said another lady health worker.

This distribution of electric bikes from next week will have a positive impact on the vaccination process in Sindh, said a Sindh health department official, adding, that female vaccinators will be equipped to ride electric bikes safely and efficiently by providing them with riding skills and information related to riding these vehicles. The scope of this program will further expand and this move will have a direct and beneficial effect on Sindh's vaccination program, another official added.

## NOTICE FOR AUCTION OF MINOR MINERALS LEASE OF DISTRICT SWABI

The District Auction Committee of District Swabi invites applications from registered contractors of Minor Minerals for participation in auction and grant of Minor Mineral leases for one year of District Swabi under provision of Section-80 sub Section (3) of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Mines & Mineral Act 2017 for mining on the basis of "As is where is" in the office of Deputy Commissioner Swabi on 24/01/2024 at 11:00 am, in case of non-auction due to any reason, next date of auction will be 25/01/2024 at 11:00 am. Details are given below:-

S. No.	Name of Area with Acreage	Reserve Price	Call Deposit
1.	1984.69 Acres near village Sher Dara / Mir Ali / Naranji District Swabi	18,523,498	4,630,875
2.	40 Acres near village Narai Kanda District Swabi	3,774,803	943,701
3.	16.52 acres near village Kotha District Swabi	835,849	208,962
4.	430.18 acres near village Pujman District Swabi	29,548,864	7,387,216
5.	357.00 acres near village Kadai / Zaida / Badrai Khwar District Swabi	367,676	91,919
6.	99.92 acres near village Och Khwar District Swabi	6,721,959	1,680,490
7.	416.25 acres near village Bada District Swabi	1,213,330	303,332
8.	581.71 acres near village Sheikh Jana / Gango Dher District Swabi	1,280,737	320,184
9.	375.20 acres near village Panjpir / Kala Dara District Swabi	6,605,905	1,651,476
10.	794.33 near village Maneri Bala / Saleem Khan District Swabi	3,834,121	958,530
11.	1588.34 acres near village Pontia District Swabi	31,281,372	7,820,343
12.	40.67 acres near village Panjpir Badrai Khwar District Swabi	1,563,847	390,962
13.	50.00 acres near Village Maneri Payan District Swabi	14,685,534	3,671,384
14.	241.74 acres near Village Anora Abad District Swabi	2,636,565	65,9141
15.	416.25 acres near Village Gandaf District Swabi	2,372,733	593,183
16.	253.57 Acres near village Darra Maira District Swabi	490,234	122,559
17.	322.63 acres near village Jaganath District Swabi	119,122,471	29,780,618
18.	1708.77 acres near village Jalbai Dobyan	449,140,500	112,285,125
19.	2487.61 acres near village Clontra Jabbar / Masam Dheri District Swabi	304,150,000	76,037,500
20.	100.13 acres near village Dab Korona / Jalsai District Swabi	66,000,000	16,500,000

### TERMS AND CONDITIONS

- Only those persons or firms registered with Directorate General Mines & Minerals Khyber Pakhtunkhwa as Minor Minerals Contractors can participate in auction. Interested parties can register themselves in the Directorate General Mines & Minerals Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Peshawar as well as in regional offices.
- The registered parties/individuals shall submit application form at the cost of **Rs.10200/-** (Ten thousand & Two Hundred Only) non-refundable on any working day at least three (03) days before the auction. Last date for submission of application form is **22/01/2024**.
- Blacklisted/ Defaulter persons or those persons who are not registered with Directorate General Mines and Minerals are not allowed to participate in the auction.
- The interested parties can visit and check the advertised areas before auction. The sketches of the areas are available for the interested parties in the office of the undersigned.
- Call deposit shall be deposited under account No. No. **0066-2008140092** and application fee under account No. **0066-2008208215** in any branch of Bank of Khyber.
- The registered applicants/parties shall also submit attested copies of CNIC, income tax registration certificate (NTN) and partnership deed/article & memorandum of association along with evidence of paid-up capital (if applicant is partnership firm/ company).
- The successful bidder shall deposit  $\frac{1}{4}^{\text{th}}$  of the total bid money as security within three days from the date of auction, otherwise, call deposit shall be forfeited in favour of the Government and the bid of second highest bidder shall be considered as highest bid, subject to condition that the difference between the first and the second highest bids is not less than 10 percent of the highest bid.
- The successful bidder shall demarcate his leased area within fifteen days from the issuance of Allotment Letter on his own expenses.
- The successful bidder shall be bound to pay Excise duty to Commissionerate of Mines or its approved excise duty collection contractor on government notified rates.
- The successful bidder before issuance of allotment letter shall be bound to deposit withholding tax under Rule-236-A of IT02011 with Income Tax Department and Professional Tax as per rules to the Excise & Taxation Dept. Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.
- The successful bidder will be bound to pay surface rent to the land owner under Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Mines & Mineral Act 2017/Amended 2019.
- The successful bidder shall be responsible to work in leased area strictly in accordance with the provisions of Mines & Mineral Act, 2017.
- The successful bidder shall be bound to use only verified challans for transportation of minor minerals duly verified by the concerned Assistant Director. Transportation without a verified transit challan shall be considered as un-authorized transportation and action under section-56 of the ibid Act shall be initiated against the lessee as well as other offenders.
- The successful bid will comply with the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Mines & Minerals Act 2017/Amended Act 2019 and Rules thereof.
- The competent authority reserves the right to accept or reject any bid with cogent reason.
- The area at S. No.11 has been reduced and submitted for approval. Upon approval by the competent authority, the reserve price will be adjusted accordingly.
- Other information in this regard can be obtained from the office of undersigned during office time i.e. **09:00 AM to 05:00 PM** on any working day.

Assistant Director (Tech)  
Mineral Development Swabi

INF(P)0043/24



KARACHI: Caretaker Federal Minister for Education, Madad Ali Sindhi, addressing the ceremony of Book Launching written by Dr. Afshan Malik Chairperson Sindho Social Welfare Trust at Sindh Police Museum.



# Faculty members of Afghan varsities calls on Governor

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Haji Ghulam Ali has urged faculty members of Afghan universities to focus intellectual orientation of students and divert their attention towards research and modern technology.

He was talking to a delegation of faculty members of Afghan universities in Governor House here on Friday. The delegation comprised 38 faculty members of Afghan universities that are having training in IM Sciences Hayatabad

with the financial assistance of Higher Education Commission.

Governor welcomed the delegation and discussed matters relating to promotion of contemporary education and capacity building of students. He said that capacity building of Afghan youth would further strengthen peace and led the country on course of progress and prosperity.

He also stressed upon faculty members to provide students with knowledge and education enabling them to tap potential of Afghan natural resources.

He said that Afghan students should be provided education and technology to remove backwardness and induce development. He also highlighted significance of higher education institutions for development of a nation.

On the occasion, governor was told that one month capacity building course is underway in IM Sciences for Afghan professors, assistant professors and lecturers. He was informed that various courses would be arranged for Afghan professionals in second phase.

## SBBWU arranges awareness walk

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: The Compost Club Shaheed Benazir Bhutto Women University, (SBBWU) Peshawar on Friday arranged an awareness walk here to emphasize the pivotal role of women in waste management, as part of its 'Sustainable Campus Operation' initiative.

The initiative aimed to cultivate a culture of sustainability by empowering women to take leadership roles in waste management practices. The varsity's club sought to harness the potential of female leaders through education, training, and community engagement to create a more resilient and environmentally conscious society.

Speaking on the occasion the Vice-Chancellor, Prof Dr Safia Ahmed said that fostering female empowerment is a holistic and empowering approach that recognizes the pivotal role of women in driving positive change. "By fostering female empowerment, we not only contribute to sustainable waste practices but also pave the way for a more inclusive and equitable future," she noted.

The participants of the walk and members of the Compost Club, actively participated in this walk. The guests lauded the sustainability efforts of members of Compost Club by highlighting their collective commitment for a greener future. The goal of the event was to reduce organic waste on the campus and motivate other academicians to embrace sustainability and recycling practices. Students from all departments of the varsity participated in the walk by preparing banners from waste materials like plastic and cardboard to display their interest.

## 2 including woman killed

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: A man shot dead his sister in Zaida area of Swabi district on Friday for marrying another man after getting divorce from her first husband.

A complainant, Fazal Hadi reported to Zaida police that he along with his wife and nephew were at home when his brother-in-law, Jihad Ali entered the house and fired at his sister. He told the police that his wife died on-the-spot while the hiller escaped from the scene. He said his brother-in-law was not happy over the second marriage of his sister. Police have registered an FIR and started investigation.

In another incident in Zaida, a youth named Muhammad Taoheed was shot dead in front of his house. The brother of the deceased told Zaida police that his brother received a phone call and went out of the house. After some time, he said shots were heard and when he went out to inquire about the situation, he found that his brother was shot dead. He said his family has no enmity with anyone and did not know who killed his brother. Zaida police have registered a case and started investigation.

ow of your flag. He said that by creating conflict between us, the Aghs have captured our resources. If we do not show unity today, future generations will not forgive us.

Meanwhile, the independent candidate NA-38 Saleem Khattak, while launching the election campaign from worker convention, said that I am a rebel against this system because the resources of our district are being looted for 20 years.



PESHAWAR: KP Caretaker Minister for Information Barrister Feroze Jamal Kaka Khel in a group photo with the newly elected cabinet of Press Club.

# Lingering impact of transgenerational trauma

Fatimah Saeed

**PALESTINE, historically celebrated for its olives and hospitality, now bears the enduring shadows of transgenerational trauma due to persistent conflict. This trauma has left indelible psychological marks, evident through elevated rates of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) that transcends generations.**

The burden of these traumas disproportionately affects children, with over half in Gaza already grappling with PTSD even before recent conflicts. The transmission of trauma across generations manifests in collective grief, loss, and anger, deeply shaping both individual mental health and societal cohesion. Despite showcasing remarkable resilience, the persistent cycle of trauma underscores the imperative need for substantial changes addressing the root causes of this deep-seated issue.

Once hailed for its olives and renowned hospitality, Palestine has tragically become a canvas of enduring conflict, leaving profound scars on its people and land. To comprehend the profound impact of transgenerational trauma in Palestine, delving into the historical context shaping the region's tumultuous journey is crucial.

At the onset of the 20th century, Palestine was predominantly inhabited by an Arab population coexisting with a smaller Jewish community. The pivotal Balfour Declaration of 1917 marked a turning point, articulating British support for establishing a "National Home for the Jewish People" in Palestine. This declaration catalyzed increased Jewish immigration, intensifying tensions between the indigenous Arab populace and the newcomers. The United Nations' partition proposal in 1947 resulted in the establishment of the State of Israel in 1948, triggering the mass displacement of approximately 700,000 Palestinians who became refugees in their own homeland. Subsequent years witnessed genocidal acts, conflicts, recurrent displacements, and military occupations, perpetuating a cycle of instability and insecurity plaguing the region.

Gaza stands as a poignant example of this enduring struggle. Its inhabitants suffer not only the direct brunt of deadly conflicts, such as recent onslaughts, but also chronic trauma stemming from a long-standing occupation. Harsh realities like home seizures, oppressive policing, extrajudicial killings, and arbitrary detentions

inflict psychological wounds on the population. The illegal blockade on Gaza exacerbates economic deprivation, widespread unemployment, and poverty, further compounding the distress.

The toll of this turmoil materializes as concrete mental health challenges. In Gaza, PTSD rates soar alarmingly high, with a significant portion of the adult population experiencing disrupted sleep, perpetual vigilance, flashbacks, nightmares, and emotional numbing. However, labeling this trauma as merely "post-traumatic" seems inadequate as the trauma endures, giving rise to what might be more aptly termed as "Present-Traumatic Stress Disorder."

Children bear the heaviest burden under these circumstances. Research in 2006 among Gaza's children aged 10 to 18 revealed that nearly every child in Palestine likely experienced at least three traumatic events, with 41% suffering from PTSD. By 2020, studies indicated that over half of Gaza's children were already grappling with PTSD, highlighting the transgenerational transmission of trauma, as children internalize the experiences of their elders, particularly through behavioral patterns and emotional responses.

This impact transcends individual psychological symptoms, extending to a collective sense of loss, grief, and anger, shaping not only individual mental health but the well-being of the entire community. In the face of these overwhelming adversities, Palestinians exhibit remarkable resilience. The shadows of trauma cast over Palestine seep beyond the psychological realm, affecting social relationships, community structures, and the political landscape, adding layers of complexity to an already deep-rooted issue.

As the world bears witness to the ongoing struggles of the Palestinian people, it becomes imperative to acknowledge the extremely painful impact of transgenerational trauma. Despite enduring decades of conflict, displacement, and hardship, Palestinians have displayed remarkable resilience, preserving their cultural identity and fostering a sense of community. Their endurance and adaptation amidst adversity resonate as a strength that transcends immediate struggles. Beyond rhetorical speeches and diplomatic endeavors, addressing the mental health needs of this resilient population emerges as a crucial step toward healing the festering wounds across generations in a land once celebrated for its olives and hospitality.



PESHAWAR: Adviser to KP Chief Minister for Health Dr. Riaz Anwar administering anti-polio drops to a child during polio campaign.

## Foggy condition prevails in KP

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Like other parts of the country, the foggy conditions with cold waves continued in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa on Friday.

Most districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, including Peshawar remained covered in fog while the mercury level dropped to 5C in the provincial capital with zero visibility in the morning.

Owing to dense fog the National Highways and Motorway Police (NH&MP) temporarily closed M1 Motorway from Peshawar to Rashakai and Burhan Interchange and Swat Express Motorway. Due to fog/smog in the city, the district administration issued instructions to the citizens urging them to restrict their movement in vehicles and if necessary use fog lights and keep headlights low.

Avoid frequent lane changes and maintain sufficient distance from the front vehicle on the road to avoid accidents. People are advised to contact helpline number 1915 for traffic-related information.

Meanwhile, the Regional Meteorological Center Peshawar on Friday predicted that mainly cold and dry weather is expected in most districts of the province, while very cold in upper districts and hilly areas.

It said that moderate to dense foggy conditions are likely to prevail over Peshawar, Charsadda, Nowshera, Mardan, Swabi, Haripur, Bannu, Lakki Marwat, D.I. Khan and Tank districts as well as over Motorway (M1) / Highways in morning/night. The public are advised to be cautious during travelling.

During the last 24 hours cold and dry weather prevailed over most districts of the province while dense foggy conditions prevailed over plain areas. Rainfall recorded (in mm) during the last 24 hours at different stations of KPK was nil.

The maximum and minimum temperatures recorded in centigrade at different stations of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa were Peshawar 09/05, Chitral 15/01, Timgara 18/00, Dir 13/-01, Mirkhani 16/-02, Kalam 13/-05, Dros 15/02, Saidu Sharif N.A, Pattan 21/08, Malam Jabba 09/01, Takht Bhai 08/03, Kakul 17/02, Balakot 18/02, Parachinar 14/02, Bannu 16/02, Cherat 17/05, DI Khan City 12/03. The lowest temperatures recorded in the province was -05°C in Kalam and -04°C in Tirah valley of Khyber district.

# Nationwide polio drive inaugurated in KP

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Advisor to Caretaker Chief Minister for Health, Dr. Riaz Anwar renewed government's commitment for stamping out the crippling virus of polio from the region at the outset of the new year saying that despite competing priorities and challenges the government will continue its course with reinvigorated spirit for delivering its promise on ensuring healthier and safer future for the children of the country.

He expressed these views while inaugurating the first National Immunization Days (NID) of the year at the provincial level here at Police Services Hospital Peshawar on Friday. The inauguration ceremony was also attended by Deputy Coordinator Emergency Operation Center Muhammad Zeeshan Khan, Dr. Syed Bawar Shah, President Pakistan Pediatric Association KP, Dr Sarfaraz

Khan team leader WHO KP and other relevant officials.

While talking to media he emphasized the government's commitment for achieving the complete eradication of the poliovirus across all segments of society. Dr. Anwar stated that despite the hard-weather challenges, polio teams are dedicated to reach every household with eligible children to ensure their vaccination in every campaign.

He further highlighted that comprehensive preparations for the five-day polio eradication campaign, consisting of two phases, have been completed at the Provincial Emergency Operations Center. Starting from January 8, this campaign aims to administer polio drops to all children up to the age of five. Dr. Anwar stressed the importance of collaboration from parents and other community members to eliminate this infectious disease.

Providing details about

the campaign, Dr. Riaz Anwar informed that Lakki Marwat, South Waziristan Upper, and Lower will initiate the polio eradication campaign from January 15. Deputy Coordinator of the Emergency Operations Center, Zeeshan Khan, shared campaign details with the media, stating that over 7.4 million children in the province will receive anti polio drops during this initiative.

"To ensure the success of the campaign, a total of 31,505 trained polio workers have been organized into teams, including 28,049 mobile teams, 1,964 fixed teams, 1,321 transit teams, and 171 roaming teams. Additionally, 7,151 area in-charges have also been appointed for effective monitoring of the campaign" he added. For the security of the polio teams during the campaign, approximately 50,000 personnels have been deployed, Zeeshan Khan concluded.

## ANP true representative party of Pakhtuns

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Awami National Party candidate for NA 38 Hamid Tofan has said that Awami National Party is the representative party of Pakhtun nation and is fighting the war of Pakhtuns on every front. People should make ANP candidates successful by voting in the general elections. This is what he is addressing at the rally in Union Council Paloosa Sar

He said that the Pakhtun nation is facing problems and difficulties while living in a region rich in natural resources. Despite producing cheap electricity, petrol, natural gas, etc., the people of Pakhtunkhwa are deprived of facilities.

He said that while living in a country, the Pakhtun nation is being treated like a stepmother which is no longer tolerable. Play your part in fighting for the rights of Pakhtuns under the shadow

of your flag. He said that by creating conflict between us, the Aghs have captured our resources. If we do not show unity today, future generations will not forgive us.

Meanwhile, the independent candidate NA-38 Saleem Khattak, while launching the election campaign from worker convention, said that I am a rebel against this system because the resources of our district are being looted for 20 years.

# Winter brings boom to fish trade in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa

PESHAWAR (APP): The increased chill and dense foggy conditions have amplified the demands of mouth-watering fish varieties including trout fish and delicious chappli kabab in KP especially Peshawar where all eateries outlets packed with customers enjoying its delectable bites till late night.

Known for hospitality, Peshawar is a unique ancient city for being frequently visited by tourists and food lovers to relish on its delectable traditional foods varieties including mouth-watering chappli kabab, Peshawari rice-polao and fish varieties mostly brought from Malakand, Hazara divisions, Punjab and Karachi as special winter food recipes.

While travelling on historic Qissa Khawani and Namak Mandi bazaars in the bustling city of Peshawar, a visitor can't resist the aroma of grilled fish and chappli kabab being served with traditional Qehwa and spicy sauces in harsh winter. "The tantalizing aroma of trout and carp fish besides other varieties and chappli kabab has always attracted me to enjoy its delectable taste at Qissa Khawani bazaar. It is my third visit to Qisa Khawani of the ongoing winter season with my family. My visit to

Peshawar remained incomplete without enjoying the mouthwatering chappli kabab and grilled fish with green qehwa," said Riaz Khan, a resident of Nowshera while talking to APP. Besides food outlets, many visitors take parcels for their loved one at home to keep themselves warm in harsh winter.

Ganta Ghar, a famous fish trade hub in Peshawar drew a substantial number of sea food lovers where trade of fish varieties including mushka, raho, simon, pomfret, mahsher, and lobsters were significantly increased after the cold wave gripped Peshawar valley for the last three days. The hotel's owners and even vendors received a deluge of orders for eating at shops and home delivery from residents and visitors enjoying its delicious bites along with loved ones during peak of winter season.

Sajid Ali, a trader of a fish outlet at Ghanta Ghar said trout stock has been brought from Swat and Mansehra districts as a special winter offer to fulfill Peshawarties' pressing demands. "The recipe of trout fish is very simple and time-efficient. We prepare trout in oil after its proper water wash and cutting. Later, varieties of spicy

sauces, pomegranate seed powder, salt and other species ingredients are properly mixed."

