

## Senate session on 21st F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: President Asif Ali Zardari has summoned the session of the Senate on Tuesday (May 21) at 05:00pm. The president summoned the session of Upper House in exercise of the powers conferred by Article 54(1) of the Constitution of Pakistan. President also visited family home of Shaheed Maj Babar Khan in Mianwali and expressed condolences to the family members of the martyr.



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## KP CM's bail extended F.P. Report

RAWALPINDI: A district and sessions court of Rawalpindi on Saturday extended the interim bail of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister Ali Amin Gandapur till May 28. The additional district and sessions judge conducted hearing of interim bail plea for Ali Amin Gandapur in a case of arson and meddling government affairs.

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# Dozens injured in attacks on hostels of students in Bishkek

BISHKEK: Dozens of Pakistani students were wounded in mob violence around student hostels in Bishkek, capital of Kyrgyzstan. According to some media reports, a recent fight between Egyptian students and local Kyrgyz people has been wrongly blamed on Pakistani students, leading to violent attacks on their hostels in Bishkek.

The attackers forcibly entered the hostels, broke the doors of the rooms and tortured and injured several students. On the other hand, Pakistan's embassy in Kyrgyzstan has advised the Pakistani students in Bishkek to stay indoors until the situation returns to normalcy. The embassy is also in contact with the local law-enforcement authorities to ensure safety of Pakistani students.

In a social media post, Ambassador of Pakistan in Bishkek Hasan Zaigham assured that the embassy was liaising with the local law-enforcement authorities to ensure safety of the Pakistani students. The envoy also shared helpline numbers

+996555554476 and +996507567667, asking the students to call in case of emergency.

"In view of mob violence around student hostels in Bishkek, the embassy strongly advises all Pakistani students in Bishkek to stay indoors until the situation returns to normal. We are liaising with the local law-enforcement authorities to ensure safety of our student fraternity," the ambassador said.

Foreign Office spokesperson Mumtaz Zahra-Baloch also reposted the envoy's message and said the embassy was in contact with the Kyrgyz authorities to facilitate Pakistani students as their safety was of paramount importance for the ambassador and his team.

Various social media posts also reported the incidents of mob violence in the hostels housing foreign students in Bishkek, along with the footages and imagery, with many appealing to the relevant authorities for immediate help to the Pakistani students.

According to Ambassador Hasan Zaigham, the embassy staff was continuously responding to the calls from the Pakistani students and extending maximum possible support to them. "The Embassy of Pakistan is doing its best to help Pakistani students in distress," he responded to an X post.

FO spokesperson Baloch also seconded the ambassador, saying he and his team were available on the given emergency numbers which are also available on WhastApp. "They have responded to hundreds of queries by students and their families. In case the numbers do not connect because of phone traffic, please text/WhatsApp," she advised.

On the other hand, Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar said reports of mob attacks on students in Kyrgyzstan were very disturbing. Dar said, "We are in contact with Kyrgyz authorities to ensure safety of Pakistani students." He said Pakistan's envoy in Kyrgyzstan had been directed to provide all facilities to students. — Agencies

## Justice Muneeb swears-in as Acting CJP F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Justice Muneeb Akhtar Saturday took oath as Acting Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP). According to the details, Justice Muneeb Akhtar, known for his legal acumen and dedication, will temporarily lead the judiciary during this period.

The swearing-in ceremony took place in the Supreme Court, where Justice Yahya Afridi administered the oath to Justice Muneeb. Supreme Court judges, law officers and staff participated in the swearing-in ceremony. The appointment of Justice Muneeb Akhtar as Acting Chief Justice will ensure continuity in the leadership of the Supreme Court.

It is pertinent to note that Chief Justice Qazi Faez Isa is currently on an international tour with Justice Mansoor Ali Shah. Justice Qazi Faez Isa will attend the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) Chief Justices Conference in Azerbaijan. His departure signifies Pakistan's active engagement in international judicial cooperation and dialogue.

Justice Qazi Isa's participation in the international conference is seen as an important step in promoting judicial cooperation and enhancing the legal framework in the ECO region. Their engagement at the conference aims to address common legal challenges and share insights on judicial practices among member states.

## Govt jacks up power price F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: The government on Friday increased the electricity tariff by Rs1.47 per unit. According to a report on Saturday, the collection from consumers will take place in August, September, and October.

The electricity companies had requested the funds as part of the third quarter adjustment for 2023-2024, seeking Rs 31.34 billion under capacity charges. Sources said that Rs5.57 billion were requested for operation and maintenance costs, and Rs12.38 billion were requested for the transmission and distribution impact under monthly fuel cost adjustment.

Previously, Nepra had completed the hearing on the electricity companies' request under the quarterly adjustment. Nepra approved the Power Division's request, allowing an increase of Rs 1.45 per unit in electricity prices.

## PM directs envoy to help Pakistani students — directs minister to immediately leave for Kyrgyzstan to assist Pakistani students F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Saturday expressing concerns over the situation of violence in Bishkek, directed Pakistan's Ambassador in Kyrgyzstan Hassan Ali Zaigham to provide all necessary support to the Pakistani students.

The prime minister asked him to personally visit the hostels of Pakistani students and meet them, PM Office Media Wing said in a press release. The ambassador apprised the prime minister that Pakistani students were safe and those injured were being assisted by the embassy.

The prime minister advised him to remain in contact with the parents and provide them timely information, adding that immediate arrangements should be made for those injured Pakistani students who wanted to return to Pakistan. The government would bear all the expenses in this regard, he said.

The prime minister, expressing his concerns, further said that he was monitoring the situation himself and would not leave the students alone in this situation. The Government of Pakistan was in contact with the Kyrgyz government, he added. "Deeply concerned over the situation of Pakistani students in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan. I have directed Pakistan's Ambassador to provide all necessary help and assistance," earlier, the prime minister wrote on his X timeline.

According to Pakistan's Embassy in Bishkek, foreign students living in Bishkek including those

## Shehbaz announces returning party presidency to Nawaz F.P. Report

LAHORE: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif has announced the return of the PML-N party presidency to Nawaz Sharif, promising to steer the country out of current difficulties under his leadership.

Addressing a meeting of the PML-N Central Working Committee at the party's central secretariat in Model Town here on Saturday, Shehbaz Sharif emphasised the unwavering support for Nawaz Sharif within the party despite challenges faced over the years.

"Today is a satisfying day for me," the PM stated, expressing gratitude for the strength and support from the PML-N leaders. "There is no greater satisfaction and peace of mind for me than to return this trust to my elder brother, the leader of PML-N," he added.

Recalling the trials faced by Nawaz Sharif, including the treatment in 2018 and his arrest in 1999, he highlighted the resilience and leadership demonstrated by the former prime minister and the late Kulsoom Nawaz during those challenging times. He commended the PML-N leaders for their steadfast loyalty and courage.

from Pakistan, were subjected to violence by locals in the aftermath of their earlier brawl with Egyptian nationals a few days ago. As per reports, some hostels of medical universities in Bishkek and private residences of international students including those of Pakistanis were attacked. However, the embassy said that so far, they had received no confirmed reports of death or rape of any Pakistani student there.

The Prime Minister Shehbaz Shari also directed Federal Minister for Kashmir Affairs, Gilgit Baltistan and Frontier Regions Engineer Amir Muqam to immediately travel to Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan to assist and rescue the Pakistani students affected by recent unrest in the country.

On the direction of the prime minister, Engineer Amir Muqam will leave for Bishkek tonight, said a news release issued by the PM House.

Amir Muqam will meet with high level government officials in Bishkek to address the situation and ensure the safety and well-being of Pakistani students. He will also meet with the students, listen to their concerns and ensure that they receive the best possible medical treatment for any injuries.

The prime minister has expressed deep concern over the recent violence against foreign students in Kyrgyzstan and has directed that all possible assistance be provided to the affected Pakistani students. He also instructed that those who wish to return to Pakistan be facilitated to do so at the government expense. The prime minister has assured that the government would not leave the students alone in this difficult time and would maintain constant contact between the students and their parents through the embassy.

## Sindh govt to provide travel facilities to lawyers F.P. Report

KARACHI: The delegation of the Karachi Bar Association called on Sindh Senior Minister and Provincial Minister for Information, Transport, Excise, Taxation, and Narcotics Control, Sharjeel Inam Memon, in Karachi. Karachi Bar Association General Secretary Akhtiar Ali Chana, Raj Ali Wahid, Abdul Qadir Soomro, and Abdul Faheem Memon participated in the meeting.

In the meeting, various problems faced by the lawyer community in Karachi were discussed. Karachi Bar Association leaders apprised Senior Minister Sharjeel Inam Memon of other challenges faced by lawyers, including transportation.

Sindh Senior Minister Sharjeel Inam Memon



announced that the Sindh government will provide travel facilities to lawyers in Karachi. He said that a shuttle service will be started from Pigeon Chowk to the City Courts to ease the travel problems of lawyers, making it easier for lawyers in Karachi to travel from Malir Courts to the City Courts.

Sharjeel said that the services of the Karachi Bar Association in promoting democracy and the rule of law are invaluable and cannot be forgotten. He said that the

PPP's initiatives for lawyers are in line with the visionary leadership of Shaheed Bhutto and Shaheed Bibi. Shaheed Bhutto believed in the important role of lawyers in protecting democratic principles and ensuring justice for all.

He said that Shaheed Bhutto's policies upheld the rights of the underprivileged and the independence of the judiciary, and that Shaheed Bibi introduced several reforms to strengthen the judiciary and support the legal profession.



ISLAMABAD: Police officials standing alert in front of Kyrgyzstan's embassy during Islami Jamiat-e-Tulba protest against Bishkek incident.

## Dar, Muqam to depart for Kyrgyzstan amid mob attacks F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Saturday decided to send Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar to Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan to provide assistance to Pakistani students affected by the recent situation in the country.