Before making it on medium flame, he said the fish is properly marinated for about two hours to ensure that all sauces are intact and colour is unchanged and later served to customers with chips, sauces (Chitnis), salad and naans. Sajid said most of people wanted deep-fried fish, some liked 'tawa macchi' and many liked grilled and baked trout fish for eating at shops as well as taking the parcel for their loved ones, adding one kilogram ungrilled trout was being sold at Rs 3000 to Rs 3500 per kilogram in open market.

Wapda's retired employee, Qaiser Khan while eating fish at Ring Road Peshawar along with friends told APP that trout was his favorite seafood as its meat was full of proteins and vitamins besides easily digestible. "When I was young, I visited Swat with my father during winter to enjoy the freshwater brown trout due to its aromatic taste and spiciness amid snowfall. This winter, I did not go to Swat due to the availability of grilled and baked trout fish at Peshawar."

Dr Riaz Khan, senior children

specialist Govt Hospital Pabbi Nowshera said there was an additional burden on the heart, brains, joints and lungs of weak people and children due to persistent cough, nausea and frosts in winter, adding consumption of fish was the best available choice to help reduce risks of these diseases. Besides best source of proteins, vitamins, omega 3 fatty acids, phosphorus, iron and iodine, he said that consumption of seafood help improve digestion, protects skin from dryness and relieves joints' pains.

He said Pakistan can earn substantial revenue by giving special incentives to trout's farmers besides construction of new trout lakes especially in Malakand and Hazara divisions due availability of plenty of cold water reservoirs and ideal climate conditions for trout and carp farming. KP Fisheries Department spokesman said that Trout Village Project was launched in Hazara and Malakand divisions under which over 100 small and large trout fish farms established. "Trout farming is a highly profitable business and any farmer having 35 marla land and proper water inflow and outflow system can produce 3000 kg trout by earning about three mil-

lion rupees profit after 15 months rearing."

These farms were established under a 50:50% cost sharing formula basis contributed by KP Government and farmers mostly in Swat and Mansehra districts. Similarly, work on development of coldwater fisheries resources' costing Rs 1200 million, a joint venture of Federal and Provincial Governments having 40:60% cost sharing basis continued in Malakand and Hazara divisions under which about 300 trout lakes would be established to cater sea food demands of the ever growing population.

Development of reservoirs for uplift of fisheries resources costing Rs 500 million' project has been approved under which 67 carp fish farms and model hatchery on 179 kanal at Swabi would be established. From this large hatchery, he said fish seedlings would be provided to private hatcheries and Turbella dam. With completion of these projects, he said KP's fish production would likely increase to 740 metric tons from the existing 400 metric tons in the next few years.

He said water pollution and climate change as a big threat to trout

farming and suggested a comprehensive mechanism for disposal of hotel waste in Malakand and Hazara divisions. "Throwing of plastic pollution and hotels effluent drains directly into River Swat and Kunhar are extremely harmful for freshwater trout," he reiterated. Work on a new project 'development of fisheries resources in merged areas' was underway and that model coldwater research centre at Madyn Swat with a facility of a fish hatchery where academia and young researchers would be facilitated to conduct researches on aquatic resources.

"The August 2022 floods had inflicted millions of losses to the fisheries sector in Hazara and Malakand divisions where many carp and trout fish hatcheries were either completely destroyed or damaged." The spokesman said that demands of Pakistani fish has increased to Thailand, Saudia Arabia , South Korea and Singapore and time has come to go towards commercialization of fish farming to bolster the country's fish exports. Similarly, he suggested soft loans to all flood affected fish farmers for reconstruction of their farms and lakes especially in Upper Swat.





## In brief

Illegal diesel recovered  
F.P. Report

**D I KHAN:** The district police have intensified crackdown against illegal fuel agencies across the district and recovered 13372 liters of Diesel and 2347 liters of petrol during last three days, Police spokesman said Friday. According to a police spokesman, following the directions of District Police Officer (DPO) Abdul Rauf Babar Qaisrani a crackdown has been launched against illegal fuel agencies across the district. The police have registered cases against 58 persons involved in the business of illegal fuel in different areas of the district. During the crackdown, the police also recovered 26 fuel units, 118 Plastic Tanks and 145 bottles, DPO Abdul Rauf Babar Qaisrani said indiscriminate legal actions would be continued against the business of illegal fuel.

Transporters block highway  
F.P. Report

**QUETTA (PPI):** Quetta-Karachi main highway near Lakpass was blocked on Friday by transporters, demanding the authorities to retrieve 4000 vehicles of transporters stranded in Chaman due to protest sit-in. According to detail, on the call of All Pakistan Mustarika Transport Association, transporters blocked Quetta-Karachi main highway near Lakpass area of district Mastung for all kinds of vehicular traffic, demanding the authorities to take steps for retrieving 4000 vehicles stranded in Chaman. Talking to media, representatives of transporters said that about 4000 vehicles had been stranded in Chaman owing to the protest sit-in staged in Chaman, a city bordering Afghanistan, by All Parties Chaman, Anjuman Tajran Chaman and Laghari Itehad. They said vehicles of transporters were not being permitted by the organisers of protest sit-in to leave Chaman. They called on the authorities to take steps for retrieval of the 4000 stranded vehicles. Quetta-Karachi highway remained closed till filing this report.

Anti-polio drive inaugurated  
F.P. Report

**MARDAN:** Deputy Commissioner Mardan Muhammad Fayyaz Khan Sherpao has said that we have to work together to eradicate the dangerous disease of polio. He was speaking at the inauguration ceremony of the National Anti-Polio Campaign, commencing from 8th January 2024. Deputy Commissioner Mardan Fayyaz Khan Sherpao officially kicked off the campaign by administering polio vaccine drops to the children on this occasion. He appealed to the parents to ensure that their children under five years of age are vaccinated against polio during the campaign, it is important not only for the health of their children but also for the nation. He appealed to the people to cooperate with the polio team and the health staff in the national anti-polio campaign starting from 8th January 2024.

## 3 passengers killed in mishap

**PANNU AQIL (INP):** Three passengers were killed and more than 20 others sustained injuries when a speeding passenger coach skidded off the road and fell into a ditch on the National Highway near Pannu Aqil on Friday. According to police, three passengers died on the spot while more than 20 others got hurt in the accident.

## Police arrest killer of a six-year old baby girl in Dir

## F.P. Report

**LOWER DIR:** The Lower Dir police on Friday claimed to have arrested the killer of a six-year old baby girl within 24 hours and the accused confessed to the crime of rape and murder. Speaking at a news conference at the Timergara police lines, the district police officer Ziaud Din confirmed the arrest of News Ali Khan 40 s/o Gul Raip Khan, a resident of Bannu district recently residing at Khazana in Lower Dir. He said the accused was a married man who migrated to the district from Bannu. SP investigation Zahoor Khan and other officers were also present on the occasion.

A 6-year old baby Maria, daughter of Abdur Rehman, a resident of Khazana village was found dead in the fields near the Panjkora River at Khazana in the jurisdiction of Munda police station here the other day.

The DPO said the case was a challenge for the police department as the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Inspector General of police and Regional Police Officer had also taken its notice. He said the 40-year old accused, who migrated to the area some six years ago, had confessed that he had raped the baby first and then strangled her and threw her body near the Panjkora River at night. The accused worked as a labourer at a local bakery for the last two years. The DPO said that scores of suspects were taken into custody after the incident sparked widespread criticism on social media as it was the first case of this nature in Dir. He said that a high level investigation team led by him was formed that traced the killer

and arrested him within 24 hours.

The baby went missing from her home on Wednesday and the family searched for her all day. The body was found on the bank of Panjkora River which was shifted to the district headquarters hospital Timergara for post mortem report. The hospital staff took samples from the body and sent them to Peshawar for laboratory report.

**Dir elders meet administration for demarcation of riverbed in district:** A jirga of local elders and political leaders on Friday met the additional deputy commissioner Abdul Wali Khan, assistant director minerals department Ijaz Khan and Akhunzada Naseerullah of the irrigation department at the deputy commissioner Jirga Hall at Balambat.

The jirga members including chief of the Dir Qaumi Pasoon Malik Jehan Alam, Brigadier retired Saeedullah Khan, former provincial minister Mahmood Zeb Khan, Malik Abdul Sattar Khan, Malik Sher Muhammad Khan, Malik Sardar Amir, Malik Bakht Ali and others discussed the issue of demarcation of the riverbed and auction of sand and gravel. They were of the view that frequent flash floods had washed away agricultural lands on both sides of the river and widened the riverbed.

The jirga informed the administration that FIRs against some of the land owners had been registered for excavation from their own lands. They pointed out that the Upper Dir district administration had agreed with the landowners on demarcation of the riverbed, so the Lower Dir

administration should also follow that way. The jirga also demanded reversal of the FIRs registered against some of the local land owners.

The administration agreed to the jirga's proposals and promised that the contractors would not be allowed to lift the sand, gravel and other minerals from the riverbed till the final decision on the matter.

**Teachers' demand:** Female teachers working in the second shift on Friday complained that they were not getting their salaries for the last three months due to which they were suffering hard. Talking to local journalists they said that they had not been paid for the last three months despite taking regular classes at the government girls' higher secondary school Ziarat Talash.

The teachers said the district education officer had de-notify the center due to less enrollment. They said that they had met the Lower Dir deputy commissioner and officers of the education department and demanded their salaries for three months but to no avail. The female teachers demanded the high ups of the education department to take notice of the matter and direct the concerned officials to release their salaries.

**Road accident:** A woman and two children, all residents of Talash, were injured when a car plunged into the Panjkora River near the Zulam Bridge in the jurisdiction of Timergara police station here on Friday. The driver lost control over the wheel due to over speeding. The Rescue 1122 emergency team rushed to the spot and shifted the injured to the district headquarters hospital Timergara.



QUETTA: Activists of Sunni Ulema Council holding a rally for acceptance of their demands.

## Snowfall covers hilly areas

**NEELAM (INP):** The Neelum Valley is experiencing chilling temperatures as low as minus seventeen degrees in its upper regions. This bitter cold has not only frozen streams and springs but has also brought tourism to a standstill, with severe weather conditions prompting the suspension of tourist traffic.

The harsh winter has dealt a blow to businesses reliant on tourism in the Neelum Valley, as the extreme cold discourages visitors from venturing into the upper areas. The impact is evident as people associated with tourism face a significant downturn in their economic activities.

Adding to the challenges faced by the residents of Neelum district, electricity and internet services have been faltering for the past three months. The persistent issues have compounded the difficulties of the local population, further exacerbating the already harsh living conditions.

The relentless snowfall has forced the closure of schools in the upper Neelum region due to safety concerns for students and staff. As a result, educational institutions are experiencing unplanned holidays, disrupting the regular academic calendar.

Meanwhile, in Ziarat and its surroundings, a late-night snowfall transformed the landscape into a picturesque scene that captivated both locals and tourists. With six inches of snow blanketing the city and eight inches in the mountains, the region has become a winter wonderland. Residents and visitors alike are relishing the breathtaking scenery and enjoying the unexpected gift of nature.

As climate change continues to impact regions worldwide, these events in Neelum Valley and Ziarat serve as a poignant reminder of the urgent need for environmental awareness and sustainable practices.

## Gilani hails ZAB mission

**MULTAN (INP):** Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) is committed to the mission of Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto (ZAB) who steered the country out of crises through his leadership qualities, vision and forward thinking.

Former Prime Minister, Syed Yusuf Raza Gilani in a statement on ZAB Bhutto's 95th birth anniversary here on Friday said that his services rendered for the country and the nation will always be remembered.

PPP Senior Vice Chairman noted that Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto was a visionary, forward-thinking leader who empathised with the people's pain and with his leadership abilities, showcased a positive identity for the country internationally. The Senator maintained that slogan "Roti, Kapra or Makan," is the ideology of the party. Eulogising Ex Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto service, he said that she worked for the country following in her father's footsteps. After her martyrdom, PPP Chairman Bilawal Bhutto and Co-Chairman Asif Ali Zardari effectively managed the country and the party, Gilani concluded.

## All arrangements set to conduct polio drive

## F.P. Report

**LANDI KOTAL:** All arrangements have been finalized to carry out a seven days anti-polio campaign successfully to be scheduled on Monday, Jan. 08, 2024 here in all three tehsils of district Khyber.

In this connection a meeting under the chair of Deputy Commissioner (DC) Capt (Retd) Sanaullah was held in DC Khyber house, Peshawar that was attended by Additional DC (general) Muhammad Hamid, Dr Usman of health department, representatives of World Health Organization (WHO) police and other concerned officials.

The officials were briefed of comprehensive report on arrangements to carry out polio campaign, awareness, security, refusal parents and other issues. Later on, DC Khyber in the presence of health officials administered polio drops to one of the children to formally open the drive.

According to district health official approximately 0.228000 million children below five years to be vaccinated in the seven days anti-polio campaign to be carried out across the Khyber. Almost 945 fixed, transit and mobile teams of vaccinators had been constituted to facilitate the masses at

health centers, taxi stands and door to door campaigns.

The polio campaign has scheduled from Jan 08, 2024 and will continue till Jan 14 2024 in Khyber besides other districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. DC Captain (Retd) Sanaullah urged the parents to feed anti-polio vaccine to their children and assist the health staff to make Pakistan free of the crippling disease. As per the health department, because of successful anti-polio drives carried out by the health officials with support of other stakeholders, no polio case has been detected in Khyber for the last one and half years.

## Arrangements for polio drive finalized

## F.P. Report

**HAFIZABAD:** All necessary arrangements have been finalised to launch the first five-day polio immunization campaign of this year from 28, January and drops of polio vaccine will be administer to more than two lakh and twenty-two thousand children below five-year-old in the district.

This was stated in the meeting of District Anti-Polio Committee, Hafizabad. Deputy Commissioner Sundas Irshad presided over the meeting.

Addressing the meeting DC said that neither polio drops are harmful to health nor un-Islamic so parents

must get administer polio drops to their children up-to five-year-old to save them from everlasting disability.

She appealed the ulema, teachers and representatives of traders, media men and civil society to play their active role to make anti-polio drive successful.

AC Hafizabad Munawar Hussain, CEO Health Dr. Umar Sharif, representative of World Health Organisation Dr. Faiq Ali Tarar, Prominent Religious Scholler Syed Waseem-ul-Hassan Shah and other members of the committee attended the meeting.

DC directed the officers of health department to ensure administering vaccination of hundred percent

target children during the campaign and any negligence or slackness would not be tolerated.

**Woman died:** A woman was died and her husband injured in road accident at Kassoki Chowk Hafizabad. According to details, Ghulam Jalani and her wife Tahira was coming to city Hafizabad from village Kot Hassan Khan on motorcycle. When they reached at Kassoki Chowk, a unknown Mini Truck hit the bike, as result of which Ghulam Jalani and his wife Tahira injured.

They were shifted to Lahore for treatment where Tahira was succumbed due to injuries. Truck driver sped away to hit the bike.

## Students lament educational backwardness in modern era

## F.P. Report

**ZHOB:** Despite the fact that education and development are interdependent. The countries experienced accelerated development have done so by modernizing and facilitating meaningful education, but in this era of science and technology, we are deprived of the modern educational opportunities.

Our problems are ranging from poverty, unemployment and low literacy rate and state-of-the-art educational institutions. Historically and geographically important, Zhob has always remained a backward, remote district of Pashtoon-Baloch province,' lamented the Pashtoonkhwa student organization here on Friday.

Addressing a crowded press conference, the provincial deputy organizers of Pashtoonkhwa student organization Emal Sarwan, Samad Afghan, district secretary Amir-ul-Bashar, district senior co-secretary Irfanullah, secretary BUITEMS Zhob campus Qahir Khan Kakar, office bearers and activists said that the densely populated district Zhob shares borders with South Waziristan, Afghanistan, Loralai and Dera Ismail Khan but Ironically deprived of all the basic amenities of life including a state-of-the-art university even in this modern era.

Today, there are twenty universities alone in Faisalabad, twenty-five



universities in the Punjab capital Lahore and over two dozen universities in the federal capital Islamabad and Rawalpindi, but unfortunately, with few universities, our literacy rate is still very low as compared to other provinces,' they said.

The students said that Pashtoon-Baloch province, particularly Southern Pashtoonkhwa, is facing numerous problems including poverty, backwardness, illiteracy, unrest and unemployment. Keeping in mind the educational backwardness, the utmost priority of the higher education commission, governor, the caretaker CM and the provincial education minister should be modern education.

'Establishment of BUITEMS Zhob campus is a much appreciated initiative, where both girls and boys students from this backward region are studying in different disciplines. A few years back, the con-

struction work of the campus was started on two hundred acres of land near Killi Hassanzaai,' they lauded.

They said, the sub-campus of Panigur and Turbat varsities have been granted university status, but the BUITEMS Zhob campus has not been granted university status so far. Now the students eager to get higher education have no other option but to travel to other provinces.

If BUITEMS Zhob campus is not given the university status immediately, on one hand, the semester fee will become unaffordable, while on the other hand, few students will take admissions at the campus, which will be resulted in closure of campus in near future,' they lamented. The students have demanded the upgradation of BUITEMS Zhob campus into university, so that the educational backwardness could be eliminated.





# Russian hackers were inside Ukraine telecoms giant for months

LONDON (Reuters): Russian hackers were inside Ukrainian telecoms giant Kyivstar's system from at least May last year in a cyberattack that should serve as a "big warning" to the West, Ukraine's cyber spy chief told Reuters.

The hack, one of the most dramatic since Russia's full-scale invasion nearly two years ago, knocked out services provided by Ukraine's biggest telecoms operator for some 24 million users for days from Dec. 12. In an interview, Illia Vitiuk, head of the Security Service of Ukraine's (SBU) cybersecurity department, disclosed exclusive details about the hack, which he said caused "disastrous" destruction and aimed to land a psychological blow and gather intelligence.

"This attack is a big message, a big warning, not only to Ukraine, but for the whole Western world to understand that no one is actually untouchable," he said. He noted Kyivstar was a wealthy, private company that invested a lot in cybersecurity. The attack wiped "almost everything", including thousands of virtual servers and PCs, he said, describing it as probably the first example of a destructive cyberattack that "completely destroyed the core of a telecoms operator."

During its investigation, the SBU found the hackers probably attempted to penetrate Kyivstar in March or earlier, he said in a Zoom interview on Dec. 27. "For now, we can say securely, that they were in the system at least since May 2023," he said. "I cannot say right now, since what time they had ... full access: probably at least since November."

The SBU assessed the hackers would have been able to steal personal information, understand the locations of phones, intercept SMS-messages and perhaps steal Telegram accounts with the level of access they gained, he said. A Kyivstar spokesperson said the company was working closely with the SBU to investigate the attack and would take all necessary steps to eliminate future risks, adding: "No facts of leakage of personal and subscriber data have been revealed."

Vitiuk said the SBU helped Kyivstar restore its systems within days and to repel new cyber attacks. "After the major break there were a number of new attempts aimed at dealing more damage to the operator," he said. Kyivstar is the biggest of Ukraine's three main telecoms operators and there are some 1.1 million Ukrainians who live in small towns and villages where there are no other providers, Vitiuk said.

People rushed to buy other SIM cards because of the attack, creating large queues. ATMs using Kyivstar SIM cards for the internet ceased to work and the air-raid siren - used during missile and drone attacks - did not function properly in some regions, he said. He said the attack had no big impact on Ukraine's military, which did not rely on telecoms operators and

made use of what he described as "different algorithms and protocols".

"Speaking about drone detection, speaking about missile detection, luckily, no, this situation didn't affect us strongly," he said. Investigating the attack is harder because of the wiping of Kyivstar's infrastructure.

Vitiuk said he was "pretty sure" it was carried out by Sandworm, a Russian military intelligence cyberwarfare unit that has been linked to cyberattacks in Ukraine and elsewhere. A year ago, Sandworm penetrated a Ukrainian telecoms operator, but was detected by Kyiv because the SBU had itself been inside Russian systems, Vitiuk said, declining to identify the company. The earlier hack has not been previously reported.

Russia's defence ministry did not respond to a written request for comment on Vitiuk's remarks. Vitiuk said the pattern of behaviour suggested telecoms operators could remain a target of Russian hackers. The SBU thwarted over 4,500 major cyberattacks on Ukrainian governmental bodies and critical infrastructure last year, he said. A group called Solntsepyok, believed by the SBU to be affiliated with Sandworm, said it was responsible for the attack.