Federal Minister for Kashmir Affairs and Gilgit Baltistan Engineer Amir Muqam will also accompany the deputy prime minister. Both the ministers would depart for Bishkek on Sunday morning through a special flight, a press release issued by the

PM House said. Despite the situation being under control, the delegation is being sent to provide necessary assistance and facilities to the Pakistani students, the news release added.

During his visit, the deputy prime minister will hold meetings with high-level Kyrgyzstan officials and ensure the provision of medical facilities to the injured students. He will also review the arrangements for the safe return of Pakistani students to their homeland.

The prime minister has been closely monitoring the situation throughout the day and he also remained in

contact with the Pakistan ambassador in Bishkek. He expressed deep concern over the recent violence against foreign students in Kyrgyzstan and directed that all possible assistance be provided to the affected Pakistani students.

He also instructed that those who wish to return to Pakistan be facilitated to do so at the government expense. The prime minister assured that the government would not leave the students alone in this difficult time and would maintain constant contact between the students and their parents through the embassy.



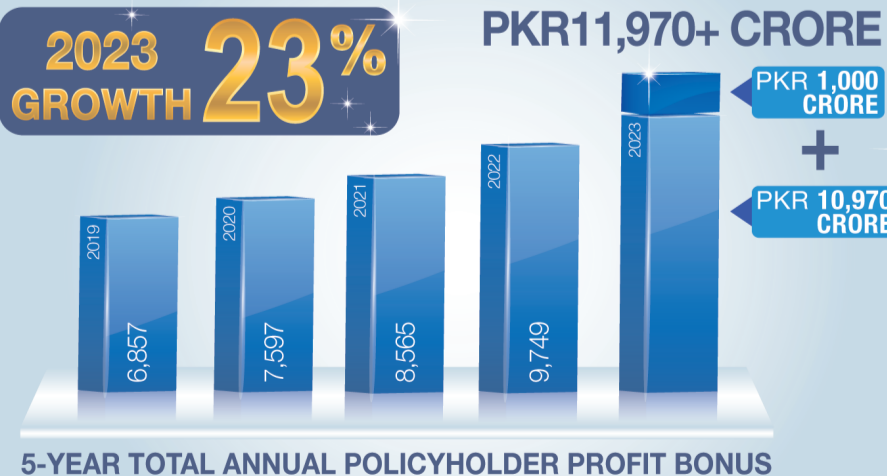
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# CM orders close coordination for land record digitisation

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif presided over a special meeting relating to Board of Revenue (BoR) reforms here on Saturday.

A briefing was given on the Punjab Urban Land Systems Enhancement (PULSE). Maryam Nawaz Sharif issued directions to undertake essential steps for the digitalisation process. She ordered collaboration of relevant departments during the land digitalisation process.

It was informed during the briefing that the land record digitisation process is being undertaken with the cooperation of the World Bank under the 'Plus Project.'

Punjab Land Record Authority and Management of Estate Land gave a briefing about the business plan affairs. Owner based digitalisation of all neighbourhoods( mouzas) will be carried out in Punjab.

The revenue system will be made transparent through partition of land and parcel document. The government will declare a clear property from every aspect as Green. The lands having issues will be declared as Blue and Red.

The proposal to abolish joint property system will be seriously reviewed. Legal complications will be reduced with the allotment

# Police ordered to prepare security plan for Eid

KARACHI (APP): Sindh Home Minister, Ziaul Hassan Lanjar, has directed the police to prepare a comprehensive security plan for Eid al-Adha 2024, ensuring the safety of life and property of citizens.

The plan should include measures to ensure the implementation of the code of conduct for animal sacrifice, security arrangements, and surveillance.

The minister directed that all registered welfare and social organisations, religious seminars, and other stakeholders be bound by the code of conduct issued by the Sindh government and that the

# PU organizes Int’l symposium on CPEC

LAHORE (APP): Punjab University Pakistan Study Centre (PSC) organized an international symposium on “CPEC and Regional Dynamics” here on Saturday.

Dr Agnieszka Nitz-Makowska, Dr Kerry Longhurst from Poland, Dr Iram Naseer of FC College University Lahore, Former Dean Faculty of Arts & Humanities Prof Dr Muhammad Iqbal Chawla, Director PSC Prof Dr Naumana Kiran, faculty members and students were also present.

Dr Kerry Longhurst highlighted China’s focus on soft power, particularly the ‘green aspect’ of Chinese power, which encompasses environmental security other than human security. She emphasized the significance of CPEC in this context as China collaborates with regional powers to promote the agenda of better environmental conditions.

Dr Nitz-Makowska shed light on CPEC and China’s soft power in Pakistan. She emphasized China’s use of soft power tools, including foreign policy, culture, and domestic values to gain trust. Dr Nitz-Makowska said that China’s soft power approach in Pakistan is a game-changer.

# Minister reviews regional anti-dengue operations

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Health Minister Khawaja Salman Raffique announced a comprehensive review of anti-dengue operations at the regional level during a meeting, held at the office of Assistant Commissioner Shalimar Town on Saturday.

Emphasising the importance of surveillance, he highlighted the need for monitoring dengue hotspots, including graveyards, tyre shops, mosques, under-construction buildings, educational institutions, and other key locations.

The minister stressed the necessity of intensifying anti-dengue efforts across the province, urging commissioners, deputy commissioners, and assistant commissioners to take full responsibility for preventing the spread of the dengue virus.

He directed anti-dengue teams to ensure thorough

larvae detection and take action against violations of standard operating procedures (SOPs). Public cooperation in taking precautionary measures was also deemed essential.

In a detailed briefing, AC Dr. Anam Fatima informed the health minister about anti-dengue operations conducted from January 1 to May 17, 2024. The minister underscored the importance of accurate reporting from all hospitals, including suspected, probable, and confirmed dengue cases.

He instructed that all anti-dengue activities be uploaded to the dashboard for better tracking and management. Additionally, he called for participation of focal persons from all departments in district and regional anti-dengue meetings.

Professor Waseem Akram, head of the Research & Development

Cell for Dengue Research in Punjab, reiterated the need for a proactive approach and collaborative efforts among all departments to control the dengue virus. He mentioned the introduction of a new, effective model for dengue control.

The meeting saw contributions from Director CDC Dr. Yadhullah, CEO Lahore Dr. Faisal, and representatives from various departments, including Agriculture, Environment, LESCO, Forestry, Education, and the Punjab Food Authority. Professor Waseem Akram participated via video link, ensuring broad-based input into the anti-dengue strategy.

The session concluded with a reaffirmation of the commitment to making clean and green Punjab a top priority, as envisioned by Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif.

# 313 raids conducted on drug dealers hideouts

LAHORE (APP): Under the directions of IGP Punjab Dr Usman Anwar, crackdown has been intensified in the province to eradicate the scourge of drugs.

During the last 24 hours, 313 hideouts of drug dealers were raided across the province including Lahore, 142 accused were arrested and 139 cases were registered. One kilogram of Ice, 61-kg charas, 1,235 litres of liquor were recovered from the accused.

A Punjab Police spokesman said that during the ongoing 'Drug Free Punjab' campaign, launched on February 26, a total of 23,603 raids had been conducted on the hideouts of drug dealers, 11,536 accused arrested and 10,997 cases were registered.

The police recovered 7,236-kg charas, 37-kg Ice, 120-kg heroin, more than 250-kg opium and 140,866 litres of liquor from the accused during the campaign so far.

# CM Sindh lauds Gambat Institute for performance

KARACHI (APP):Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah has said that the Pir Abdul Qadir Shah Gilani Institute of Medical Sciences, Gambat has reached a significant milestone by performing 1,000 successful liver transplants.

“This historic achievement, marking umpteenth complicated liver transplant procedures, has been successfully carried out at a public sector health facility in Pakistan.” He said this while addressing the online gathering with Dr. Rahim Bux Bhatti, the Director organized at the Institute to commemorate the milestone.

Minister Irrigation Jam Khan Shoro, PSCM Agha Wasif and Secretary Health Rehan Baloch also attended the event with CM Sindh online.

Murad Ali Shah said that his party Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari always proudly lauded the achievements of Gambat Institute. He added that he was happy to know that out of 1000 liver transplants, 460 patients belonged to Sindh, 347 to Punjab, 141 to Balochistan 36 to Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, nine to Kashmir and four to Afghanistan. “I am quite happy and content that our Gambat institute serves the entire free of cost,” he said.

The patients who attended the ceremony at Gambat include Mutahira, 8-year-old from Afghanistan, Nasir Ali, 44 Hafizabad Punjab, Mohammad Nawaz, 56, Jacobabad, Saleemullah, 18, Karak KPK, and Habibullah, 14-year old, Jaferabad Balochistan, a communique said.

The chief minister interacted with the patients and wished them a healthy and happy life. The significant milestone of 1,000 successful liver transplants was commemorated by cutting a cake by Dr Bhatti, his team members and the patients at the Department of Liver Transplantation.

The Liver Transplant Department at the institute was established in January 2016, with the first transplant performed in April of the same year.

Initially, international surgeons from Germany and other countries conducted these surgeries. Over time, the institute developed its in-house team of experts, led by Dr. Abdul Wahab Dogar, which now handles all transplant procedures. Dr. Bhatti is credited with the vision and realization of this advanced medical facility, which serves as a model for the country and a monument of humanitarian efforts.

“The transplants are provided at no cost to patients, funded by the



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Interior Mohsin Naqvi in a meeting with Ambassador of Saudi Arabia Nawaf Bin Saeed Ahmed Al-Maliki. —APP Photo

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“The transplants are provided at no cost to patients, funded by the

Sindh government, in turn alleviating the financial and logistical burdens previously associated with seeking treatment abroad,” Murad Shah said. The success rate of liver transplants at the institute is reported to be 90 per cent, comparable to rates in developed countries, Dr Rahim Bux Bhatti told the CM.

He further added that the hospital, equipped with state-of-the-art machinery, also performs other transplants, and treats a variety of diseases, positioning itself as a leading healthcare institution in Asia. Liver Department Achievements: The liver department’s achievements include the highest number of living donor liver transplants in Pakistan in a year.