Vitiuk said SBU investigators were still working to establish how Kyivstar was penetrated or what type of trojan horse malware could have been used to break in, adding that it could have been phishing, someone helping on the inside or something else. If it was an inside job, the insider who helped the hackers did not have a high level of clearance in the company, as the hackers made use of malware used to steal hashes of passwords, he said.

Samples of that malware have been recovered and are being analysed, he added. Kyivstar's CEO, Oleksandr Komarov, said on Dec. 20 that all the company's services had been fully restored throughout the country. Vitiuk praised the SBU's incident response effort to safely restore the systems. The attack on Kyivstar may have been made easier because of similarities between it and Russian mobile operator Beeline, which was built with similar infrastructure, Vitiuk said.

The sheer size of Kyivstar's infrastructure would have been easier to navigate with expert guidance, he added. The destruction at Kyivstar began at around 5:00 a.m. local time while Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy was in Washington, pressing the West to continue supplying aid. Vitiuk said the attack was not accompanied by a major missile and drone strike at a time when people were having communication difficulties, limiting its impact while also relinquishing a powerful intelligence-gathering tool. Why the hackers chose Dec. 12 was unclear, he said, adding: "Maybe some colonel wanted to become a general."

# President of Belarus gives himself immunity

TALLINN (AP): President Alexander Lukashenko of Belarus signed a new law that gives him lifelong immunity from criminal prosecution and prevents opposition leaders living abroad from running in future presidential elections.

The law theoretically applies to any former president and members of his or her family. In reality, it only is relevant to the 69-year-old Lukashenko, who has ruled Belarus with an iron fist for almost 30 years. The new measure appears aimed at further shoring up Lukashenko's power and eliminating potential challengers in the country's next presidential election, which is due to take place in 2025.

The law significantly tightens requirements for presidential candidates and makes it impossible to elect opposition leaders who fled to neighboring countries in recent years. Only citizens of Belarus who have permanently resided in the country for at least 20 years and have never had a resi-

dence permit in another country are eligible to run. Belarus was rocked by mass protests during Lukashenko's controversial re-election in August 2020 for a sixth term, which the opposition and the West condemned as fraudulent. At that time, Belarusian authorities detained more than 35,000 people, many of whom were tortured in custody or left the country.

Lukashenko also has been accused of involvement in the illegal transfer of children from Russian-occupied towns in Ukraine to Belarus. According to the text of the new law, Lukashenko, were he to leave power, "cannot be held accountable for actions committed in connection with exercising his presidential powers."

The law also says the president and members of his family will be provided with lifelong state protection, medical care, life and health insurance. After resigning, the president would also become a permanent lifelong member of

the upper house of parliament. Opposition leader Svetlana Tikhanovskaya, who fled to neighboring Lithuania in 2020, said the new law is Lukashenko's response to his "fear of an inevitable future," suggesting Lukashenko must be concerned about what happens to him when he leaves power.

"Lukashenko, who ruined the fates of thousands of Belarusians, will be punished according to international law, and no immunity will protect him against this," it's only a matter of time," Tikhanovskaya said. The country's political opposition is seeking an investigation into the disappearances of opposition politicians and the removal of Ukrainian children from Ukraine.

"We will ensure that the dictator is brought to justice," Tikhanovskaya said, emphasizing that there are still about 1,500 political prisoners behind bars in Belarus, including Nobel Peace Prize laureate Ales Bialiatski.

# Ukraine says no 'plan B' to unblocking US funding

KYIV (Reuters): Ukraine is considering no alternative to securing stalled US military assistance for its war against Russia and is confident the US Congress will give its approval to release the aid, Foreign Minister Dmytro Kuleba said.

"We don't have a plan B. We are confident in plan A," Kuleba told CNN in an interview. "Ukraine will always fight with the resources given to it. And...what is given to Ukraine is not charity. It's an investment in the protection of NATO and in the protection of the prosperity of the American people," he said. Kuleba said that if Russia prevailed in the conflict, now more than 22 months old, "other leaders

will be tempted to follow in Russia's footsteps. And ensuring security in this part of the world and deterring these leaders will require a much, much higher price tag for the United States."

Kuleba said any officials suggesting that Russian President Vladimir Putin would never attack a NATO member state if the Kremlin succeeded in Ukraine "are making a huge mistake. And they should change their job." The US administration's request for another \$61 billion in support for Ukraine has been bogged down in the US Congress, where Republicans say it must be paired with tougher immigration controls along the

## Philippines remains open to diplomacy with China

MANILA (Reuters): The Philippines remains open to diplomatic discussions with China and believes the two nations can achieve a resolution to disputes over the South China Sea through peaceful dialogue, its national security adviser said in a statement.

Eduardo Ano's remarks came after a Chinese foreign ministry spokesperson called recent joint patrols by the United States and the Philippines in the South China Sea "provocative" and "irresponsible". "Our joint patrols with the United States and potential future activities with other allied countries shows our mutual commitment to a rules-based international order and for promoting peace and stability of the region," Ano said.

The Chinese embassy in Manila repeated the foreign ministry spokesperson's comments when asked to respond to Ano's remarks. Two Chinese navy vessels had shadowed Philippine and US ships conducting the recently concluded joint patrols, the Philippine military said.

The two-day maritime exercises involved four vessels from the Philippine navy and four ships from the US Indo-Pacific fleet, including Nimitz-class aircraft carrier USS Carl Vinson. The patrols ended and the US vessels called at the port of Manila. The joint patrols were the second held by the Philippines and the US in less than two months in the South China Sea, where tensions over disputed territorial claims are flaring.

The Philippines remains open to diplomatic discussions with China and reaffirms its commitment to fostering good relations with all nations," Ano said. "We believe that through peaceful dialogue and adherence to international law, we can achieve a resolution that serves the best interest of all parties involved in the region," he said.

China lays claim to almost the entire South China Sea, a conduit for more than \$3 trillion in annual ship commerce. China's claims of sovereignty overlap territorial waters claimed by the Philippines, Vietnam, Indonesia, Malaysia and Brunei. In 2016, the Permanent Court of Arbitration in the Hague said China's claims had no legal basis. China has rejected that ruling.

## Armed men kidnapped 32 migrants

MONTERREY (Reuters): The armed men who kidnapped 32 migrants in northern Mexico over the weekend aimed to extort money from them and their families in the United States, Mexico's president said, one day after the migrants were released from captivity.

He said that the migrants, who were found, were abandoned in a parking lot in a shopping center in the northern city of Reynosa in the state of Tamaulipas. "Because there was a strong deployment (from Mexican authorities), they decided to free them, safe and sound," President Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador said in his morning press conference.

The case has highlighted the risks faced by the hundreds of thousands of migrants who cross through Mexico en route to the US border each year, who are targets of extortion and kidnapping by powerful criminal groups. Human rights activists have been warning for months about an escalating kidnapping crisis in Reynosa, where last year Reuters documented a pattern of kidnappings - and at times sexual assault - of migrants and asylum seekers.

The 32 migrants were abducted from a commercial bus that had departed the northern city of Monterrey for Matamoros, across from Brownsville, Texas, according to Mexican officials. They were forced off the bus while traveling through Reynosa and whisked away in cars by armed men, officials added. In a separate case, authorities in the border state of Sonora said they had rescued around 20 migrants, many also kidnapped off busses.

# Russia hit Ukrainian region with non-Russian missiles

KYIV (Reuters): Russia has hit the eastern Ukrainian region of Kharkiv with non-Russian made missiles, the regional governor said. The statement from Oleh Synehubov, reported by Ukraine's public broadcaster Suspilne, followed a claim by the United States that Russia had recently used short-range ballistic missiles (SRBMs) sourced from North Korea to carry out many strikes against Ukraine.

"We are conducting all the necessary examinations. I will say for now that the markings have been erased from these missiles, but what we can see (is that) the country which produced it is not the Russian Federation," Suspilne cited Synehubov as saying. Ukraine has not confirmed the US assertion the missiles are North Korean. Ukraine's air force spokesperson said that Kyiv did not yet have information about whether the missiles were North Korean.

Meanwhile, Ukraine said its air force conducted a strike on a Russian command post near the occupied city of Sevastopol more than 200 km (120 miles) from Kyiv-held territory, and hit a military unit in a separate strike on the Crimean peninsula. Russia's Defence Ministry said its air defence units had downed a total of 36 Ukrainian drones over Crimea.

Ukraine's Air Force Commander, Mykola Oleschchuk, posted a video from social media on the Telegram messaging app showing smoke rising from an explosion near Sevastopol, a Crimean port that serves as the headquarters of Russia's Black Sea Fleet. "Thanks again to the air force pilots and everyone who planned the operation for perfect combat work," he said.

He also published a screenshot of a



social media post saying that a Russian military base in the city of Yevpatoria had been hit in a strike. Mikhail Razvozhayev, the Moscow-installed governor of Sevastopol, described the attack as "the most massive in recent times".

One person was hospitalized after a piece of shrapnel struck a house, he wrote on Telegram. In a later posting, Razvozhayev said three residents of a home hit by falling debris had been evacuated. Further evacuations might be necessary as forensic experts examine part of a missile that fell near a village. Reuters could not independently verify the reports.

In a report just after midnight, Russia's Defence Ministry reported the downing of 36 drones in Crimea and one over the southern Russian region of Krasnodar. The head administrative official in Saky, home to an air base north of Sevastopol, said several Ukrainian air attacks on

the area had been repelled.

And Ukrainian bloggers and unofficial Telegram channels said Russian air defence units had been in action repelling Ukrainian attacks in the Kerch strait, on Crimea's eastern coast, and in the Russian Black Sea port of Novorossiysk. The Russian defence ministry had earlier reported that its forces had destroyed 10 incoming missiles over the peninsula. The Strategic Communications Department of the Armed Forces of Ukraine said a Russian command post had been hit near Sevastopol.

Ukraine has stepped up its attacks on the Crimean peninsula, which was seized and annexed by Moscow in 2014, seeking to destroy Russian military capabilities and force its fleet to pull back from the Black Sea. Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelenskyy has said Kyiv has managed to seize the initiative from Russia in the area.

# South Korea views young daughter of Kim as his likely successor

SEOUL (AP): The young daughter of North Korean leader Kim Jong Un is seen as her father's likely heir apparent, South Korea's spy agency said, its first such assessment on the pretense who was unveiled to the outside world a little more than a year ago.

There has been intense outside debate and speculation about her, reportedly about 10 years old and named Ju Ae, since she made her first public appearance in November 2022, when she watched a long-range missile test launch with her father.

The girl has since accompanied her father to a slew of major public events, with state media calling her Kim Jong Un's "most beloved" or "respected" child and churning out footage and photos proving her rising political standing and closeness with her father. A senior general knelt and whispered to her when she clapped while watching a military parade at a VIP observation stand in September. She was photographed standing in front of her father at one point during a visit to the air force headquarters in November, with both Kims wearing sunglasses and long leather jackets. In a New Year's Eve celebration at a packed Pyongyang stadium, Kim Jong Un kissed her on the cheek and she did the same

to her father.

Most of these scenes are something that had been unimaginable in North Korea, where Kim is the subject of a strong and loyal following that treats him like a god. South Korea's main spy agency, the National Intelligence Service, said that it sees Kim Ju Ae as her father's likely successor, citing a comprehensive analysis of her public activities and the state protocols provided to her.

The NIS public affairs office told The Associated Press that it still considers all possibilities regarding the North's power succession process because Kim is still young, has no major health issues, and has at least one other child. Kim turns 40. Earlier, lawmaker Youn Kun-Young said the nominee for the NIS chief position, Cho Tae-yong, had given him that assessment. In phone conversations with the AP, Youn, a member of parliament's intelligence committee, said Cho's written responses to his questions contained no other details about Kim Ju Ae.

The NIS has a spotty record in confirming developments in North Korea, one of the world's most secretive nations. North Korea's state media have yet to make any direct comments on the succession plan, including whether

Kim Ju Ae has any siblings. Du Hyeogn Cha, an analyst at Seoul's Asan Institute for Policy Studies, said that while the NIS currently sees a high possibility of Kim Ju Ae getting primed to become her father's successor, few can predict whether she would eventually become the North's next leader. Cha added that Kim Ju Ae lacks political achievements that he said are essential to be formally anointed as the country's future leader.

Cheong Seong-Chang, an analyst at the private Sejong Institute in South Korea, said that Kim Jong Un likely believes his daughter has the capacity and resolve to succeed him as leader. He said Kim Jong Un's obesity appears so serious that "it won't be surprising even if he collapses tomorrow." "By accompanying her father on major events, it's like she's learning kingship and building a human network at a tender age," Cheong said.

NIS and officials from other parts of South Korea's government earlier said it was premature to view Kim Ju Ae as her father's heir, given Kim Jong Un's relatively young age and North Korea's Confucianism-influenced, male-nominated power structure. They had said the girl's repeated appearances were more likely meant to shore up

public support for Kim's family and his plan to one day hand power over to one of his children. Since its foundation in 1948, North Korea has been successively ruled by male members of the Kim family. Kim Jong Un inherited power upon his father Kim Jong Il's death in late 2011. Kim Jong Il took over power after his father and state founder Kim Il Sung died in 1994.

The name of Ju Ae matched what retired NBA star Dennis Rodman called Kim's baby daughter, whom he said he saw and held during a trip to Pyongyang in 2013. The NIS told lawmakers in a private briefing last year that Kim Ju Ae has an older brother and a younger sibling whose gender the agency hadn't confirmed. The NIS said at the time that Kim Ju Ae had never been enrolled in an official education facility and was getting homeschooled in Pyongyang, according to some of the lawmakers who attended the briefing.

Cheong, the Sejong Institute analyst, called the NIS intelligence on the older brother inaccurate, though he agrees that Kim Ju Ae has a younger sibling. Revealing the young Kim Ju Ae came as a huge surprise to foreign experts because neither Kim Jong Un nor Kim Jong Il were mentioned in North Korean state media before they became adults.

# Curbing migrant arrivals from Africa is about investment: Italian PM

ROME (AP): Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni told her European Union partners that curbing migration flows from African countries has less to do with offers of charity than strong partnerships coupled with strategic investments in those nations.

Meloni told reporters at a year-end news conference that last month's deal on the EU's Migration and Asylum Pact partially improved the situation for Italy and other asylum countries, but does not represent a solution to increasing migrant arrivals. "What needs to be done in Africa is not charity," she said. "What needs to be done in Africa is to build cooperation and serious strategic relationships as equals, not predators."

Meloni also stressed the need "to defend the right not to have to emigrate ... and this is done with investments and a strategy." Reforms EU leaders agreed on last month are based on a new set of regulations governing how member states respond to people arriving in Europe. The deal has been harshly criticized by humanitarian groups, saying it will diminish the rights of people on the move.

Meloni also said that supporting Africa's development and the dangers posed by artificial intelligence (AI) will be among the key themes for Italy during its one-year presidency of the Group of Seven (G7), which Rome took over at the start of January. Italy outlined its proposed strategy in Africa in the so-called Mattei Plan — named after Enrico Mattei, founder of state-controlled oil and gas giant Eni — which seeks to expand cooperation beyond energy.

Meloni said the plan includes specific projects, but stopped short of providing details, adding they will be unveiled in the coming weeks. The Italian leader admitted that results in tackling illegal migration — one of the top priorities of her far-right coalition government — are so far disappointing.

Meloni's government garnered criticism by aid groups and left-wing opposition parties after approving harsher immigration laws, restrictions on sea rescue operations and plans to build migrant reception centers in Albania. But her electoral promises to stop

massive migration flows to Italy have been mostly unfulfilled. In 2023, the path from North Africa across the central Mediterranean to Italy became Europe's busiest migration route.

According to the UNHCR, a total of 260,662 people have crossed the Mediterranean Sea from Northern Africa to Europe since the beginning of 2023. Data from Italy's Interior ministry showed the migrant arrivals in Italy jumped 50% in 2023 from the previous year. About 155,750 migrants reached Italian shores last year, including more than 17,000 unaccompanied minors, compared to 103,850 in 2022.

"The data on migration are not satisfying, especially considering the amount of work we dedicated to that," Meloni said, adding that she would continue to work with African countries to prevent illegal migrant departures. "My goal is to work in Africa, block the departures in Africa, evaluate the possibility to open up hot-spots there to establish who has the right and who does not to come to Europe," Meloni added. "At the same time

we'll work on legal migration."

The Italian premier also addressed other hot international topics, clarifying Rome's position on the Israel-Hamas war. "I think it would be an error to say 'First we destroy Hamas and then we'll talk,'" Meloni said regarding the future of the Palestinians in Gaza. "Because one of the most effective tools for exposing Hamas, who does not have any interest in the Palestinian cause, is to work on a serious structural solution for the Palestinian problem."

Responding to possible risks of Italy's isolation in Europe, after last month its parliament rejected a motion to ratify the European Stability Mechanism (ESM) reform that aims at strengthening the system's powers to supervise troubled countries, Meloni called this tool "obsolete." She added that Italy's failure to ratify a reform of the fund could turn into an opportunity to make it "more efficient." Italy remains the only EU country that failed to ratify the treaty, which cannot be implemented without approval by all national parliaments.



**The Frontier Post**

Rehmat Shah Afridi (Late)

Founder

Bilal Shah Afridi

Chief Executive

Jalil Afridi

Managing Editor

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

Peshawar Office: 091-5700095, 0300- 9009001

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

E-mail: fppeshawar@thefrontierpost.com

Lahore Office: 0335-4026284

Email: fplahore@thefrontierpost.com

Islamabad Office: 0321-5066253

Email: mahmoodafridi@thefrontierpost.com

Karachi Office: 021-32213411, 0300-8340907

Email: fpkarachi@thefrontierpost.com

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

## Pakistan's foreign policy

A three-day conference of Pakistani envoys worldwide is currently underway in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA) Islamabad that will culminate today January 06 (Saturday). The Country's ambassadors, high commissioners, and heads of Pakistan missions from important capitals across the globe are attending this important session. Foreign Minister Jalil Abbas Jilani outlined the framework of discussions at the Envoys' Conference and its importance as a deliberative forum on diplomatic challenges and opportunities for Pakistan given the global and regional developments. Jilani also underscored the need for strengthening the anchoring role of the Foreign Office in foreign policy formulation and implementation. Prime Minister Kakar, in his keynote address, shared his perspective about the pressing demands on the conduct of Pakistan's foreign policy to align it with present-day imperatives.

Historically, the foreign policy of any nation always derives from its core national interests comprehensively encompassing the political, economic, security, and territorial integrity of that nation. Foreign Policy governs the fundamental principles of dealing with other nations, with friends and foes, bilateral and multilateral consortiums, global treaties, foreign trade as well as travel and tourism of its citizens. Pakistan's foreign policy is guided by the country's vision as a progressive, economically ascendant state that prioritizes the socio-economic well-being of its people. Pakistan's foreign policy revolves around fundamental values of peace, regional equilibrium, Strategic balance, shared prosperity, and building partnerships with its neighbors, regional and extra-regional states based on equality and reciprocity. Meanwhile, several internal factors including the country's history, geography, domestic politics, economy, ideology, and societal dynamics play a crucial role in shaping its foreign policy objectives. Externally, global and regional geopolitical dynamics, bilateral and multilateral relationships, and security concerns also significantly impacted Pakistan's foreign policy choices throughout the past. Historically, being a security state, Jammu and Kashmir dispute and India's eternal enmity toward Pakistan had always been a major driving force behind Pakistan foreign policy decisions since from day one and still this factor has a vital role in shaping Pakistan foreign relations together with newly emerged menace of terrorism that badly affects Pakistan geopolitical and security environment in the country. Pakistan's economic considerations such as trade and investment, development aid, and pressure and coercion from the international financial institutions including the World Bank and the IMF significantly mold Islamabad domestic and foreign policies. It has been also observed that powerful friendly countries including the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, China, the United States and others also influence Pakistan domestic and foreign policy decisions as and when their interests intersect with their competing nations.