Combined Kidney and living donor liver transplant the first ever in the history of Pakistan. Living donor liver transplant for HIV-positive patient first ever in the history of Pakistan. First ever in the history of Pakistan ABO-incompatible liver transplant. Swap Liver Transplants; auxiliary liver transplantation, and Pediatric Liver Transplants. Currently, it is the largest liver transplant program in the country and heading towards the largest liver transplant program in the world.

# Crime eradication police responsibility: IGP

LAHORE (APP): Inspector General of Police (IGP) Punjab Dr. Usman Anwar has said it is a responsibility of supervisory police officers to eradicate crimes and ensure easy delivery of justice and policing services to citizens.

He expressed these views while presiding over a video link meeting at the Central Police Office here on Saturday. RPOs, CPOs and DPOs of Multan, Bahawalpur, Dera Ghazi Khan, Sheikhupura, Sahiwal region participated in the meeting through video link.

The IGP ordered to improve follow-up of the public complaints, received on 1787 complaint management system and their quick redress. He instructed to focus on modern technology for scientific investigation and improve the workout rate of the cases. He emphasised effective supervision as well as effective coordination with prosecutors to improve the quality of investigation.

The IGP Punjab said that investigations of heinous crimes including dacoity murder, kidnapping for ransom should be completed by senior officers under their supervision. He said that ongoing targeted and intelligence-based operations against katcha area criminals should be accelerated, and counter measures

should be intensified to eradicate organised crimes.

The IGP reviewed performance of all regions and districts individually and issued instructions for law and order and crime control. He said that under the ongoing 'Drug Free Punjab' campaign against drugs and for protection of women and children, timely action should be expedited and performance reports should be sent to the CPO. Additional IG Investigation Muhammad Idrees Ahmad, Additional IG Operations Shahazada Sultan, AIG Operations Zahid Nawaz Marwat and other officers were present in the meeting.

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# SHRC conducts 2-day specialized course

KARACHI (APP): The Sindh Human Rights Commission (SHRC) and Sustainable Social Development Organization (SSDO) conducted a 2-day specialized Course on the Prevention of Trafficking in Persons Act 2018.

The goal is to enhance the legal system's fairness and justice in Sindh. As many as 400 investigation officers, station house officers and legal officers of Sindh Police attended the two day advocacy and advocacy on combating trafficking in persons and bonded labor in Sindh.

The series of advocacy and Sensitization session with Sindh Police was organised at Police Training Centers Saeedabad, Karachi, Hyderabad, Shahdarpur, Larkana.

The sessions were organised by Sindh Police in collaboration with Sustainable Social Development Organization (SSDO), Sindh Human Rights Commission (SHRC) with the support of US Embassy, Islamabad.

Chairperson SHRC Iqbal Ahmed Detho provided expertise on evidence collection and case file preparation. Participants were guided through the

meticulous process of gathering and organizing evidence, ensuring its admissibility and relevance in legal proceedings.

Emphasizing the importance of thorough documentation, Detho highlighted best practices for compiling case files that uphold the integrity of the investigative process and facilitate fair and just outcomes.

Syed Kausar Abbas, Executive Director SSDO delving into the intricacies of identifying indicators of human trafficking. Through engaging case studies, participants were equipped with the necessary skills to recognize and address trafficking scenarios effectively.

Further delved into the realm of investigation by discussing the policies and standard operating procedures (SOPs) related to Trafficking in Persons (TIP) and Smuggling of Migrants (SOM). Through a detailed examination of these policies and SOPs, participants gained a comprehensive understanding of the protocols and guidelines governing investigations into trafficking and smuggling cases.

The session facilitated an exploration of best practices and effective strategies for

implementing these policies in real-world investigative scenarios, empowering participants to navigate the complexities of TIP and SOM investigations with competence and proficiency. He appreciated the initiative of DIG Training Faizullah Korejo to organize the advocacy & Sensitization session with investigation officers of Sindh Police.

SHRC Consultant Barrister Rida Tahir conducted comprehensive training sessions on policies and laws concerning Trafficking in Persons and Smuggling of Migrants.

These sessions covered both global and local perspectives, she led an enlightening session focused on understanding the needs of trafficking victims. Through a victim-centric approach, participants gained insights into the complex challenges faced by trafficking survivors and explored strategies for providing comprehensive support services. The session fostered interactive discussions, allowing participants to exchange ideas and perspectives on effectively addressing the needs of trafficking victims while advocating for their rights and well-being.

# Salman called for collective effort

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Health Minister Khawaja Salman Raffique has called for a collective national effort to enhance the health system.

He made the appeal during his visit to Jinnah Hospital Lahore on Saturday, where he celebrated the birthday of Mansoor, a young boy, who recently underwent a successful renal transplant.

Kh Salman praised the Jinnah Hospital team for their exemplary work in performing Mansoor's transplant. He congratulated the entire medical team, paying tribute to their dedication and skill. "I congratulate the entire team of Jinnah Hospital Lahore for the successful renal transplant of baby boy Mansoor," he said. He also announced plans to increase the capacity of the hospital's Urology Department to better serve the community.