Country's envoys act as representatives of their nations in the host countries and they have very limited approach and resources. The foreign policy of any nation stems out of its economic and financial stability, military power, industrial growth or geopolitical significance, that enables any nation to project its influence through diplomatic maneuvers, political engagement and mediations at the global level. Envoys performance is largely dependent on the bilateral relations, convergence of political, economic and trade interests, otherwise their role is not more than a messenger or a postman. Historically, Pakistan could not pursue an autonomous foreign policy because of its security concerns, Kashmir dispute, and persistent economic degradation, which has been an unceasing dilemma of the country throughout history. Pakistan missions abroad have no utility except provision of consular services to Pakistani diaspora in foreign countries. Although, Prime Minister Kakar vowed to champion the Jammu and Kashmir cause through active diplomacy, but arranging Kashmir Day events in Embassies and Consulates on yearly basis, media coverage and photo shoots of Ambassadors are insufficient to liberate Kashmir or highlight Kashmir cause at the global level. For that end, courageous political leadership and kinetic diplomacy at the UN and important capitals is essential to revive the Kashmir dispute and take it to logical conclusion in accordance with the UN resolutions.

## EU's perspective on Gaza conflict

EUROPEAN Union foreign policy Chief Josep Borrell has said that the international community must impose a solution to the Israel-Hamas war as both sides are unable to come to terms. According to Borrell, he has learned over the past 30 years that the solution has to be imposed from outside because the two parties will never be able to reach an agreement. If this tragedy doesn't end soon, the entire Middle East might end up in flames.

Ther conflagration of the Gaza conflict is gradually reaching out to neighbouring countries including Lebanon, Syria, Libya, Iran, Iran and Yemen. Yemeni Houthis are currently attacking the US and Israeli targets through missiles and drones in the Middle East and territorial waters including the Red Sea while several cargo vessels have been targeted over the past weeks. A continuous exchange of fire between Lebanon Hizbullah and Israeli troops occurred on a regular basis on the Lebanon-Israel border while an important Hamas leader had been assassinated in Beirut that cast doubts regarding a potential breakout of conflict on Lebanon-Israel border in the coming days. A US led maritime coalition is currently deployed in the Red Sea to counter Houthis threat, and President Biden ordered US troops for retaliatory actions against Iran backed militant groups targeting US interests in neighbouring countries. Amid such heightened tension, a deadly blast near the shrine of late Iranian General Qassem Solemani on his death anniversary has drawn Tehran into the ongoing conflict in Gaza, which is likely to escalate in the coming days.

Historically, western governments and media co-relate Israel and Palestine as well as compare Israeli military with Hamas, which is factually incorrect because Israel is an occupying state while Palestine is an occupied territory. Hamas is a popular liberation movement against the Israeli occupied forces therefore the events must be viewed in that context. European Union foreign policy Chief Josep Borrell must review his statement about imposition of a solution regarding the Gaza conflict is a biased and malignant assertion because the Palestine is a globally accepted dispute that has to be resolved according to the aspirationS of Palestinians people in line with the UNSC resolutions. Therefore, the European Union and western leaders must work for the implementation of the UN resolutions instead of causing confusion and complicating the Palestine dispute that will not benefit all affected communities but ensure global peace and stability in the coming years and decades.

### Important Notice

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



# What can Russia's opposition do in 2024?

Alexander Finiarel

AS a new year dawns, the prospects for the war in Ukraine look bleak. The Ukrainian counteroffensive did not deliver the major breakthrough some expected. Sanctions have not only failed to deliver a knockout blow to Russia but have caused elites to rally around the regime.

The West has so far failed to establish sufficient arms production to supply Ukraine, and the world's attention has now been diverted to the conflict in Israel. As the US-based Institute for the Study of War warns, if the West continues to delay expanding aid to Ukraine, it could lose the war next year.

All the while, Russia's opposition appears to be in a particularly hopeless position. After authorities swiftly crushed anti-war protests in the first months of the invasion, the world's hopes for domestic resistance to the war have all but faded. The exiled opposition has surprised European politicians, and even themselves, with the depth of their internal divisions.

In October, the Netherlands Institute of International Relations held a workshop to discuss possible scenarios for Russia's future after Vladimir Putin's presidency. The academics concluded that the country's domestic opposition was far less likely to bring about this future than the state of Putin's health, the actions of the Ukrainian army and the international anti-Putin coalition, as well as the influence of China and global oil prices.

While the opposition is physically removed from Russia, they are not powerless. In her study of the Arab Spring, American sociologist Dana Moss identified five key ways that diasporas helped fuel the anti-government protests that spread across much of the Arab world in 2011. They allowed the opposition to overcome censorship by passing information to domestic and foreign audiences. They connected revolutionaries to one another, as well as with foreign media and politicians, and acted as their representatives abroad. They provided material aid and shared skills acquired abroad, and

some returned to their home countries to participate in the protests themselves. Political scientist Yossi Shain, who studies Russia's opposition in exile, points out that activists can also help Russians flee the regime, develop strategies for anti-Kremlin forces still inside the country, and articulate an ideology that unites its supporters.

Russia's opposition fulfills all of the above functions. Their media outlets continue to fight Kremlin propaganda and connect Russians to each other and the outside world. The Platform for Anti-War Initiatives, whose work gets less attention than the high-profile conflicts between opposition factions, coordinates the work of opposition organizations and represents Russians in the European Parliament.

Anti-war organizations continue to support political prisoners, evacuate deported Ukrainians and persecuted activists, and help Russian men evade military service and desert from the front lines. Anti-war Russians have established their own flag, songs, literature, exhibitions, and cultural spaces. For example, the Returning the Names commemoration of victims of Soviet repression, united communities of Russians, Belarusians, and Ukrainians around the world in 2022-23. Even a defeated and ousted opposition remains capable of influencing its home country. To do so, it needs to convince its domestic supporters that it holds sway among foreign governments, demonstrating that it can protect their interests better than the current regime. To the international community, the opposition in exile must show that it still has supporters inside the country whom it can mobilize when the time comes.

This is where Russia's exiled opposition is failing. The need for them to organize is urgent as there are areas where they could have a significant impact on the course of the war. For one, they could help ensure that Russian army defectors are granted asylum in countries where they have no risk of being extradited to Russia.

Research shows that people are more likely to defect if there is a safe haven available, which in turn can drain the military of manpower and cause instability among the ranks. Most European countries accept Ukrainian draft dodgers and refuse to extradite them back home. But they do not do this for Russian draft dodgers.

This plays into the hands of Putin's regime, which has a much larger population to draw on for soldiers. Systematic support for defectors would demonstrate to war-weary Russians that the West is not fighting the Russian people. At the same time, involving deserters in anti-war activities could even make it possible to build resistance to the war within the Russian army.

What little support does exist for Russian defectors remains largely symbolic, even though more than 60 anti-war organizations from around the world have signed an appeal asking the European Parliament to develop protection measures for conscientious objectors and defectors. Germany and France have indicated a willingness to grant asylum to Russian deserters and evaders, but their actions do not live up to their words. Germany has granted asylum to only 131 applicants out of 4,074.

The Russian opposition could also devise a way for personal sanctions to be lifted from those who show opposition to the war and the Kremlin. Politician Dmitry Gudkov, investor Andrei Movchan, economist Maxim Mironov, and Maria Pevchikh, chair of the Anti-corruption Foundation, have spoken about the need for such a mechanism.

There is clearly interest from Russia's elite, too, as politicians Leonid Volkov and Maxim Katz have both spoken of being approached by sanctioned businessmen who asked for their help. If the opposition could facilitate this, it could split Russia's elite by showing they had another option. However, in the absence of such options, these elites are forced to rally around Putin. Oligarchs loyal to the

regime, such as Grigory Beryozkin, owner of RBC (and previously Komsomolskaya Pravda, a propaganda mouthpiece for the Kremlin), are trying to lift sanctions against them through lobbying and campaigns to whitewash their business in the Western press, rather than through negotiations with anti-war forces.

Russia's presidential election in March provides the opposition an opportunity to make some gains. Of course, the election results are a foregone conclusion - Kremlin

spokesman Dmitry Peskov said himself that Putin will be elected with 90% of the vote. However, periods in the lead-up to elections are difficult times for electoral autocracies like Russia. They have to win citizens over by fulfilling promises to improve their lives. As the new year dawns, Russian citizens are still suffering from higher prices for fuel, eggs and chicken. People also pay

closer attention to politics before elections, which makes it a good time for the opposition to organize rallies and spread their message. The opposition could have turned this election into a fully-fledged anti-war campaign by consolidating what remains of their movement within Russia around a single candidate. But predictably, Russian authorities prevented independent candidates from even collecting signatures. In this context, the opposition faces the question of how to capitalize on the period of vulnerability for Putin's regime.

The exiled opposition has a critical role to play in this, as they can draw attention to the needs of their allies within the country. Moreover, the opposition needs to prepare for what will come after the elections. Analysts believe a new wave of mobilization in the spring is almost inevitable, which makes it essential to develop ways to stop Russia's army from amassing further strength.

While the global coalition of Ukraine's allies is in disarray, the Russian opposition has to seize this opportunity to launch a domestic counteroffensive and show that people were wrong to write it off.

*The Moscow Times*

# I teach in secret, defying Taliban ban and fighting despair

Maryam Ahmadi

I have sent the link and I am waiting for my students to join the Zoom session. I am teaching them English. I receive a notification that my students are in the waiting room. I put a big smile, I let them in, and greet them in English. I know that they can't see my smile because I don't turn on my camera for security reasons, but I know they hear it in my voice.

I know that I have to do everything and anything to keep up the spirits of my students. And I have to do it for myself as well. Since 2021, we have had to struggle against two enemies: the Taliban ban on secondary and higher education for girls and women and the desperation and hopelessness that are slowly overcoming us.

According to the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), some 2.5 million girls and young women are out of school due to the ban. Before the universities were closed for us, one in three young women were enrolled; some 100,000 were denied their dreams of pursuing the degrees they wanted.

Not only that, even when students have found opportunities to study abroad, the Taliban has denied them the right to do so. Islamic scholars have repeatedly said and emphasised that there is no basis in our religion for this ban. Even economically, it does not make sense. The UN Children's Fund (UNICEF) estimates that preventing girls from attaining secondary education costs the Afghan economy some \$500m per year. The Taliban government has refused to change its decision despite the repeated appeals of international organisations and agencies. Afghan women and girls, for their part, have refused to give up.

The need and desire for education has been so great that soon after the bans were imposed, a few teachers got together and organised classes online. At first, it was a small group with just a few students. I joined them about a year and a half ago. We teach English as well as all high school subjects and a few additional courses, like computer skills. News of our courses spread by word of mouth and more and more students joined. By 2023, we had grown to 400 students from across Afghanistan.

I consider myself lucky to have this opportunity - to be able to help a little my family financially and help other young women and girls who want to study and learn. I had received training at a teacher training centre before 2021. I did the course without having the intention to be a teacher one day; my dear father had suggested that I do it and I followed his advice. At the centre, they taught us how to approach education through different methods and how to interact with students to help them learn better. But a lot of what we learned could only be applied in a normal situation where the teacher and students are in a classroom together, not online struggling with a frustratingly bad internet connection.

So when I began teaching online, it was a challenge. I struggled and often

thought about quitting, but the desire of my students to learn kept me going and I found a way to make it work. "Whenever I thought I couldn't do it, you showed me somehow that I could. You are the best role model in my life," one student wrote to me recently. Such messages really warm up my heart and motivate me to keep going.

But there are other times when I also get difficult questions that I struggle to answer. "Teacher, if I had been allowed to go to school, now after two years, I would have graduated from school. But it would have been useless because I am not allowed to go to university. Or if I were to graduate from university, again it would be useless because I would not be allowed to work. So why should I study now?" another student asked me recently. It was a heart-breaking question. I wonder how many girls and young women across the country are asking themselves this question.

Due to the prison-like conditions that Afghan women and girls live in, many suffer from mental health problems.

According to statistics from medical facilities, there has been a sharp increase in Afghan women taking or trying to take their own lives. Many don't have hope for the future and I can see it in my students. I am often compelled to assume the role of a counselor and sit and listen to stories of suffering and depression. Some of my students have shared that they are mocked or blamed for what has happened to them - working hard and dreaming big, only for everything to come crashing down. Hearing and knowing what my students are going through makes it all the more challenging to teach. But I know I cannot give up and must keep going for their sake. I constantly try to keep them motivated, keep their spirits high, and encourage them to love learning and exploring.

I share inspirational stories and biographies of great people from across the world. I ask them to write lists of their dreams and goals, to share their plans for their future and everything that keeps them hopeful and motivated. I try to help younger students discover their talents; I ask them to write stories and poems or to paint. We try to break out of prison through learning and creativity. The other teachers and I are doing our best to keep the hope of Afghan girls and young women alive. But we need support. It would make a huge difference for our students if the United Nations and international organisations could help us set up a mechanism to formalise the education we provide and grant valid documents certifying degrees attained. This would help motivate young women and girls and lessen the troubling feeling that they are wasting their lives.

Things in life often don't go according to plan. I never planned to be a teacher, especially not one in hiding. But here I am teaching online, defying an unjust ban, trying to help my fellow Afghan girls and women, and fighting despair. It is a job I never wanted, but I love doing it.

# Trump isn't to blame for Giuliani's fall

David Lewis Schaefer

RUDY Giuliani was once hailed as "America's Mayor" for his rescuing New York City from the depths of crime, civil disorder, and general ungovernability during his eight years in office. He restored the city's security, cleanliness, and livability, and then leading its initial recovery during the final months of his second term from the horrors of the September 11 terrorist attack on the Twin Towers.

His reputation has since reduced somewhat: he has been ordered to pay \$148 million to two Georgia election workers he was found to have defamed by falsely accusing them of having purposely mishandled ballots during the 2020 election. (The accusation was part of Donald Trump's widely discredited, but never-ending, claim that the election was "stolen" from him.) While Giuliani had

turned his reputation into a lucrative political consulting business generating a net worth of over \$50 million, the judgment has compelled him to declare bankruptcy, with his already-reduced finances unlikely to cover even a reduced penalty. Giuliani's connection to Trump was the fruit of a friendship that developed over several decades between two prominent New Yorkers. Yet, aside from their shared celebrity, they would seem to have had little in common. Starting with assistance from his father, a successful real-estate mogul, Trump built his inheritance into a multi-billion-dollar fortune through canny real-estate investments, but also by declaring bankruptcy three times.

He also earned that fortune through his use of "branding," licensing the Trump name to other corporations. The value of his brand grew with the his

1987 book The Art of the Deal, which purported to offer the author's get-rich tips, and even more by his decade-long hosting of the television show "The Apprentice," where his crassness, along with his unpredictable firings of potential employees, earned him a multitude of fans. By contrast, Giuliani came to prominence as a crusading Federal prosecutor, serving for fifteen years in that position before he resigned to launch his first (unsuccessful) mayoral campaign in 1989. During his tenure Giuliani achieved justified renown for successfully prosecuting mob bosses and corrupt politicians. He even served, as historian Fred Siegel observes in his 2005 biography The Prince of the City, as the model for anti-corruption lawyers in two feature films.

Yet there was a less admirable side to Giuliani's

prosecutorial conduct: his publicity-seeking habit of arresting alleged white-collar criminals in their offices, "carting them off," as Siegel puts it, "in handcuffs like common criminals" (as if they might otherwise be flight risks). One of the best-known of those he prosecuted was Michael Milken, the "junk-bond king" of the 1980s, whom he convinced should accept a plea-bargain leading to almost two years' imprisonment, along with a large fine. A new book by a friend of Milken's, Richard Sandler, Witness to a Prosecution, provides, in the eyes of business columnist / Wall Street Journal reviewer Charles Gasparino, "a convincing and concerning story of how the government" in this case "targeted a largely innocent man and, when presented with proof of that innocence, refused to turn away from a bad case." Milken was pardoned by

Trump in 2020.

Giuliani's conduct, well before his association with Trump, was not without flaws. Arguably, these flaws were mirrored in his private life: he divorced three wives (one behind Trump so far), letting his second one learn of the divorce only by announcing it on television. One can only surmise, then, that once his own aspirations for higher office - he ran an abortive campaign for the Republican Presidential nomination in 2008, leading early before losing to John McCain - were thwarted, Giuliani was lured to become a Trump acolyte by the apparent lure of continuing access to power. So enamored did he become of that access that he ended up excusing or defending, starting in Trump's 2016 campaign, just the sorts of presidential behavior one would have expected him to denounce as a prosecutor. This is not to deny Trump's consider-

able accomplishments in both domestic and foreign policy, including economic prosperity, outstanding judicial appointments, the Abraham Accords, but refers specifically to his embarrassing crudity along with his post-Presidential misbehavior, beginning with his encouraging the January 6, 2021 assault on the Capitol that aimed to reverse the Electoral College vote.

As a sometime New Yorker I was once disturbed by Giuliani's offensive tactics in his treatment of alleged white-collar criminals (often accused of "victimless" crimes like insider trading), then celebrated his mayoral achievements. And there were two other aspects of his personal life that I liked: he was a fellow New York Yankee fan, and a learned opera buff. As in a Greek tragedy, I can only lament the tragic flaw that besmirched the late stage of his public career.



# Boris Johnson is gone, but his toxic Brexit myths will go on poisoning UK politics

Rafael Behr

**T**HERE is no crisis at Westminster so serious that it cannot be made to look trivial by the inclusion of Boris Johnson. And there is no scandal involving Johnson that cannot be explained, partially or wholly, by his lies. Those are axioms of post-Brexit politics. The House of Commons committee of privileges is due to publish a report concluding that a former prime minister turned his back on truth and put himself in contempt of parliament. The gravity of the offence invites a serious discussion about the safeguards in British democracy. Or it should.

Johnson lied because he had broken the rules that most other people observed during the pandemic, often at significant personal cost. He lied because he felt no duty of submission to rules imposed by his own government or any other authority. He lied because breaking rules and refusing to admit it had been a reliable method of self-advancement throughout his life, propelling him all the way to Downing Street. He lied because that is what he does. Those facts being established, and Johnson having quit the Commons to avoid the indignity of a suspension, the main question left hanging is how such a man ever reached a position of power for which he was obviously unfit. What sickness in British politics produced the hallucination of merit in Johnson's candidacy for No 10?

The question presupposes that the fever has broken. Sweaty feuding between supporters of the former prime minister and the incumbent, once Johnson's protege, suggest otherwise. The row with Rishi Sunak is ostensibly about something other than lockdown breaches, but they are connected in the way that multiple items of garbage can burn separately in the same skip fire. Sunak is accused of vetoing honours that Johnson was entitled to dole out on his resignation as prime minister, and of renegeing on specific assurances that some MPs would get their peerages in due course.

Downing Street says that is untrue. Nadine Dorries, one of the thwarted nominees, decries a snobish conspiracy by rich kids in No 10 to prevent a working-class girl from Liverpool achieving the ladyship that Johnson had said was in

the bag. Another explanation would be that Johnson lied.

This is the trivialising process in action. Somehow debate lurched from the constitutional principle that MPs be accountable for the veracity of what is said in parliament to playground recrimination between rival gang leaders and their mates. The same manoeuvre skips glibly from a public health emergency in which hundreds of

a constitutional order based on protocols and propriety, while accelerating its decay. The more British democracy has been exposed to him, the less serious it has become. His toxic self-involvement has contaminated the Conservative party so completely that even in rejecting him it inflates his vanity. He is a lump of weapons-grade narcissium polluting the political air.

**It illuminates flaws in a constitutional order based on protocols and propriety, while accelerating its decay. The more British democracy has been exposed to him, the less serious it has become. His toxic self-involvement has contaminated the Conservative party so completely that even in rejecting him it inflates his vanity. He is a lump of weapons-grade narcissium polluting the political air. Enough Tories have diagnosed that problem to want rid of him, although that urge is reversible. Less than a year ago Johnson was defenestrated by the parliamentary party. Only a few months later, a hundred MPs were ready to nominate him as the best person to replace Liz Truss. Back in the summer of 2019, when Theresa May resigned, plenty of Conservatives swore sacred oaths to prevent Johnson ever reaching No 10, before endorsing him and serving in his government. That was the Rubicon moment. Crossing to Johnson's side required wilful rejection of any attempt to enact Brexit while remaining in some way cognisant of economic and diplomatic reality. May had burned herself out trying to reconcile ideological demands for complete rupture from Europe with rational mitigation of the cost.**

thousands of people died to bickering over the timetable on which failed ministers should be allowed to swap a seat in the Commons for a cushier berth in the Lords; all against the backdrop of a brutal cost of living crisis, Johnson is not responsible for all that is absurd in Westminster.