Reflecting on boy's aspirations, the minister shared, "Mansoor wants to become an engineer when he grows up. The entire doctor community is overjoyed with his successful surgery today." He highlighted ongoing efforts under the leadership of Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif to improve patient care, noting, "In the eyes of Allah, there is no greater passion than serving humanity. Those who serve humanity have great ranks."

During the visit, the minister cut Mansoor's birthday cake and congratulated his mother on the successful surgery. A bouquet was presented to the young patient. The event saw the participation of various medical professionals, including Principal of Allama Iqbal Medical College Prof. Syed Asghar Naqi, Head of Department Prof. Naveed Iqbal, MS Dr. Yahya Sultan, Assistant Professor Dr. Shabbir, Dr. Hamza Nazir, and Dr. Kashif Shabbir.

The health minister's visit underscores the government's commitment to supporting healthcare advancements and celebrating the dedication of medical professionals in Punjab.

## Governor, Federal Minister meeting: Suggestions for creating jobs opportunities considered

PESHAWAR (APP): The Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Kundi on Saturday met with Federal Minister for Privatization, Board of Investment and Communications Abdul Aleem Khan. Various issues including increasing investment opportunities in the province, ongoing projects under the management of the Ministry of Communications were discussed in the meeting. Various suggestions for

creating employment opportunities in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa were also considered. Federal Minister Abdul Halim Khan also congratulated Faisal Karim Kundi on assuming the post of Governor. Governor Faisal Karim Kundi said that in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, there are vast opportunities for private companies to work in the mineral and tourism sector.

He said that the natural resources of the province, especially the merged districts, can be used properly to create employment for the local and talented people of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Governor calls for steps to provide assistance to Pakistani students in Bishkek

The Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Faisal Karim Kundi has expressed concern over the harassment of Pakistani students in Bishkek and called for steps to protect them. He expressed concern over violence against Pakistani students and urged Pakistani embassy in Kyrgyzstan to provide needed help and assistance to Pakistani in Bishkek. The Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa also advised Pakistanis to remain in their hostels, avoid public places and protect themselves from mobs till normalization of situation.

## Educ Dept KP failed to achieve admission targets

PESHAWAR (APP): Department of Education Khyber Pakhtunkhwa is still far from the goals in the admission campaign and despite extension of the admission campaign date till May 15, 2024 the goals could not be achieved. When contacted, no officials are ready to take responsibility for the failure of the admission campaign in government schools. The concerned officials including the District Education Officers are reluctant to discuss this issue and refused to talk on the campaign for enrolment of the kids in the schools. On the instructions of the provincial government,

the education department had directed to conduct a special campaign till April 30 and it was later on extended to May 15 but failed to achieve the target. During the campaign, the target was set to bring more than 10, 13000 out-of-school children to schools. It is being claimed that 6,84,670 children will be brought to schools during the admission campaign. Initially, the campaign was extended till May 15 in case the targets were not completed, however, heads of all concerned schools, including District Education Officers, have been instructed to make the

campaign a success. In case of failure in admission campaign, it was decided to take strict disciplinary action against the officers but in spite of the expansion, those goals could not be achieved, only paper data was used and a total of 112844 targets were set in Peshawar by the Education Department, but 71446 could enter. Likewise, 32864 out of 52972 targets were achieved in the Education Minister's native area and the target of admitting 31756 children in the native area of Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa was set while 22020 were achieved.

### Employment to be controlled via technical skills: Minister F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Minister for labour department Fazal Shakoor Khan has said that unemployment can be controlled through promotion of technical and vocational education. We will encourage those male and especially female students who are enrolled in various technical and vocational institutions of Workers Welfare Board KP and we will also on them" he said in a prize and sewing machine distribution ceremony held at vocational institute district Charsadda. He also said that technical and vocational as well schools and colleges run by KP labour department would be established in tribal districts very soon. The KP labour department minister was flanked by secretary WWB Ibrar Shah, director education Amjad Khan, director administration Shuaib Khan, assistant director Salman Ahmad, vice president Women Chamber of Commerce Peshawar Anila Khalid while school principal and a large number of workers children and others also attended the event. In his speech Fazal Shakoor Khan said that all products available in markets are prepared by workers but the workers benefit less while designers get much profit. We encourage and invest in workers of WWB and give priority to the local market through the products of our workers" he further said.

## HE transferred, posting principles in province

PESHAWAR (APP): The Higher Education Department Khyber Pakhtunkhwa has issued notification of transferring and posting 17 female Associate Professors of Grade 20, said a notification issued here on Saturday. According to the notification, there are appointments of some of the women associate professors to administrative posts i.e principals while some women have been appointed in the field of teaching. Among Peshawar female Associate Professors, Samina Khaliq of Grade 20 has been appointed

Principal Professor, GDC Mathura Peshawar. Safia Rehana has been posted to GPGC Mardan, Peshawar, Saeeda Shahnaz GFC Women Peshawar appointed. Neelam Gul GGDC Dargai Malakand, Sadia Khan GGDC Bacha Khan Peshawar, Khaleeda Adeeb Professor Principal GGDC Jaluzai Nowshera, Anila Ghani Professor GCGC Peshawar appointed. Tagneed Bano Professor GCGC Peshawar, Nail Naz Principal Associate Professor Lachi Kohat appointed,

Haizel Begum Principal Professor GGDC Barikot Swat, Seema Gul Associate Professor GGDC Barikot appointed. Shaista Islam, Principal Prof. GGDC NO. 1 Charsadda, Moiza Sherman Principal GGDC Manki Swat appointed while Zahra Jabeen Principal GPGC Abbottabad No. 1, Shakeela Nasira Professor GGDC No. 1 Hayatabad appointed. Ayesha Siddiqua, Professor and Rabia Sikandar appointed as Principal GGDC Karak and Principal GCGC Peshawar.