The whole business of leaders draping their cronies in ermine was grotesque before he made it obscene. But his turpitude is radioactive. It illuminates flaws in

Enough Tories have diagnosed that problem to want rid of him, although that urge is reversible. Less than a year ago Johnson was defenestrated by the parliamentary party. Only a few months later, a hundred MPs were ready to nominate him as the best person to replace Liz Truss. Back in the summer of 2019, when Theresa May resigned, plenty of Conservatives swore sacred oaths to prevent Johnson ever reaching No 10, before endorsing him and serving

in his government.

That was the Rubicon moment. Crossing to Johnson's side required wilful rejection of any attempt to enact Brexit while remaining in some way cognisant of economic and diplomatic reality. May had burned herself out trying to reconcile ideological demands for complete rupture from Europe with rational mitigation of the cost. It couldn't be done. Johnson represented the view that there was no real cost, only sabotage by enemies. And they could be overcome by a surge in national spirit, incarnated in a heroic leader - the archetypal offer of populism. Johnson's great helmship and Brexit as a dream of national renaissance are still fused in some Tory imaginations. He addressed that constituency directly in a resignation statement that cast the privileges committee as a "kangaroo court" installed as part of a plot "to take revenge for Brexit and ultimately to reverse the 2016 referendum". The form and tone of the argument are cribbed from the Donald Trump playbook: self-pitying, paranoid, designed to stir bellicose nationalist grievance.

The imitation would be more alarming if it wasn't also desperate. There is an audience for the embittered Brexit betrayal myth, but not an election-winning majority. Its indulgence by Conservatives indicates a party already settling into opposition and, while US Republican-style derangement is an obvious trajectory once the burden of government is cast off, a restoration of beleaguered liberal Tory traditions is also available. For all the damage that Johnson has done, his power to make everything trivial has proved self-diminishing.

He thought he stood above the institutions that he corrupted, but he was brought down by conventional democratic mechanisms. His lies about lockdown parties were exposed by a free press and punished by parliament. The Tory majority he claims as proof of his unique popularity did not save him. The system that swallowed his shtick also disgorged him. The real tragedy is that he was host to a more stubborn parasitic worm of an idea - the Brexit delusion that has nested in the guts of British politics and will not so easily be excreted.

The Guardian

# Gaza: What went wrong and how to fix it

Faisal J. Abbas

**As we reflect on some of the tragic events of 2023 and how they could have been averted, one cannot help but remember a quote by the late British Prime Minister Winston Churchill. This is because he was spot on when he said: "You can always count on Americans to do the right thing - after they have tried everything else."**

The ongoing catastrophe in Gaza is a case in point. Rather than listening to the advice of its long-standing friends and partners in the region, the US administration opted to go with biased, bottomless support for Israel, which many politicians and observers are accusing of committing genocide. The conflict has now been raging for almost three months and more than 21,000 Palestinians have been killed, mostly civilians and particularly women and children. Meanwhile, the majority of Israeli hostages are unreleased and the Hamas leadership remains at large.

Needless to say, this whole conflict could have been avoided if Washington had just listened to the repeated Saudi advice. This was highlighted in the first Ministry of Foreign Affairs communique following Oct. 7. It stated that this explosion of violence was precisely what Riyadh predicted would happen as a result of the continued illegal occupation of Palestinian land and intimidation of the Palestinian people, especially by the current far-right Israeli government.

Also, had a two-state solution - an initiative led by the Kingdom since the Madrid Peace Conference of 1991 - been reached, then we might have averted the current crisis. Critics will say "but if anyone is to be blamed, it is the Palestinians," adding the clichéd - although somewhat true - statements of "they (Palestinians) never miss an opportunity to miss an opportunity," and "how can Israel negotiate with them if the Palestinians themselves are divided?"

Fair enough, but the Israelis are not innocent either. The constant building of illegal settlements and violations of international law every time negotiations were ongoing did not help. Not to mention the now open secret of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's survival policy of torpedoing any attempt to negotiate a Palestinian state by constantly under-

mining the legitimate Palestinian Authority in the West Bank and empowering Hamas, an entity it declares a terror group, in Gaza to further the internal Palestinian rifts and support the tainting of the just Palestinian cause with an extremist ideology.

So, where did the Americans go wrong? It started with the abominable early declaration that there were no red lines for Israel and the vetoing of a UN Security Council ceasefire resolution. Putting aside the horrific civilian death toll in Gaza, the massive humanitarian crisis and the severe devastation these positions have caused, the US administration has now contributed, if not absolutely guaranteed, that extremism and hatred will breed for generations to come. Not just in Gaza, but around the world.

After all, how do you expect a child who lost a parent, or both, a limb or his/her family to feel when they grow up? For all they know, they were out playing when the house they lived in was bombed indiscriminately.

Should Hamas not bear the responsibility for that, critics will ask, while adding that, if they (Hamas) did not do what they did on Oct. 7, this war might have not erupted. That could be an argument, but that child will certainly not engage in it. After all, the child did not see Hamas killing his or her parents. The child saw an Israeli plane dropping a bomb on his/her home, on a hospital and the local school. And then he/she would be told that, had Israel not been occupying Palestinian lands, Hamas would not have existed.

Then you have what my colleague Mina Al-Oraibi recently described, in an Arabic Asharq Al-Awsat column, as "the freefall of Western ideals." This could not be any more obvious than when US Secretary of State Antony Blinken criticized Israel for not doing more to avoid targeting civilians, while in the month that followed the State Department itself bypassed Congress twice to ensure more weapons sales to Israel. Then, when the Houthis (whose slogan has always been "Death to America ... curse the Jews") started attacking ships in the Red Sea as retaliation for what is going in Gaza, all of a sudden the US woke up to that threat.

Even though the Saudi-led coalition in Yemen had been

warning of it for eight years. Most recently, Yemeni Foreign Minister Ahmad Awad bin Mubarak told Asharq Al-Awsat's Badr Al-Qahtani that "we have repeatedly warned of the danger of allowing an armed ideological group to undermine security and stability and threaten international navigation."

It is ironic that the same legislators who removed the Houthis from terror lists and banned the sale of weapons to Saudi Arabia and criticized it for a war waged at the request of the legitimate, UN-backed government of Yemen are now wanting the Kingdom to join its Red Sea coalition. Alas, that ship has sailed. The hopes in the Kingdom are now focused on the ongoing truce in Yemen and the hope that it might turn into a permanent peace deal in the near future.

So, what next? Obviously, one wishes the advice was taken seriously at an earlier stage. Particularly because, as early as last September, there were serious talks of a Saudi-Israeli normalization deal that would have guaranteed the rights of Palestinians to their state. The longer the war continues and the higher the death count rises, the harder it becomes to achieve regional peace (let us not forget that Saudi Arabia also brings its Muslim and Arab League clout). This is because, naturally, the Palestinian demands will change and the cost to Israel is going to increase. The immediate advice is for the Biden administration to listen to Thomas Friedman, who says America should give Israel some tough love. The White House should realize that the only person benefiting from the prolonging of the war is Netanyahu.

This is a politician who I believe belongs behind bars, whether he is found guilty of corruption or held accountable for the undisputed crimes against humanity committed in Gaza. A ceasefire must be agreed, hostages must be freed and an international aid effort to rebuild and treat the wounded in Gaza must be mobilized immediately. After that, there might still be hope for talks to continue. The Palestinians must also play ball and form a unified government under the legitimate authority in the West Bank. Let us be hopeful that 2024 can see the end of hostilities and the birth - or at least the embryonic stages - of a Palestinian state.

Arab News

# Britain has a moral duty to turn away refugees

Sebastian Milbank

**L**AST year, almost 30,000 people illegally crossed the English channel in small boats. The drop may well be due in part to the fierce winds experienced over the year, and in 2024 the numbers arriving are projected to rise. Thousands of migrants are already waiting in France for their chance to attempt the dangerous crossing.

This ongoing human catastrophe and security failure has been flattened to an issue of party politics by many; the Tories send hundreds of millions of pounds to Rwanda to take deportees who have never arrived, while Labour promises to solve the problem by opening up legal routes and spending more in humanitarian aid. The simple truth is that both of these discussions show a political class lost in the realm of fantasy and out of touch with the most fundamental duty of the state. Securing our borders, and policing citizenship, are the basic preconditions for a stable nation and a functioning democracy.

It is patently obvious that too many coming are not legitimate refugees, no matter what determi-

nation the Home Office reaches. Since those crossing the channel are resident in France, they are not in imminent peril, and are obviously not refugees in the spirit of how the term is intended, or by the standards of common sense. Some 9 in 10 are men, who apparently are quite content to leave siblings, wives, children and parents in the countries they claim are too dangerous for them to live in. Some of those claiming asylum in the UK have been reported as popping back to their home countries for holidays.

Yet we know that many will be granted asylum here. And while they wait, they are housed and fed from the public purse. It's hard to blame them. Why wouldn't those who can expect a far better life travel to the UK for work if they could? And why would they bother with a legal migration system that would likely reject them, when they can get free bed and board and a 90 per cent shot of staying by entering illegally and filing a claim?

There's a concept in civil law

called an "attractive nuisance". In essence, if a property owner leaves visible and unsecured something likely to lure a child into danger, they may be liable for injury, even if the child was trespassing. Something of the same could be said of British policy towards illegal channel crossings, in which desperate people dreaming of a better life are lured into danger and the hands of people smugglers by the rewards that the state showers on those who make the journey. So long as we continue as we are now, ever more people will seek to cross the channel. Some of them will die in the attempt. Billions will be spent in housing and feeding them. Trust in the government and the courts will fatally wither. None of these things are "small" problems, least of all for those whose lives are disrupted or destroyed in the process.

Though improved patrolling of our waters and vastly more help from France are needed, neither is a replacement for removing the perverse incentive structure created by our present policies. Those

who enter the country illegally must be ineligible for refugee status, and should be deported on an automatic basis, not to the middle of Africa, but back to their countries of origin. Safe and legal routes for refugees cannot function when the system rewards opportunists. Instead, as with Syria, Hong Kong and Ukraine, refugee status should be given on the basis of those determined to be in the most need, and with proper debate, agreement and planning by Parliament. In those instances refugees were primarily vulnerable people - like children, women and the elderly - not economic migrants who have begun their life in the UK by breaking our laws.

It's easy for politicians to take the easy way out, for fear of seeming selfish, heartless or cruel. But there is nothing kind about pretending away the need for limits, boundaries and borders. Letting people die in the Channel so that we can feel good about ourselves is not an act of moral heroism. Learning how to say no might just be.

The Telegraph

# One pilot's early take on the Tokyo airport runway collision

Les Abend

**T**HE fiery collision between a Japan Airlines Airbus 350-900 and a Japanese coast guard aircraft on the runway at Tokyo's Haneda Airport was a disaster that could have been a much bigger tragedy. All 379 people on Tuesday's JAL 516 Flight were safely evacuated. Unfortunately, five crew members aboard the coast guard's De Havilland Canada DHC-8 perished. That plane's captain was in critical condition, according to public broadcaster NHK.

On a positive note, credit is due the cockpit and cabin crew aboard the JAL flight. It is textbook training for flight attendants to be prepared for a possible evacuation on every takeoff and landing. They are triggered to leap from their jump seats and make an immediate determination of safe exits for passengers to escape. That's why flight attendants want passengers off their phones and computers on takeoff and landing, so that they are situationally aware in the unlikely event of such circumstances.

A fire may render a particular door or emergency window exit unusable. It's obvious that the flight attendants picked the correct

exits to evacuate the A-350 since everyone survived. And it would appear the pilots did their best to accomplish their evacuation checklist, which includes shutting off the fuel to the engines. How could this accident have occurred? We won't know for sure until an investigation is completed. Although it's speculation at the moment, this crash reminds me of a similar circumstance that occurred in 1991 at Los Angeles International Airport. A USAir Boeing 737-300 collided on the runway with a SkyWest commuter plane, a Swearingen Metroliner turboprop, killing more than 30 people.

It was a busy day at the Los Angeles airport. Airplane surface movements on the runways and taxiways got complicated enough such that the air traffic controller lost track of the fact that she still had the Metroliner holding in position on the runway in anticipation of its takeoff. Meanwhile, the controller had cleared the B-737 to land on the same runway. As it was landing in the darkness, the USAir crew could not make out the silhouette or navigation lights of the small SkyWest airplane that was in

position at a runway intersection. The B-737 collided with the Metroliner almost immediately after touchdown.

This accident was the catalyst for a series of procedural and technological changes. One example of a change was to prohibit controllers from taxiing an airplane onto a runway for takeoff at night or during low visibility weather. Although the Los Angeles accident occurred in the United States, most of the aviation world took note. Pilots have become hypersensitive to remaining on an active runway waiting for takeoff clearance longer than a minute. And controllers have become hypersensitive to procedures that involve clearing an airplane to land with an airplane on the same runway awaiting takeoff.

Haneda Airport is one of the busiest in the world with nonstop radio chatter, and it's possible a traffic controller's message was misunderstood and one of the planes was in the wrong place. Normally, a clearance is read back and acknowledged by a pilot, but on busy transmission occasions there might not be an opportunity

to immediately provide feedback. Sometimes a transmission gets blocked by another airplane at a critical time, which makes it important for both pilots and controllers to be situationally aware. Only one transmission can happen at a time. Another scenario is that the pilots of the Airbus A-350 lined up for the wrong parallel runway. I find that less likely because at least one pilot in the cockpit should have caught the error, notwithstanding that the air traffic controller would have noticed.

Additionally, procedures in Japan are virtually the same as in the US; air traffic controllers are very competent and regimented. Out of all the international destinations to which I flew, Japan was one of the safest. No doubt, the investigation into the Haneda Airport accident will reveal the missteps that led to the collision. To be certain, many factors will be involved. Somewhere within those factors will be a human element. We'll need to give the accident investigators time to reach a likely probable cause or causes, with the objective of preventing such tragedies in the future. Flying to Tokyo? Don't hesitate to board the airplane. I would.

CNN



# Weekly inflation up by 0.81pc

ISLAMABAD, Jan 05 (APP): The weekly inflation, measured by the Sensitive Price Indicator (SPI), witnessed an increase of 0.81 percent for the combined consumption groups during the week ended on January 4, the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS) reported on Friday. The SPI for the week under review in the above-mentioned group was recorded at 313.66 points as compared to 311.14 points during the past week, according to the PBS data. As compared to the corresponding week of last year, the SPI for the combined consumption group in the week under review witnessed an increase of 42.86 percent.

The weekly SPI with the base year 2015-16 =100 covers 17 urban centers and 51 essential items for all expenditure groups. The SPI for the lowest consumption group up to Rs 17,732, increased by 0.81 percent and went up to 308.53 points from last week's 306.04 points.

The SPI for consumption groups from Rs 17,732-22,888, Rs 22,889-29,517; Rs 29,518-44,175 and above Rs 44,175 it increased by 0.84 percent, 0.79 percent, 0.83 and 0.80 percent respectively.

During the week, out of 51 items, prices of 19 (37.25%) items increased, 09 (17.65%) items decreased and 23 (45.10%) items remained stable.

The items, which recorded a decrease in their average prices on a week-on-week (WoW) included potatoes (8.68%), tea lipton (1.29%), garlic (0.68%), cooking oil 5 litre & vegetable ghee 2.5 kg (0.54%) each, washing soap (0.47%), pulse mash (0.36%), wheat flour bag (0.23%) and vegetable ghee 1 kg (0.08%). The items that recorded an increase in their average prices on a week-on-week (wow) basis included tomatoes (16.04%), chicken (13.98%), eggs (3.20%), onions (3.04%), bananas (2.13%), pulse gram (2.12%), sugar (2.04%), pulse moong (1.68%), LPG (1.19%), firewood (0.51%) and georgette (0.23%).

On a Year-on-Year (YoY) basis, the items that witnessed decrease in prices included onions (12.25%), mustard oil (5.40%), vegetable ghee 1 kg (1.11%) and bananas (1.01%).

The commodities which recorded an increase in their average prices on YOY basis included gas charges for Q1 (1108.59%), tomatoes (94.05%), cigarettes (93.22%), chillies powder (81.74%), garlic (67.88%), wheat flour bag (65.36%), gents sponge chappal (58.05%), sugar (57.76%), rice irri-6/9 (54.52%), gents sandal (53.37%), rice basmati broken (51.45%), and gur (48.07%).

## Gold rates decline by Rs1,200 to Rs 217,000 per tola

ISLAMABAD (APP): The per tola price of 24 karat gold decreased by Rs.1,200 and was sold at Rs.217,000 on Friday compared to its sale at Rs.218,200 on last trading day.

The price of 10 grams of 24 karat gold also decreased by Rs.1,028 to Rs.186,043 from Rs.187,071 whereas the prices of 10 gram 22 karat gold went down to Rs.170,539 from Rs.171,482, the All Sindh Sarafa Jewellers Association reported.

The price of per tola and ten gram Silver remained stagnant at Rs.2,660 and 2,280.52 respectively.

The price of gold in the international market decreased by \$9 to \$2,058 from \$2,067, the Association reported.

## PSX loses 124 points

ISLAMABAD (APP): The 100-index of the Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) witnessed a bearish trend on Friday, losing 124.26, a negative change of 0.19 percent, closing at 64,514.90 points against 64,639.16 points the previous trading day.

A total of 949,559,318 shares valuing Rs.19,355 billion were traded during the day as compared to 548,989,972 shares valuing Rs. 15.395 billion the last day. Some 362 companies transacted their shares in the stock market; 161 of them recorded gains and 187 sustained losses, whereas the share prices of 14 remained unchanged.

The three top-trading companies were K-Electric with 481,119,880 shares at Rs.6.12 per share, WorldCall Telecom with 33,379,558 shares at Rs.1.47 per share and Bank of Punjab with 28,423,802 shares at Rs.6.92 per share.

## Markets mixed ahead of US jobs as rate cut hopes fade

HONG KONG (AFP/APP): Asian stocks were mixed Friday after a bigger-than-expected rise in US private-sector jobs poured cold water on hopes for an interest rate cut in the next few months.

The losses across most markets tracked another weak day on Wall Street, where concerns grew that an end-of-year rally may have gone ahead of itself, leading investors to pull out of some of the biggest gainers -- mainly tech titans such as Apple and Amazon.

Data on Thursday from payroll firm ADP showed far more private-sector jobs were created last month than forecast and significantly more than in November.

While the figures also showed wage growth slowing, the reading reinforced the view that the labour market was still very tight and posed a threat to the Federal Reserve's goal of bringing inflation down to its two percent target. It is currently at 3.3 percent.

That gave a jolt to optimism the central bank would cut interest rates as soon as the first quarter of this year, with Bloomberg News saying traders now see about a 65 percent chance of that, compared with around 85 percent last week. "There was nothing within the data that would suggest any urgency from policymakers to begin normalising rates lower during the first quarter," BMO Capital Markets' Ian Lyngen said.

The figures came a day after minutes from the Fed's December meeting showed officials expected to keep borrowing costs at a two-decade high for some time as they want to make sure they have inflation under control.

Attention now turns to the release later Friday of the closely watched non-farm payrolls report, which could play a major role in Fed decision-making. "A too strong report could be a setback for stocks, aligning with expectations of rate cuts in the second half of 2024," said SPI Asset Management's Stephen Innes. "If the report aligns with or falls slightly short of expectations, it may reinforce beliefs in an imminent rate cut, potentially sparking a rally. On the other hand, a significantly weaker reading could renew concerns about a looming recession."

"Hence, the fine line where the (jobs) report must land is not an especially ideal risk-reward setup." With expectations for an early cut waning, traders are cashing in their recent gains, dealing a blow to the Nasdaq, which fell for a fifth straight day Thursday -- its worst run since December 2022 -- as the tech sector comes under pressure. The unease seeped into Asian trade, with markets swinging between losses and gains for most of the day.

Tokyo, Singapore, Manila, Mumbai and Jakarta all rose but Hong Kong, Shanghai, Sydney, Seoul, Wellington, Taipei and Bangkok fell.

The yen continued to weaken on expectations the Fed will not be hiking in the first quarter, while analysts said the New Year's Day earthquake in Japan could also force the Bank of Japan to delay a tightening of monetary policy.