PESHAWAR: Advisor to Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa on Finance Muzamil Aslam presiding over FPCCI meeting regarding budget proposals.

## SCCI demands further reform measures to broaden tax-base

**F.P. Report**  
PESHAWAR: President, Sarhad Chamber of Commerce and Industry while giving proposals for fiscal year 2024-25 demanded further reform measures to broaden existing tax-base. He said KP is a net exporter of electricity and gas, despite the fact that provinces were being charged equal rates with other federating units, which is totally unfair and unjustifiable. KP total oil production is 31000 barrels per day, which is 42 percent share of the whole country's oil production, Fuad said. He suggested the establishment of an oil refinery in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa wherein oil reserves were available in surplus quantity. Fuad asked to revive IDBP for the provision of loans on easy terms to promote industry in the province. He mentioned that from 30 to 32 billion dollars through human resources were official and the same

figure amount was unofficial in the shape of foreign exchange. Therefore, he called for launching a special technical training program for human resources of the country. Fuad Ishaq was speaking during the All Pakistan Presidents Conference held in Islamabad, said in a statement issued here on Saturday. The conference was attended by presidents of all chambers of Pakistan, FPCCI office bearers and association presidents. The SCCI president said KP is producing 6500 megawatt electricity in which 2700 megawatt is utilized in summer and only 1100 megawatt in winter season, rest of the produced electricity exported to the national grid. He said the U.S has imposed anti-dumping duty on China, there is an opportunity of 100billion dollar export for Pakistan. He asked the government to pursue Chinese investors to make investments and take benefit from 100billion dollar export that will promote

industrial and economic activities in KP and create employment opportunities for many people in the province. Giving examples of Bangladesh, Japan and Korea, Fuad said these countries open import and produce finishing products by getting raw material and then exporting and increasing their foreign exchange. The SCCI chief expressed grave concern over payment of Rs8 Trillion interests on loans. Talking about hydel, nuclear and thermal power, Fuad said all these resources expenditure is only Rs11 per unit but due to inefficiency of power distribution companies, thieves and growing line losses, Rs23 per unit has been increased in it, calling for steps for its eradication at government level. The chamber president, while commenting on the increasing gas crisis and low pressure said that people have been forced to disconnect gas over high gas prices and use alternative sources of fuel.

Emphasizing the need of broadening tax-base through reforms, Fuad said according to rough estimates, nearly 30million people were paid various taxes in which salaried class also included and it is quite visible that only 120,000 members of the business community were paid over Rs 1 Million taxes every year. The SCCI chief called for reviewing IPPs to overcome the current economic crisis. He gave a proposal of issuance of all vehicle number plates at national level and to make distribution of income and tax-revenue as per population of the province. He informed KP is earning a revenue of Rs 1 Billion on head of vehicle registration and taxes while Islamabad is gaining Rs 20 Billion annually. Earlier, the participants of the conference thoroughly deliberated on various proposals for FY budget 2024-25 and expressed grave concern over the huge burden of loans on the country.



PESHAWAR: Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Sardar Ali Amin Gandapur chairing a meeting regarding issues of local governments.

## FIA Anti-Corruption Circle arrested 6 suspects in LRH

PESHAWAR (APP): The FIA Anti-Corruption Circle Peshawar during a raid have arrested six suspects including three employees of the Lady Reading Hospital Peshawar for their involvement in the embezzlement of government medicines worth millions of rupees, spokesman of FIA said here Saturday. According to detail, the team of FIA Anti-Corruption Circle Peshawar on the information raided the hospital and arrested six alleged accused involved in the case of illegal sale of government medicines of the Lady Reading Hospital. The alleged accused used to illegally sell gov-

ernment medicines issued to Lady Reading Hospital. The alleged accused were identified as Sulaiman, Abdul Jabbar, Abid, Imad, Tahir and Yousaf Jan, the spokesman said. Accused Yousaf Jan is the mastermind of the gang, FIA spokesman said, adding, Alleged accused Sulaiman, Abdul Jabbar and Abid were performing duty as technicians in Lady Reading Hospital. The raids were conducted in different private hospitals of Peshawar on identification of the accused, FIA spokesman said. Accused Imad was arrested from Al-Shifa Health Care located in Dabgari Garden

Peshawar, FIA spokesman said. Accused Imad was working as a ward boy in Shireen Shah Hospital, FIA spokesman said. On the identification of the arrested accused Imad, other accused were arrested, FIA spokesman informed. On the identification of the accused, a huge amount of official medicines were also recovered from the warehouse of Shifa Medicos and the said warehouse has been sealed, FIA spokesman said. A huge amount of official medicines were also recovered from Al-Shifa Healthcare Hospital and the accused was arrested and

investigation started, FIA spokesman said. FIA has launched a crackdown against the elements involved in the illegal sale of government medicines. Records of private hospitals involved in the illegal sale of government medicines are being collected, FIA spokesman said.