Tokyo - Nikkei 225: UP 0.3 percent at 33,377.42 (close)

Hong Kong - Hang Seng Index: DOWN 0.8 percent at 16,509.68

Shanghai - Composite: DOWN 0.9 percent at 2,929.18 (close)

Dollar/yen: UP at 145.27 yen from 144.61 yen on Thursday

Euro/dollar: DOWN at \$1.0926 from \$1.0952

Pound/dollar: DOWN at \$1.2669 from \$1.2682

Euro/pound: DOWN at 86.25 pence from 86.32 pence

West Texas Intermediate: UP 0.7 percent at \$72.72 per barrel

Brent North Sea Crude: UP 0.5 percent at \$77.99 per barrel

New York - Dow: FLAT at 37,440.34 points (close)

London - FTSE 100: UP 0.5 percent at 7,723.07 (close)



LAHORE: A vendor displaying and selling sweet lime at Fruit Bazar.



LAHORE: A vendor selling fish to the customers at his roadside setup.

## Trade deficit shrinks by 34.29%, export grow by 5.17% in 1st half

ISLAMABAD (APP): The country's merchandise trade deficit contracted by 34.29 per cent during the first half of the current fiscal year compared to the corresponding period of last year, the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS) reported. The Trade deficit from July-December (2023-24) was recorded at \$11.148 billion as against the deficit of \$16.965 billion in July-December (2022-23), showing negative growth of 34.29 per cent.

During the period under review, the exports increased by 5.17 per cent to \$14.981 billion compared to the exports of \$14.244 billion during the corresponding period of last year, according to the latest PBS data.

On the other hand, the imports narrowed by 16.28 per cent and were recorded at \$26.129 billion compared to \$31.209 billion last year.

Meanwhile, on a year-on-year basis, the exports from the country increased by 22.21 per cent in December compared to the exports of the same month of last year. The exports during the month were recorded at \$2.812 billion as against the exports of \$2.301 billion in December 2022. On the other hand, the imports during December 2023 were recorded at \$4.514 billion compared to the imports of \$5.144 billion in December 2022, showing a decrease of 12.25 per cent, according to the data.

On a month-on-month basis, the exports from the country increased by 9.29 per cent when compared to the exports of \$2.573 billion during November 2023. The imports into the country went down by 0.55 per cent when compared to the imports of \$4.539 billion in November 2023, PBS reported.

Meanwhile, the services' exports during July-November (2023-24) earned foreign exchange worth \$2,986 million as compared to exports of \$3,089 million during the same period of last year, showing negative growth of 3.33 percent.

The services' imports into the country however increased by 20.67 percent by going up from \$3,406 million last year to \$4,110 million during the first five months of current fiscal year. Based on the figures, the services' trade deficit increased by 254.51 per cent during the period under review by going up from \$317 million last year to \$1,124 million this year.

## Chinese delegation visits ICCI to explore IVs and investment prospects in Pakistan

ISLAMABAD (APP): A Chinese business delegation led by Zhang Yang, Chairman, Chang Jiang Industrial Company (Pakistan) Company Limited and Director of Chongqing Federation of Industry and Commerce visited the Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) and explored the possibilities of joint ventures and investment in Pakistan.

The representatives of Li Ting International China and Yihai Culture Communication Company Limited of China were also in the delegation, said a press release issued here on Friday.

Addressing the delegation, Engineer Azhar ul Islam Zafar, Acting President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry briefed the Chinese delegation about the potential investment opportunities in various sectors of Pakistan's economy.

He said that Pakistan offers a liberal investment regime with attractive incentives to foreign investors and emphasized that Chinese companies should bring technology and set up manufacturing units in Pakistan to earn lucrative returns.

He highlighted the key focus areas for Chinese companies, which have good potential for future business collaboration between Pakistan and China. He assured the Chinese business delegation that ICCI would extend them all possible cooperation in connecting them with the right partners.

Speaking on the occasion, Zhang Yang, Chairman, Chang Jiang Industrial Company (Pakistan) Co., Ltd, and Director of Chongqing Federation of Industry and Commerce said that they are in Pakistan to explore business and investment opportunities.

He said that the delegation members have found Pakistan a promising investment destination and would like to contribute to its economic development.

Both sides discussed various options to strengthen collaboration between the private sectors of Pakistan and China to further improve bilateral trade and economic relations between the two countries.

## Emirates celebrates 25 years of success serving Islamabad and Lahore

### F.P. Report

KARACHI: Emirates, the world's largest international airline, proudly commemorates its 25th anniversary of operations at Islamabad and Lahore airports. Since its inaugural flights to both cities in January 1999, Emirates has played a crucial role in connecting Islamabad and Lahore to the world via Dubai, while fostering economic growth and cultural exchange.

Over the past quarter of a century, Emirates has been a reliable partner facilitating seamless passenger and cargo movement and significantly contributed to the development of the country and region through tourism and trade. The airline's strong presence in Islamabad and Lahore underscores its position as a leading and reliable carrier which is committed to excellence and innovation in the aviation sector.

In its pivotal role, Emirates ensured seamless journeys for millions of passengers on its routes from the key points in Pakistan, with the airline operating a robust schedule of ten weekly flights from each of the two cities.

Highlights etched in Emirates' remarkable history serving Pakistan's capital city Islamabad, and its second largest city Lahore, include the transport of over 11.4 million passengers on over 34,000 flights between both cities and the airline's hub in Dubai.

Emirates' extensive network of more than 140 destinations has not only enhanced tourism and economic ties for Pakistan, but it has also fostered stronger relationships between communities worldwide.

Through Emirates' scheduled services, Islamabad and Lahore have both emerged as strategic gateways connecting passengers to top destinations in the United Kingdom, Europe, USA, and Canada. With the UAE being home to more than 1.6 million Pakistani nationals, comprising more than 15 percent of the population, the country and specifically Dubai, is also a popular destination for travellers from the two cities.

Flights to Lahore and Islamabad are most frequented by travellers from the same points, across the leisure and business segments, and including passengers flying to visit family and friends.

On the airline's 25th anniversary of operations in both Islamabad and Lahore, Mohammed Alhashmi, Emirates' Vice President for Pakistan said: "Emirates is proud to have been part of the county's growth story, with operations to Islamabad and Lahore, two important points in our Pakistan network. Emirates continues to be a dependable travel partner for many in Pakistan, including our loyal customers who rely on us for the premium services we offer, both in the air and on the ground, commitment to excellence in our service standards and ensuring an unmatched travel experience, as well as seamless connectivity to points in our vast network."

"Our operations to Islamabad and Lahore have been a resounding success since the launch 25 years ago, facilitating travel and movement of essential commodities. Tangible benefits throughout the supply chain in the hospitality and tourism industry and job creation are some of the achievements that have positively impacted local communities. We are proud to have contributed in a meaningful way to Pakistan and would like to thank the authorities and all stakeholders and industry partners whose support has made this possible over the years."

In addition to its passenger services, Emirates has played a crucial role in solidifying both Islamabad's and Lahore's positions as vital cargo hubs in the region. The airline continues to support local industries and businesses by uplifting cargo from Islamabad and Lahore to the rest of its global network. With its vast cargo network and state-of-the-art facilities, Emirates SkyCargo has been instrumental in enabling seamless transportation of goods and leveraging trade synergies that have not only boosted economic development but have also contributed significantly to the growth of both regions.

Over the past 15 years alone, Emirates' flights have uplifted a combined 225,000 tonnes of cargo out of Islamabad and Lahore, with commodities exported ranging from sporting and leather goods, textile and apparel, courier, and perishable items, including meat and produce such as mangoes. Top commodities frequently imported into both points in Pakistan include laboratory and medical equipment, diagnostic and testing kits, in addition to medicines and vaccines for medical and veterinary use, courier, fabrics, textile accessories, mobile phones and computer accessories, totalling more than 96,000 tonnes over the same 15-year period.

Emirates and Pakistan share a special relationship, which goes back more than 38 years when its first-ever flight marking the airline's launch, was from Dubai to Karachi on 25th October 1985. Since then, the historic partnership has continued to blossom with Emirates currently offering 53 weekly services to five Pakistani cities including Karachi, Islamabad, Lahore, Peshawar, and Sialkot, operated with Boeing 777 wide-body aircraft. Following the launch of its operations in 1985 in Karachi, Emirates began service to Peshawar in 1998. Then in 1999, Emirates was introduced to Islamabad's.

### Court Notice

In the Court of Saima Ehsan Civil Judge II/Allaqa Qazi Buner at Daggar.Case No o . 4 9 3 / 1 Institution.8/12/2022. date of hearing 10/1/2024. Inayatullah VS Ahmad Nawaz.Motice to 8.Hakim Khan s/o Nubat Khan. 12.Amjad s/o Said Nazar. 19. Sherullah Khan s/o Nazer Khan. 22. Umer. 23. Amen sons. 24.Yasmen. 25.Nasem daughters of Lal Khela resident of Agary Chamla tehsel Mandamr Buner.Whereas in the above mentioned case the mentioned defendants can not be served in the ordinary way, it is, therefore, proclaimed that if the said defendants will/shall not appear personally or through dually authorized agent or pleader in the court at 9 am dated 10/1/2024 the proceeding will be taken ex- parte. Given under my hand and seal of this Court.





In brief

Klopp not wishing Salah too much luck

LONDON (AFP): Liverpool boss Jurgen Klopp joked Friday that he is not wishing Mohamed Salah too much luck at the Africa Cup of Nations as he prepares for a crucial spell of games without his top scorer. Salah is away with Egypt for the tournament in Ivory Coast while Japan captain Wataru Endo will be involved at the Asian Cup in Qatar, with both players expected to go deep in the respective competitions. That could mean they will not be back until the second week in February but Klopp said he sent them on their way this week without wishing them too much success. "I said if I wish you good luck it would be a lie," Klopp said ahead of Liverpool's FA Cup third-round tie at Arsenal on Sunday. "From a personal point of view, I would be happy if they go out in the group stage but that's probably not possible. They can go on and win it. "So it was 'Good luck and come back healthy'. We have to deal with it and we will deal with it. I am pretty positive that we will find a way." Klopp does not really have a suitable replacement for Salah, who plays on the right side of his attack and has scored 18 goals in all competitions this season. Midfielder Dominik Szoboszlai was touted as a potential option but he has been ruled out for at least two matches with a hamstring injury sustained in the New Year's Day win over Newcastle. But Klopp, whose side are top of the Premier League, is confident Liverpool can fill the hole left by Salah. "I think we played against West Ham (in last month's League Cup quarter-final) without Mo on that side and Harvey Elliott played there," he said. "We have different offensive options who can all play that wing in a different way. Nobody else can play like Mo, it is not possible -- we just have to use the boys with their skills. "Do we want to play without Mo? No. In the past we didn't have to do it often but we always found a way. "But we play Arsenal and you can lose to Arsenal with Mo Salah so it's possible to lose to them without him."

Victoria, Rybakina into semis

BRISBANE (Agencies): Former Grand Slam champions Victoria Azarenka and Elena Rybakina reached the semi-finals of the season-opening Brisbane International on Friday, but in contrasting fashion. Azarenka took 2hr 30min before finally outlasting third-seeded Latvian Jelena Ostapenko 6-3, 3-6, 7-5 in the first match on Pat Rafter Arena. The Brisbane tournament is a warm-up for the Australian Open, which the 34-year-old Azarenka won in 2012 and 2013. Kazakhstan's Rybakina was then handed a spot in the last four when her Russian opponent Anastasia Potapova withdrew with a stomach problem after losing the first set 6-1. Azarenka was in control early as she took the first set with one break of serve, but as the match progressed Ostapenko began to find her range and deservedly levelled. Ostapenko, the 2017 French Open champion, was comfortable on serve in the third set while Azarenka struggled to hold hers. But at 5-6 and serving to send the set into a tiebreak, the Latvian cracked and a poor service game handed the Belarusian victory. Azarenka will play top seed Aryna Sabalenka or Daria Kasatkina in the last four.

Pakistan lose seven in second innings after Aamir Jamal bags six-fer

SYDNEY (Agencies): A three-wicket maiden by Josh Hazlewood in the penultimate over of the day left Pakistan in deep trouble at 68-7 after Aamir Jamal bagged a six-fer to help his team gain a slender 14-run lead.

Pakistan's second innings began in the worst possible manner with Abdullah Shafique and captain Shan Masood both dismissed for ducks. Abdullah was at the receiving end of an unplayable delivery from Mitchell Starc that rushed back in to dismantle the stumps while Shan poked at a ball outside off-stump from Hazlewood that was gobbled up by wicket-keeper Alex Carey.

A brief recovery from debutant Saim Ayub and Babar Azam gave Pakistan some stability as the two stitched a 56-run partnership for the third wicket. Saim was the more positive of the two as he displayed a few attacking strokes including an upper-cut off Starc for a maximum.

The duo was uncoupled when Saim (33, 53b, 3x4s, 1x6) played around a straighter one from Nathan Lyon resulting in an LBW. Babar (23, 52b, 1x4) was removed soon after as he unsuccessfully drove off the bowling of Travis Head.



Josh Hazlewood had Saud Shakeel edge to the slips

Pakistan's misfortunes nosedived when Hazlewood dismissed Saud Shakeel, nightwatchman Sajid Khan and Salman Ali Agha in the space of five deliveries. Saud contributed with just two runs while Sajid and Salman

could not trouble the scorers. Earlier in the day, right-arm pacer Aamir triggered an Australia collapse as they crashed from 289-5 to 299 all out. Having picked a six-wicket haul on Test debut, Aamir spearheaded

Pakistan's bowling effort once again to register impressive figures of 6-69.

The 27-year-old initiated the flurry of wickets by inducing a mistimed drive by Mitchell Marsh (54, 113b, 6x4s) into the hands of

Shan and two balls later dismissed Pat Cummins for a duck with a low full-toss. Lyon was his fifth victim of the innings before he got Hazlewood for nought to finish the Australian innings. Aamir has increased his

tally of wickets in the series to 18 -- the joint-most alongside Cummins for any bowler from either side.

An attritional morning session earlier saw Australia trudge to 199-4 in 80 overs. Steven Smith (38, 86b, 3x4s) was the first batter to fall when he hit one straight to Babar off Mir Hamza. In the next over, Salman bowled a ripper that turned off the footmarks to dismiss Marnus Labuschagne (60, 147b, 6x4s).

Day four of the SCG Test will begin on 0430 PKT with Mohammad Rizwan and Aamir resuming the Pakistan batting with a lead of 82 runs and seven wickets down.

Scores in brief:

Pakistan 313 all out, 77.1 overs (Mohammad Rizwan 88, Aamir Jamal 82, Salman Ali Agha 53, Shan Masood 35; Pat Cummins 5-61, Mitchell Starc 2-75, Mitchell Marsh 1-27) and 68-7, 26 overs (Saim Ayub 33, Babar Azam 23; Josh Hazlewood 4-9, Travis Head 1-7, Mitchell Starc 1-15, Nathan Lyon 1-16)

Australia 299 all out, 109.4 overs (Marnus Labuschagne 60, Mitchell Marsh 54, Usman Khawaja 47, Alex Carey 38, Steven Smith 38; Aamir Jamal 6-69, Salman Ali Agha 2-43).

No Pakistani included in ICC's nominations

DUBAI (Web Desk): International Cricket Council (ICC) has announced the nominations of Men's ODI Player of the Year 2023.

No Pakistani player including Babar Azam, who won the Player of the Year award in the last 2 years, has been included in the ICC Player of the Year nominations.

Three Indian players Virat Kohli, Mohammad Shami, Shibman Gill and one from New Zealand Daryl Mitchell have been nominated for Men's ODI Player of the Year 2023.

Meanwhile, Sri Lanka's Chimari Atapattu, Australia's Ashley Garner, New Zealand's Emilia Kerr and England's Nat Soireburnt have been nominated for the Women's One Day Player of the Year 2023 nominations. Here, again, no Pakistani woman is enlisted.

Men's T20 Cricketer of the Year nominations include New Zealand's Mark Chapman, Uganda's Elpesh Ramjani, Zimbabwe's Sikandar Raza and India's Surya Kumar Yadav.

The nominees for the ICC Emerging Men's Cricketer of the Year include South Africa's Gerald Coetzee, India's Yashasvi Jaswal, Sri Lanka's Dilshan Madhushanka, and New Zealand's Richan Ravindra.

The winners of the ICC Awards are decided by voting. The name of the winners of awards will be announced later this month.

June 5, USA on June 12, and Canada on June 15. Pakistan's other three group fixtures are against USA on June 6, Canada on June 11, and Ireland on June 16.

The 2024 T20 World Cup will be contested by 20 teams -- an increase from the 16 that took part in the 2022 tournament in Australia -- split into four groups of five each. The top two teams from each group will advance to the Super 8 round, in which the teams will be further divided into two groups of four each: A1, B2, C1 and D2 in one group, and A2, B1, C2 and D1 in the other group. The group stage will run from June 1 to 18, and the Super 8 round from June 19 to 24 entirely in the West Indies. The top two teams in each Super 8 group will then qualify for the semi-finals.

England are the defending champions, having beaten Pakistan in the 2022 T20 World Cup final in Melbourne. Canada, USA and Uganda will be making their first appearance at a Men's T20 World Cup.

Peshawar stun Bannu in Pak Army KP Inter-Region Boys Volleyball Championship

PESHAWAR (APP): Peshawar Region stunned strong and defending Champion Bannu by a thrilling 3-2 battle in the League round match of the ongoing Pakistan Army Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Inter-Regional Boys Volleyball Championship being played here at the indoor hall of the PSB Coaching Center on Friday.

Peshawar and Bannu have the services of international volleyball players who recently represented Pakistan in the Asian Under-16 Volleyball Championship, who gave each other a tough fight.

Peshawar team have lost the first two sets very easily at 22-25 and 21-25 but later on staged a comeback with coach Hidayat guided his team along with Kashif Farhan and Zakir Ullah, the Regional Sports Officers.

For Bannu team main spikers Wajid and Saud Khan with setter Shakeel Khan along with blockers Irfan Ullah and Asmat Ullah gave tough time to Peshawar strikers at the net and won first two sets without any resistance. It was a matter of great concern for Peshawar team and it made a strong comeback by leveling the tally 2-2 before winning the third and fourth sets at 29-27 and 27-25. The sitting spectators also enjoyed the match by supporting both Peshawar and Bannu team.

In the very outset of the match it was looking like Bannu winning the

match one-sided but Peshawar played with determination and showing tremendous resilience by taking control of the match. Peshawar won the third set when stretched to 29-27, before playing a level score at 5-5, 6-6, 7-7, 10-10, 11-11, 12-12, 14-14, 17-17, 19-19, 20-20, 21-21, 22-22, 23-23, 24-24, 25-25, 26-26 and 27-all after Peshawar took the set at 29-27.

Similarly, it was the fourth set when Peshawar team including main spikers Tufail and Azad with Nigar and Awaiss Senior strongly defended at the net and setter Awaiss Junior played tremendously by succeeding in dodging Bannu main blockers Irfan Ullah and Asmat Ullah. The Peshawar libro Talha also played well with his excellent receptions.

It was the fifth and decisive set in which Peshawar defeated Bannu by 15-10. Peshawar after leveling the sets tally 2-2, raced up to victory at 3-2. In the other matches Mardan region defeated Abbottabad by 3-1, the score was 25-23, 22-25, 25-21 and 25-23. In the third match Peshawar Volleyball Academy defeated Dera Ismail Khan 3-0, the score was 25-19, 25-15 and 25-12 while in the last match Malakand defeated Kohat by 3-1, the score was 25-22, 25-21, 25-23.

The Championship, jointly being

organized by Pakistan Army and Directorate General Sports KP, with the aim to Hunt talented volleyball youth out of the five-day event to form three different teams at U16, U18 and U21 level.

The Talent Hunt Program 2023-24 is being organized in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa on the special instructions of Corps Commander Peshawar Lt. Gen. Hasan Azhar Hayat, said DG Sports KP Abdul Nasir Khan Mohmand while talking to APP here. He said, three teams U16, U18 and U21 will be formed by selecting 20 players who have shown the best performance in the competitions.

The selected players will be trained by qualified coaches, he said, adding the selected players will be given Rs 45,000 per month by the Pakistan Army for six months, while after the camp, Rs 15,000 will be given per month until the National Championship.

The aim of these efforts of the Pakistan Army is to bring positive change in the country's conditions and restore the glory of the sports field, Abdul Nasir Khan Mohmand said during his visit to see the matches. These steps will surely prove to be important progress towards a healthy society, which will provide the youth with the best opportunities to move forward, DG Sports added.

2024 T20 World Cup: India vs Pakistan on June 9 in New York

DUBAI (Agencies): The marquee India-Pakistan fixture in the 2024 Men's T20 World Cup will take place on June 9 at Eisenhower Park in New York, according to the tournament schedule released on Friday. India will play the first three of their group matches in New York and the fourth in Florida. Defending champions England take on Australia on June 8 in Barbados.

The tournament, which is being co-hosted by USA and the West Indies, is scheduled to begin on June 1, with USA playing Canada in Dallas, and end with the final on June 29 in Barbados. The semi-finals are scheduled for June 26 in Guyana and June 27 in Trinidad.

2024 T20 World Cup groups

Group A: India, Pakistan, Ireland, Canada, USA

Group B: England, Australia, Namibia, Scotland, Oman

Group C: New Zealand, West Indies, Afghanistan, Uganda, Papua New Guinea

Group D: South Africa, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Netherlands, Nepal

The 55 games will be played across six venues in the West Indies (Kensington Oval, Barbados; Brian Lara Cricket Academy, Trinidad; Providence Stadium, Guyana; Sir Vivian Richards Stadium, Antigua; Daren Sammy Cricket Ground, St Lucia; Arnos Vale Stadium, St Vincent) and three venues in the USA (Eisenhower Park, New York; Landerhill, Florida; and Grand Prairie, Texas).

The teams in Group A will be based entirely in the USA for the group stage, while Group B and C will play their games in the West Indies. Only the teams in Group D have matches split between the USA and the West Indies. Apart from playing Pakistan on June 9, India take on Ireland on

Top seed Shoaib through to final of Federal Cup Tennis C'ships

ISLAMABAD (APP): The 36th Federal Cup National Ranking Tennis Championships moved into the finals phase after arduous and effortful tennis playing activity at PTF-SDA Tennis Complex, here on Friday.

In the first semifinal of men's singles, top seed Muhammad Shoaib outclassed Muzammil Murtaza 6-1 6-0 to make it to the final.

The second semifinal will be played on Saturday between second Aqeel Khan and Mudassar Murtaza. In the ladies' singles quarterfinal, unseeded Natalia Zaman from Karachi caused a major upset when she eliminated 4th seed Soha Ali in a thrilling three-set match 6-1, 4-6, 6-4. In the semi-final, she will face top seed Sarah Mahboob Khan, who conveniently won her quarterfinal encounter against Marrukh Sajid 6-0 6-1. In other quarterfinals, Amna Ali Qayum beat Kainat Ali 6-0 6-0 and Sheeza Sajid defeated Lalarukh Sajid in a well-fought fixture 7-6(5) 6-4.

The best encounter of the day was held between Hamid Israr Khan and M. Hamza Aasim in the junior 18 & under category semifinal. Top seed Hamid Israr struggled

hard to pull off win against talented upcoming youngster M.Hamza Aasim of Islamabad. In the first set, both the players exhibited excellent game by hitting cross-court and down-the-line shots till the score reached 6 games all. The set was decided in the tiebreak, in which Hamid Israr changed the game plan and comfortably won the tiebreak 7-1. The second set was again marked in the same style and both the players demonstrated the high standard of the game of tennis.

Hamid again changed the pace and strategy of the game plan, and managed to break the 9th game of Hamza to build up the winning lead 5-4 and kept the same pressure in the 10th game by hitting some excellent cross-court shots, winning the match and set at 6-4, and qualified for the Final. The match lasted for one hour and 40 minutes.

The second semifinal of was played between Hamza Roman and Ahmad Nael Qureshi in which Hamza Roman faced some resistance to win get a straight set victory 7-5 6-4.

The following are the results:

Men's Singles Semifinal:

Muhammad Shoaib beat Muzammil Murtaza 6-1 6-0.

Men's Doubles Semifinal: Barkatullah / Yousaf Khalil Vs Abdullah Adnan / Mudassar Murtaza 6-4 6-2

Muzammil Murtaza / Muhammad Shoaib w/o Muhammad Abid / Ahmad Chaudhary

Ladies' Singles (Quarterfinals) Sarah Mahboob Khan beat Marrukh Sajid 6-0 6-1, Natalia Zaman beat Soha Ali 6-1 4-6 6-4, Amna Ali Qayum beat Kainat Ali 6-0 6-0, Sheeza Sajid beat Lalarukh Sajid 7-6(5) 6-4.

Boys 18&U Singles (Semifinals) Hamid Israr beat Muhammad Hamza Aasim 7-6(1) 4-1, Hamza Roman beat Ahmad Nael Qureshi 7-5 6-4.

Boys 14&U Singles (Semifinal) Zohaib Afzal Malik beat Muhammad Junair Khan 4-0 4-1, M.Hussain Usmani beat Muhammad Shayyan 4-1 4-0.

Boys & Girls Singles (Quarterfinals) Muhammad Ibrahim Hussain beat Azan Imran 4-1 4-0, Arsh Imran beat Salaar Khan 2-4 4-2 4-0, Amir Masood beat Umer Zaman 0-4 5-4(6) 4-1, Muhammad Faizan beat Behroze Umer 4-1 4-1.

Nadal's comeback halted in epic encounter in Brisbane

BRISBANE (AFP): Spanish great Rafael Nadal's comeback to tennis came to an end when he lost a 3hr 25min marathon quarter-final to Australian Jordan Thompson at the Brisbane International on Friday.

Thompson saved three match points in the second set before overcoming an increasingly fatigued Nadal 5-7, 7-6 (8/6), 6-4 in a grueling encounter that finished just before midnight on Pat Rafter Arena.

Playing his first tournament after almost 12 months away from the sport through injury, Nadal appeared headed for a straight sets win after claiming the first set and then getting to a 6-4 lead in the second set tiebreak.

But an inspired Thompson refused to go away and took advantage of some unforced errors from the Spaniard to clinch the second set.

Nadal, who was broken early in the third set, took a medical time out at 1-4 down after appearing to need treatment to his upper left thigh.

He was able to continue but was unable to break back and Thompson held on to the delight of the capacity crowd.

"I completely forgot I saved match points," Thompson said immediately afterwards.

"To beat Rafa in Brisbane in a quarter-final, and I think it is now my first semi-final on a hard court, I couldn't be happier."

Thompson will now play second seed Grigor Dimitrov in the semi-finals after the Bulgarian's 6-1, 6-4 victory over Australian Rinky Hijikata.

The second semi-final sees top seeded Dane Holger Rune up against Russian Roman Safiullin.

Rune looked in great touch as he downed Australian qualifier James



Duckworth 6-2, 7-6 (8/6), while unseeded Safiullin beat Italy's Matteo Arnaldi 7-6 (7/4), 6-2.

Nadal had gone into his quarter-final against Thompson in superb touch following relatively easy wins in his opening two rounds.

But Thompson, the world number 55, ensured that the Spaniard wouldn't have it all his own way, returning well throughout to constantly pressure Nadal's serve.

Despite losing his serve for the first time this tournament at 3-3 in the opener, Nadal was able to break Thompson twice to clinch a tight first set in 70 minutes.

Thompson threw everything at Nadal in the second set, playing some superb tennis, but the Spaniard was able to somehow absorb the pressure.

It looked like vintage Nadal as he turned the screws in the tiebreak, opening a 3-0 lead.

But Thompson came back to level

at 3-3, then saved two match points at 6-4 down, clinching the set in 83 minutes.

Nadal began to look tired at the start of third set, in contrast to the Australian, and it came as no surprise when he was broken early in the third, with Thompson comfortably holding on.

In the women's draw, Aryna Sabalenka fired a warning ahead of her Australian Open defence by powering into the semi-finals with a straight-sets demolition of Daria Kasatkina.

Sabalenka's 6-1, 6-4 victory was her 14th consecutive win on Australian soil after also claiming the Adelaide crown in the lead-up to last year's opening Grand Slam of the year.

The Belarusian raced through the first set against the Russian in 32 minutes, but had to fight harder in the second, breaking Kasatkina once and holding on to win the match in 1hr 26min.

Sabalenka will now play fellow Belarusian Victoria Azarenka with a 2023 Australian Open final replay against second seed Elena Rybakina a possibility for Sunday's decider.

Former Grand Slam champions Azarenka and Rybakina reached the semis in contrasting fashion.

Two-time Australian Open winner Azarenka took 2hr 30min before finally outlasting third-seeded Latvian Jelena Ostapenko 6-3, 3-6, 7-5 in the first match on Pat Rafter Arena.

Rybakina was then handed a spot in the last four when her Russian opponent Anastasia Potapova withdrew with a stomach problem after losing the first set 6-1.

Rybakina will face Linda Noskova next after the Czech player saw off 16-year-old Russian Mirra Andreeva 7-5, 6-3.





## In brief

### Police arrest two bike lifters

RAWALPINDI (APP): Police have arrested two bike lifters and recovered 11 stolen motorcycles from their possession, said a Police spokesman here on Friday. He informed that a team under the supervision of SHO, New Town Police Station managed to net two bike lifters namely Hassan and Husnain and recovered 11 stolen motorcycles and other items from their possession. A case has been registered against the accused while further investigation is underway. Superintendent of Police, Rawal Faisal Saleem said the accomplices and facilitators of the accused would also be sent behind bars.

### Police arrest six gamblers

RAWALPINDI (APP): Rawalpindi district police arrested six gamblers and recovered Rs 14,500 stake money, seven mobile phones, and other items from their possession, said a police spokesman here on Friday. He informed that Cantt police conducted a raid and arrested six gamblers namely Waris, Sajjad, Nadir, Ijaz, Fakhar and Sajid, who were allegedly involved in betting while playing cards. Police recovered Rs 14,500, seven mobile phones, and other items from their possession. A case has been registered against the accused while further investigation is under process. Superintendent of Police, Potohar said that gambling is the root cause of other evils and those involved in such crimes do not deserve any concession.

### Action against underage drivers

RAWALPINDI (APP): The Rawalpindi district police, under an effective operation against underage drivers, took action in accordance with the law and 70 cases were registered in a single day, said a police spokesman here on Friday. He informed that total 5556 FIRs were registered under the campaign launched against underage drivers while 70 cases were registered during last 24 hours. Police, on the directives of City Police Officer, Rawalpindi Syed Khalid Hamdani, were also conducting awareness campaigns in schools and colleges to educate the students about the legal age requirements for obtaining a driving license, he said. All possible steps were being taken to improve the traffic situation on the city roads and facilitate the citizens, he added. He informed that the CPO had directed the officers concerned to take solid steps to control traffic rules violations and underage driving. He urged the parents to remain vigilant about their children to avert road accidents.

### Pakistan startup fund

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Federal Minister for Information Technology and Telecommunication, Dr. Umar Saif, announced on Friday that the Pakistan Startup Fund is set to be launched on January 9. In an interview with private TV channels, Dr. Saif expressed confidence in the immense potential of Pakistani youth, highlighting that Pakistan is the world's second-largest online workforce. Over the past four years, Pakistani startups have attracted nearly \$800 million in foreign investment, according to Dr. Saif. He also mentioned that Pakistan ranks as the seventh-largest market for mobile phones globally, with 75 million broadband users. Dr. Saif said social media users in Pakistan, surpass the total population of Canada.



ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Federal Minister for Religious Affairs and Interfaith Harmony, Aneeq Ahmed addressing a seminar on Interfaith Harmony at IQRA University H-9.

## Jamal directs to accelerate conservation work during Rawat Fort visit

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Minister for Culture and National Heritage Jamal Shah on Friday directed the concerned quarters to complete the preservation work on Rawat Fort.

During his visit to the Fort to oversee the preservation work of Pakistan's cultural heritage, he emphasized for expediting the conservation work to safeguard this historic site.

The minister was accompanied by officials from the

National Heritage and Culture Division. During the visit, the minister and Secretary Humaira Ahmad were briefed by senior officials from the Department of Archeology and Museum (DOAM) about the ongoing project aimed at preserving, restoring and developing Rawat Fort.

Expressing the vital importance of this endeavor, Jamal Shah highlighted the project's core objectives, emphasizing the fusion of scientific and traditional techniques to preserve and show-

case the country's rich cultural legacy. "The efforts put into preserving Rawat Fort will not only halt its decay but will also secure its heritage for generations to come, while boosting tourism both nationally and regionally," the minister remarked. He also emphasized the inclusive aspect of the project, noting that the archaeological excavation, conservation, and restoration works would generate employment opportunities in the local area.

### AIOU increases convocation seats to accommodate students

ISLAMABAD (APP): Vice Chancellor of Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU), Prof. Dr. Nasir Mahmood, has decided to increase the number of seats in the upcoming convocation.

According to AIOU, this decision was taken in response to thousands of requests from students and recommendations made by the convocation committee.

The eligibility criteria for the convocation have also been amended to include all graduates from the Semester Autumn 2024 to the Semester Spring 2022. To accommodate the maximum number of students, the university has extended the registration date. Graduates can now register themselves on <http://convocation.aiou.edu.pk> until January 10, 2024.

AIOU Convocation 2024 will be held on January 31, 2024, at the Jinnah Convention Center, Islamabad. The President of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, Dr. Arif Alvi, who is also the Chancellor of the University, will be the chief guest at the event. Students from Islamabad, Gilgit-Baltistan, AJK and Rawalpindi Division (Attack, Chaklala, Jhelum, and Rawalpindi) will participate in the convocation at Jinnah Convention Center in Islamabad.

The convocation for the Karachi chapter is scheduled for March 3, 2024, while Lahore's convocation will be held on March 28. Quetta will host its ceremony on May 19, and the convocation for Peshawar is scheduled for June 9, 2024.

## Minister urges society to play role in polio eradication, importance of family planning

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Federal Minister for Health Dr Nadeem Jan Friday emphasized the necessity of raising awareness about family planning-related myths among the rural population and called upon every section of society to play its due role in the complete eradication of poliovirus. Talking to a private news channel, he said that every government was playing its top-level commitment and thoroughly engaged in various national polio drives where it is immunizing children under five in the country against the paralyzing poliovirus.

"Every child has the right to live free from the threat of disability caused by polio and we will not rest until all children are safe from it," Dr Jan said.

Minister also urged that scholars, educators, media, and civil society should create more awareness for importance of family planning, adding, government needs the help of Islamic scholars to convince the public.

Replying to a query about the upcoming 'Global Health Security Summit in Islamabad' which will officially be inaugurated from January 10th to 11th said that moot would serve as a great opportunity of

bringing together international and national experts to share expertise and knowledge for a safer world.

He said that around 70 countries' experts and intellectuals will participate in the summit, adding, over fifty other ambassadors from various countries will also be part of this moot.

He said first time Pakistan is hosting an international health conference to address pandemic-related issues which would present a positive image of Pakistan and prove that the country could play a key role in the health sector.

He said national and international experts are taking part in the summit, adding, summit will discuss global pandemic planning responses and its facility for low-and middle-income countries to prevent disproportionate utilization of vaccines between the first and third world.

He said effective measures were also being taken to increase the capacity of health sector. To another question, minister said that there is a great deal that Pakistan can contribute to the knowledge and experience of the global community in the fight against pandemics.

## Edu ministry honors 509 teachers with Higher Time Scales

ISLAMABAD (APP): The

Ministry of Federal Education & Professional Training granted the Higher Time Scale (HTS) to the teachers during a meeting of the departmental promotion committee held here on Friday. The promotion landscape for teachers witnessed a notable transformation.

The committee convened to deliberate on the grant of Higher Time Scale (HTS) to teachers in the BPS-18 to BPS-20 range, and a total of 509 time scale cases were meticulously reviewed and discussed. Among the notable outcomes, a total of 14 teachers of BPS-20 were granted the HTS of BPS-21.

Among them were 3 male and 4 female Professors of BPS-20 from Federal Government Colleges, while Model Colleges saw 2 male and 2 female Professors of BPS-20 achieving the coveted BPS-21 status.

Additionally, from the school side, 2 male and 1 female Principals were

granted HTS of BPS-21.

The impact of the decisions reached in the meeting extended to teachers in BPS-19, with 138 individuals successfully attaining HTS of BPS-21.

Notable grant of HTS included 23 male and 25 female Associate Professors from Federal Government Colleges, 22 male and 29 female Associate Professors from Model Colleges, and 8 Deputy Headmistresses from Model Colleges, all upgraded to BPS-20 (HTS).

Similarly, 12 male and 19 female Principals from the school side were elevated to BPS-20 (HTS).

Furthermore, 357 teachers in BPS-18 saw progress in their careers as they were granted HTS of BPS-19.

This included 36 male and 36 female Associate Professors from Federal Government Colleges, along with 34 male and 36 female Assistant Professors from Model Colleges. Moreover, 40 Assistant Headmistresses

from model colleges, 83 male and 92 female Vice Principals from schools also received HTS of BPS-19.

Acknowledging the significance of these promotions, the President of the Federal Government Teachers Association (FGCTA) Dr Rahima Rehman talking to APP, conveyed heartfelt congratulations to the honored teachers.

She expressed gratitude to the officials and officers of the Federal Directorate of Education and the Education Ministry for their dedicated efforts in facilitating the promotion process.

Professor Farhan Azam, Vice President of FGCTA, talking to APP shared his optimistic outlook on the impact of this recognition, believing it would contribute to the improvement of teachers' efficiency. He also extended his appreciation to the officials of the Federal Directorate of Education and ministry for their support.

## Task Force conducts grand operation against five illegal housing schemes

RAWALPINDI (APP): The Task Force constituted against illegal housing schemes has taken action in accordance with the law against five illegal housing projects. In the light of the directives of the Divisional Intelligence Committee, the Task Force is conducting raids and taking strict action against the rules violators.

The Task Force demolished the site offices, electric poles, billboards, roads, security rooms and other infrastructure while carrying out a grand operation against illegal housing schemes namely Green Hawks (Hartus Floare Farm), Sighu Farm House in mouza Bhal and Chak Cighu Chonra to Chak Beli Khan road, Al Khan Enclave, Aurora Housing Scheme in mouza Lab Thathoo and Wah Residencia in

mouza Bhatti Pind Sir Syed Avenue in Taxila Rawalpindi. On the directions of the Commissioner Rawalpindi Division, Liaquat Ali Chatta, the DG RDA, the DC Rawalpindi and CPO Rawalpindi are supervising the operation against illegal housing societies.

The DG RDA Muhammad Saif Anwar Jappa informed that on the instructions of the Commissioner Rawalpindi, grand operation against all illegal societies would continue without any discrimination. He said that the RDA had advised the citizens not to invest in illegal housing schemes and the citizens were also requested to visit RDA website [www.rda.gop.pk](http://www.rda.gop.pk) to check status of the housing projects.

Earlier, the RDA had also issued notices to the owners and sponsors

of the illegal housing schemes and they were directed to stop illegal advertisements, booking of the plots and development work.

The owners were running booking offices of illegal housing schemes in violation of the rules, the DG said.

The operation team including Muhammad Usman Bajwa, Assistant Director Planning Mehwish Naseem, Assistant Director Building Control RDA, Waqar Ahmad Malik, Assistant Director Land, police team from Chonra and Wah Cantt, police stations, RDA Scheme/Building Inspectors, District Council Inspector, District Administration Representatives and other team members took part in the grand operation.



ISLAMABAD: Labourers busy in construction work of Park Road with the help of heavy machineries during development work in the city.

## ANF recovers over 243 kg drugs in six operations

RAWALPINDI (APP): Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) in its crackdown against drug traffickers conducted six operations across the country and managed to recover over 243 kg drugs and arrested six accused including a foreigner, said an ANF Headquarters spokesman here on Friday.

He informed that 220 kg hashish was recovered from a trailer near Indus Chowrangi, Karachi area and an accused was arrested. 10 kg hashish was recovered from the bag of an accused rounded up near Zero Point, Gwadar.

8 kg hashish and 4 kg Ice were recovered in two operations near Chongi No. 26 Islamabad while two accused were arrested. In fifth operation, 1 kg hashish was recovered near Shershah Toll Plaza Multan and an accused was arrested.

In sixth operation, a capsule containing 17 grams cocaine was recovered from the stomach of an accused, a Nigerian national arrested from Lahore. Cases under the Anti-Narcotics Act have been registered against the arrested accused and further investigations are underway.



### 89 Afghans released

KABUL (Agencies): The Afghan Consulate in Karachi, Pakistan, has reported the release of 89 Afghan citizens, including six children, from prisons in Sindh province. These individuals have been successfully transferred back to Afghanistan, marking a positive development in their repatriation efforts. It's worth noting that there are still 279 Afghan nationals remaining in Sindh prisons, and ongoing efforts are being made to secure their release as well.

### Afghan singer's initiative

HERAT CITY (Agencies): Renowned Afghan artist and vocalist, Farhad Darya, recently announced the inauguration of 37 emergency shelters in Sanjab Wardak village, Herat province on his social media. However, the shelters have faced significant controversy from the public due to their poor design and lack of qualification. He wrote that "Following a severe earthquake in the northwest of Herat city, USD 69,100 in collected funds was allocated to build 37 emergency shelters in Sanjab Wardak village."

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

## Envoys to Afghanistan to meet: UN chief's associate spokesperson



KABUL (TOLONews): Stephanie Tremblay, Associate Spokesperson for the UN Secretary-General, said that Secretary General Antonio Guterres intends to organize the second meeting of the country's special envoys for Afghanistan at

an appropriate time. "I don't have the time to announce today," she said. "This is to cement international consensus on the way forward and to discuss the recommendations of the independent assessments," she said.

Tremblay said that the mission of the UN Special Coordinator and Independent Assessor of the UN, Feridun Hadi Sinirlioglu has been extended until the end of February. The Islamic Emirate,

meanwhile, called for an invitation of its representative in the meeting of the special envoy.

"Any meeting which is being held regarding Afghanistan, the presence of the representatives of the Islamic Emirate is needed. If the representatives of the Islamic Emirate is not present, the meeting will undoubtedly not be effective," said Zabiullah Mujahid, the Islamic Emirate's spokesman.

International relations analyst, Wahid Faqiri, said: "The Afghan government should have a parallel movement regarding such meetings. Unfortunately, the Taliban government during the past two and a half years is making hurdles ahead of the international community instead of cooperating with it." Earlier, TASS quoted the Russian special envoy for Afghanistan Zamir Kabulov as saying that the broad meeting on Afghanistan under the auspices of the UN may be conducted in mid-January.

## Iran announces plans for Afghanistan, Pakistan borders

KABUL (TOLONews): Iran's Interior Minister, Ahmad Wahidi, has announced the implementation of a plan to block some of the country's borders with Afghanistan and Pakistan. Ahmadi in an interview with Iranian news outlet (Isna) said that those border parts which faced vacuums and are misused will be prioritized in being blocked.

Iran's interior minister added that some parts of the border between Afghanistan and Iran are misused and this issue is dangerous for Iran.

Isna quoted Ahmadi as saying: "The plan to block the border is a complete plan that has different dimensions and is not just a wall, and various things are done to block the border, and it is carried out by the General Staff of the Armed Forces and by various military and police forces at the border." At the same time, the Islamic Emirate said that there is no danger from Afghanistan to the neighboring countries, including Iran, and the neighboring countries should



also pay attention to the security of their borders.

The spokesman of the Islamic Emirate said: "The smuggling route and the route that is misused, it is the right of a country to block them and we are also aware of the security. There is no problem from our side and they should also pay attention."

Meanwhile, some international relations experts

said that recent security problems in neighboring countries aroused their concerns about border security.

"The blocking of the border between Afghanistan and Iran by Iranian authorities after the Kerman explosion is an indirect accusation that terrorists are coming from Afghanistan and ruining Iran's security," said Aziz Maarej, an international

relations expert. Earlier, the spokesman of the Ministry of Borders and Tribal Affairs said that until now, the process of renewing border signs with Iran is 15% advanced. According to the Ministry, Afghanistan has nearly 200 border signs and symbols on the border with Iran, and work is underway to reconstruct these signs.

## 12 Afghans among those killed by blasts in Iran

KABUL (TOLONews): At least 12 Afghan nationals were among those killed by the blasts that happened at a ceremony in the city of Kerman, Iran on Wednesday to commemorate commander Qassem Soleimani, Iranian media reported.

Maisam Mehdipour, the deputy of media affairs of the special representative of Iran's presidency for Afghan affairs, was quoted by Tasnim news agency as saying that "the people of Afghanistan stand at the front of fighting against Daesh in Iraq and Syria as well as in Afghanistan today." According to the media, the 12 Afghan nationals are identified as:

Riza Noori, Mohammad Qassim Ahmadi, Marriam Tajik, Mohammad Matin Ahmadi, Mohammad Tajik, Naznin Fatima Azizi, Zahra Faizy, Nazifa Ghafari, Nematullah Achakzai, Latifa Achakzai, Masouma Achakzai and Razgul Alizai.



Masouma Achakzai and Razgul Alizai. Islamic Emirate's spokesman, Zabiullah Mujahid called on the Afghan refugees abroad to not attend political ceremonies and events.

Mujahid said that the issue has been shared with the Foreign Ministry. "The Ministry of Foreign Affairs is trying to identify them and wants to finalize the issue. Unfortunately, this attack inflicted heavy casualties," he said. "12 of the martyrs are from Afghanistan," said Mohammad Khan Talibi, an Afghan refugee rights activist. This comes as

some Afghan refugees in Iran said that many Afghans come to Iran for work and education.

Daesh claimed responsibility for two explosions in Iran that killed nearly 100 people and wounded scores at a memorial for top commander Qassem Soleimani.

## First waterway between Kamal Khan Dam and Zaranj opens

KABUL (TOLONews): The work of a canal that brings the Kamal Khan dam to the city of Zaranj, the capital of Nimroz province, has been completed and put into operation.

This canal was built at a cost of 80 million afghani in four months.

Ghulam Nabi, a farmer, said that he has not been able to cultivate and work for himself for three years due to lack of water. He is happy for the creation of this canal and to be able to work again.

"There was no water and we lost everything because everything we planted was lost due to the lack of water," Ghulam Nabi told TOLONews.

Abdul Hadi Hadi, head of marine department of the Helmand river, said: "The water of this dam will speed up and flow into the Lashkari canal, from which the needs of the people of Nimroz will be solved."

"This project is 24 kilometers long and 25 meters wide, and cost 80

million afghani, which was scheduled to end in six months, we finished it in four months," said Juma Khan Tawjagi, the manager of the construction company.

Some farmers who have been affected by recent droughts are happy with the completion of work on this canal.

"Our hope is back because we want water for our cultivation," said

Hamidullah, a farmer.

Nimroz local officials said that this canal is effective in the field of agricultural development in Zaranj city and its surrounding villages.

Abdul Qayum Rohani, deputy governor of Nimroz, said: "The Islamic Emirate has tried to provide drinking water to the people of Nimroz first, and we have done this so that you can see

the water wells that have been dug for kilometers."

Kamal Khan Dam was put into operation by the previous government about five years ago for the purpose of developing the agricultural sector; however, due to recent droughts and non-activation of the canals of this dam, there were no changes in the agricultural situation in this warm area province.



## Islamic Emirate brings new appointments



KABUL (TOLONews): Zabiullah Mujahid, the spokesman of the Islamic Emirate said that based on the order of the leader of the Islamic Emirate, new appointments have been made in the provinces of Faryab, Farah, Herat, Balkh, Kandahar and Nimroz.

Mawlawi Ghawsuddin Rahbar, commander of the special forces company in Faryab, is appointed governor of Farah province.

Haji Abdulraziq Rashed, former mayor of Herat province, is appointed security commander of Balkh province.

Mullah Abdulzahir Mudaser, former security commander of Balkh, is appointed as security com-

mander of Nimroz province. Mullah Nematullah Hassan, former mayor of Kandahar, was appointed the mayor of Herat province.

Mullah Hekmatullah, the former head of the Finance department of Kandahar, was appointed the mayor of Kandahar province.

Noor Ahmad Saeed, former head of Information and Culture of Kandahar, was appointed the head of the Finance department of Kandahar province.

The Islamic Emirate said these appointments were needed to bring changes in the government and added that this is done to improve the governance situation.

Zabiullah Mujahid, the spokesman of the Islamic Emirate, said: "Share their experiences in one province and another province, especially in security matters, which is one of the most important and important goals of the Islamic Emirate, to ensure the security of the country and to protect the country's borders in general."

Meanwhile, some political experts said that if expertise and experience are considered in new appointments, it can help to improve the situation.

"Change is one of the principles of the government. It should be done according to meritocracy and it is necessary for a government to implement

it," said Maeen Gul Samkanai, a political expert. "The benefit is that innovation and initiatives come. If there is someone who can't do a good job, maybe someone else will come and do it better," said Aziz Maarej, a political expert.

Earlier, based on the order of the Islamic Emirate's leader, Mohammad Aman Obaid, the former governor of Daikundi was appointed the governor of Kabul, Mohammad Qasem Khalid, the former governor of Kabul, was appointed the governor of Nimroz, and Najibullah Rafi, the former governor of Nimroz, was appointed the governor of Daikundi.

## Afghan people's fund accumulated \$155m: Mehrabi

KABUL (Agencies): Shah Mohammad Mehrabi, Central Bank supreme council member and board member of the Afghan Trust Fund in Switzerland, said that the Afghan people's fund has experienced substantial growth, with accumulated revenue totaling \$155 million.

In a video clip to TOLONews, Mehrabi said: "This

advancement underscores the steadfast commitment of the fund to its fundamental mission, safeguarding, preserving and allocating its \$3.5 billion in assets to support foreign exchange rate and price stabilization objectives in Afghanistan."

According to him, the initiative ultimately serves to enhance the well-being of the Afghan people.

Mehrabi also emphasized that the fund is tailored for economic purposes and that it is not earmarked for humanitarian initiatives.

Meanwhile, economists said that the revenue of the Afghan Trust Fund should be used for the stabilization of the afghani and the economic improvement of Afghanistan.

"This money should be

invested in power improvement and the banking sector," said Mohammad Nabi Afghan, an economist.

Some of the frozen Central Bank reserves were transferred from Washington into the "Fund for the Afghan People" last year where US officials said it will be shielded from the Islamic Emirate, according to Reuters.





# Qureshi, Haleem Adil allowed to contest elections

F.P. Report

KARACHI: The Sindh High Court's (SHC) election appellate tribunal on Friday accepted the appeals of PTI Vice-Chairman Shah Mahmood Qureshi, his son Zain and party provincial president Haleem Adil Sheikh against the rejection of their candidatures for the upcoming polls.

Qureshi and his son had contested the rejection of their nomination papers by the returning officers (ROs) from the NA-214 constituency (Tharparkar-I) while Sheikh had done the same for NA-238 (Karachi-East IV). The development comes just a day after Sheikh was granted bail by Malir judicial magistrate Saima Katto in a case related to the May 9 violence. A day before that, he was indicted in a case linked to rioting at city courts in Karachi.

The appeal acceptance also follows that of PTI Central Vice President Firdous Shamim Naqvi, who had submitted his nomination papers from Karachi's NA-236. The RO had objected to Qureshi and Zain's candidature for not providing details of their assets, source of income and paid taxes.

Meanwhile, Sheikh's papers had been rejected

for failing to "disclose details of clearance from the police/anti-corruption" and not providing the No Dues Certificate from the provincial assembly, as per the last hearing's order. The election tribunal had issued notices to the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) and others on the PTI leaders' appeals on Wednesday.

The appeals had been filed through Advocate Ali Tahir, who appeared before the tribunal today and confirmed to Dawn.com that his clients were allowed to contest the polls. Justice Adnanul Karim Memon presided over the hearing during which he heard the arguments of the parties concerned, including the ECP. He subsequently set aside the objections raised by the ROs, declaring them illegal, and directing the officials to accept the PTI leaders' nomination papers.

Separately, the appellate tribunal also accepted the appeals of PTI candidate Arsalan Khalid and the PPP's Mirza Ikhtiar Baig from NA-241 (Karachi South-III).

Meanwhile, the election appellate tribunal of Lahore High Court's Rawalpindi bench issued notices on the appeals of former information minister Fawad Chaudhry and his wife,

Hiba, against the rejection of their nomination papers from NA-61 (Jhelum-II). Justice Chaudhry Abdul Aziz presided over the hearing today.

The tribunal sought details from the Federal Investigation Agency of Fawad's and Hiba's travels abroad as well as bank account details. Hearings on both appeals were adjourned till tomorrow. Fawad had parted ways with the PTI soon after a countrywide crackdown on the party as initiated after the May 9 riots sparked by its chairman Imran Khan's arrest.

Although the ex-minister had said at the time that he was "taking a break from politics", he was seen at the launch ceremony of the Jahangir Khan Tareen-led Istehkam-i-Pakistan Party (IPP) in June. However, Fawad has kept quiet on whether he is officially a part of the IPP, which has been joined by several PTI leaders in the aftermath of May 9. Separately, a Rawalpindi election appellate tribunal headed by Justice Mirza Viqas Rauf accepted PTI leader Zulfi Bukhari's appeal, allowing him to contest polls from Attock. His candidature from NA-50 (Attock-II) had been rejected.

## CJP says will not hear individual cases related to elections

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Chief Justice of Pakistan Qazi Faez Isa has said that he will not hear individual cases related to elections.

He expressed these remarks while hearing a set of 15 petitions to determine the period of disqualification under Article 62(1)(f), especially in light of the inconsistencies found between two constitutional provisions — one prescribing a lifetime ban while the other proposing a five-year disqualification period. The court will decide whether the 2018 Samiullah Baloch case, or the 2023 amendments to the Elections Act 2017 that reduced the ineligibility period to five years, will prevail.

The case of interpretation of Article 62(1)(f) of the Constitution is being heard by a 7-member bench of the Supreme Court headed by Chief Justice Qazi Faez Isa, and comprising Justice Syed Mansoor Ali Shah, Justice Yahya Afridi, Justice Aminuddin Khan, Justice Jamal Khan Mandokhail, Justice Muhammad Ali Mazhar and Justice Musarrat Hilali.

Proceedings are being broadcast live on SC's website and YouTube channel. The fate of many politicians, including Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) supreme Nawaz Sharif and Istehkam-e-Pakistan Party (IPP) founder Jahangir Tareen, hinges on the verdict of the apex court which will determine whether they could participate in the upcoming polls or not. In its hearing on Jan 2, Chief Justice Isa advised against assuming that a particular party was being favoured.

Today, Jehangir Tareen's lawyer Makhdoom Ali Khan is presenting his arguments. At the outset of the hearing, the Chief Justice of Pakistan remarked that we have decided that we would not hear the individual case related to the elections, we would hear the case related to the constitutional interpretation, the individual cases related to the elections would be heard in another bench next week and we would form another bench for those cases.

Chief Justice Isa said that we issued a public notice in the disqualification case, but no political party became a party. He said that nobody cares about the people. "If the country is destroyed, no one cares. One mistake in nomination papers, renders a person disqualified for life." The top judge observed why are we limiting ourselves to only one specific part of the constitution and its language? Why are we ignoring constitutional history, fundamental rights? What remaining rights have been taken away by the insertion of certain new clauses? Only one general put the clause of 62(1)(f), then we all became bound?

## Admn, police responsible for protesters safety: IHC

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad High Court (IHC) Justice Mohsin Akhtar Kayani heard on the petition against police harassment of Baloch protesters and instructed Baloch protesters to immediately appoint a focal person for negotiations with the Islamabad administration and Police.

The judge remarked that there are women and children among the protesters, if anything happens to them, the administration and the police will be held responsible. Islamabad Deputy Commissioner appeared before the court and said that protesters cannot use the sound system 24 hours a day as other citizens also have rights.

The representative of Islamabad IG said that Baloch protesters' people were taken away by some 'unknown' people and that might be there some quarrel between them. The IHC Justice Mohsin Akhtar Kayani remarked that those whose brothers, fathers and sons are missing only know what is happening to them. The court said that the focal person of the Baloch protesters will meet the police and the administration at 3 o'clock today (Friday).



BEIRUT: People carrying coffins of Hamas deputy leader Saleh al-Arouri and others for funeral prayer.

## Iran mourns those slain in suicide blasts as death toll rises to 89

KERMAN, Iran: Iranian officials tried Friday to link Israel and the US to a Daesh group-claimed suicide bombing while speaking to a mass funeral for some of the 89 people killed in the attack, seeking to intertwine the assault with wider Middle East tensions from the Israel-Hamas war.

Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi and the top commander of Iran's paramilitary Revolutionary Guard sought to make the link without offering evidence for their claims. The gathered crowd in front of flag-draped caskets shouted in response: "Death to America!" and "Death to Israel!" "The enemy always sees the power of the Islamic Republic. The whole world is recognizing this power and this ability," Raisi said, without directly naming any country. "Be sure, the initiative is in the hands of our powerful forces. The place and time will be determined by our forces."

Iranian state television also sought to link America to the attack. At one point, it re-broadcast comments from 2016 from then-presidential candidate Donald Trump, who wrongly accused then-President Barack Obama of being the "founder" of the extremist group. Critics have blamed Obama's decision to pull troops from Iraq in 2011 for allowing the group, once an affiliate of Al-Qaeda, to thrive and ultimately hold vast swaths of Iraq and Syria in its self-declared caliphate by 2014. US troops under both Obama and Trump then bat-

tled alongside allied forces to retake that territory. Gen. Hossein Salami, the commander of the Guard, similarly sought to make the connection. "They can only act as agents and mercenaries of American politics and Zionism," Salami said. "But we give them this warning, ... wherever you are, we will find you. You cannot avoid divine punishment by disappearing. If you live for 1,000 years, we will find you."

In Wednesday's attack, one suicide bomber killed himself, then another attacked 20 minutes later as people and emergency workers tried to help the wounded in Kerman, about 820 kilometers (510 miles) southeast of the capital, Tehran. The attack targeted a commemoration for Guard Gen. Qassem Soleimani, killed in 2020 by a US drone strike as he led its expeditionary Quds Force. Soleimani had been part of the Iranian response to the Daesh group in Syria, while focusing on keeping embattled Syrian President Bashar Assad in power. He also had extensive ties to proxy groups around the wider Mideast, including Hamas. But the US, which killed Soleimani as part of wider tensions over its collapsed nuclear deal with world powers, saw Soleimani as the mastermind behind deadly roadside bombings targeting American soldiers in Iraq. The two attacks on Wednesday killed at least 89 people and wounded about 280 others, authorities said Friday in an update of the death toll. The

attacks have sparked condemnation from around the world, even amid Iran's wider tensions with the West over its nuclear program. Pope Francis offered a condolence telegram to express his deep sadness over the "loss of life caused by the recent explosions in Kerman," the Vatican said on Friday.

Francis "invokes upon all the people of Iran the Almighty's blessings of wisdom and peace," the Vatican said. The Daesh group claimed the attack Thursday in a statement that named the two bombers and described it as part of a new campaign linked to Israel's war in the Gaza Strip. The statement bore some differences to previous claims made by the Daesh group in other attacks it has claimed in Iran, though experts said it appeared to be legitimate and came from online channels associated with the extremists. Much of the group's leadership has been killed and replaced in the years since 2014.

It's unclear why the two Iranian leaders chose to focus on the US and Israel, rather than on the Daesh group, during their remarks Friday. Iran has retaliated in the past over Daesh-claimed attacks, including launching ballistic missiles into Syria. However, the Daesh group has grown stronger in recent years in neighboring Afghanistan, just some 360 kilometers (225 miles) east of Kerman, since the Western-backed government in Kabul fell to the Taliban in 2021. — Arab News

## Click Karen, Shikayat Darj Karen



State Bank of Pakistan introduces Sunwai, a customer complaint service available through web portal and mobile application. The service helps in registering bank related complaints as well as tracking the same.

sunwai.sbp.org.pk

StateBank\_Pak StateBankPakistan Statebank\_pak



SUNWAI Customer Complaint Service by SBP

سوئی ناردرن گیس  
Sui Northern Gas  
SNGPL Official

نومبر تا فروری  
خصوصی احتیاط ہے ضروری

سرڈیوں کے 4 ماہ گیس استعمال  
0.9Hm<sup>3</sup> سے زیادہ ہوگا  
تو گیس بل گئی گنا بڑھ سکتا ہے

لہذا!

رہنما کی زیر سربراہی ملک کریں  
گیس بڑھاتا رہنما کی زیر سربراہی کریں  
لکھنے سے پہلے کیلئے راتوں کی گیس آلات چیک کریں