### CM's aide grieves death of girl students

PESHAWAR (APP): Provincial Advisor for Tourism, Zahid Chanzai has expressed grief over death of two girl students of Haripur Degree College in Kiwai, Balakot road mishap. He also directed district administration and relevant rescue authorities to provide all the needed help to victims of the incident. He also directed health authorities to provide healthcare services to those injured in the road mishap. CM's aide also appreciated timely action of district administration that supervised the shifting of injured to Tehsil Headquarters Hospital Balakot and King Abdullah Hospital Manshera.

### Shah Sawar visits Hamza Foundation F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Former famous Pashtu singer and presently Tableeghi speaker Shah Sawar Khan visited Hamza Foundation Welfare Thalassemia Center and Blood Transfusion Services Peshawar. Coordinator Hamza Foundation Aleem Gul gave him detail visit and briefing about the different sections of the organization. On that occasion, Shah Sawar Khan met with Thalassemia and Hemophilia patient kids and their parents. He appreciated the welfare services of Hamza Foundation and made a commitment that he will organize blood camps for saving precious lives of Thalassemia and Hemophilia kids and will work as a volunteer with Hamza Foundation team for a noble cause.

## Nursing Board changed exam centers of 4 colleges

PESHAWAR (APP): In view of security concerns, the Nursing Board Saturday changed the exam centers of four nursing colleges in Malakand, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. It is planned to establish an examination center in Mardan College of Nursing for the students of these colleges, a notification of the Nursing Board issued here said. Examination centers of nursing institutes in

Malakand, Peshawar have been changed and among them College of Nursing Bathkela, College of Nursing Swat, College of Nursing Matta has been changed and now the examination center has been established at Mardan College of Nursing Institute, Peshawar. The examination centers have been changed after the colleges showing security concerns of the above mentioned colleges.

In this regard, Peshawar Nursing Board has also issued notification of changing the exam centers. The students of the above mentioned colleges in Peshawar have been instructed to inform in time, the notification said. The Peshawar exam schedule will be as per the scheduled dates as per the notification issued on April 17, said the notification.

## Government organizing open katcheries: Toru

PESHAWAR (APP): Provincial Food Minister Zahir Shah Toru on Saturday said that the present government is organizing open katcheries in different areas to solve the problems faced by the people at their doorsteps. People may feel free to come to government offices and contact us in case of any problems. The Provincial Food Minister Zahir Shah Toru was addressing an open katchri organized by the Deputy Commissioner's Office in Khanjar Kali Mardan. Besides District Health Officer Mardan Dr Javed Iqbal and Assistant Commissioner Revenue Ibrahim Khan, district officers of various provincial departments participated in the open court. On this occasion, the people of the area welcomed the provincial food minister and all the district heads on their arrival in Khanjar kali. Elders, elected representatives and social workers highlighted the problems faced by the area. Various problems were discussed between the administrative and district heads and orders were issued on the spot to solve some problems. Provincial Food

Minister Zahir Shah Toru said that the doors of our offices are always open for the public. He instructed the concerned departments on the spot about the district level problems and directed them to find solutions to the problems and submit a report in this regard. The Assistant Commissioner Revenue Ibrahim Khan assured to resolve the issues through the concerned departments. The community thanked the Minister Food, District Administration and District Heads for this initiative for coming to their doorsteps and finding out their problems and issuing instructions and orders for their proper solution.

### Weather to remain dry, hot in KP: Met Office

PESHAWAR (INP): The weather will remain dry and hot in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Meteorological Department officials said here Saturday. Chance of rain in Peshawar, Nowshera, Mardan, Swabi after noon on Saturday, said the Meteorological Department official. He said, the chance of rain in Dir, Chitral, Shangla, Swat, Buner, Malakand, Bajaur, Abbottabad, Mansehra, Butgram, Kohistan, Torghar, the Meteorological Department official said. He said, rain is also expected in Mohmand, Karam, Haripur, Khyber, North and South Waziristan, Kohat, Hangu, Karak, Bannu, Lakki Marwat and Tank also, Meteorological Department official informed. The minimum temperature of the city was recorded at 24 degrees Celsius and the lowest temperature was recorded in Kalam at 8 degrees Celsius with Malam Jabba recording a minimum temperature of 15 degrees Celsius.

## Faiq demands increase in wheat support price

**F.P. Report**  
PESHAWAR: Muhammad Faiq Shah, founder and chairman of the Amun Taraqqi Party demanded an increase in wheat support price to mitigate suffering of the farming community. The ATP chief went on to say that agriculture is an important sector, farmers and people associated with this sector and allied industry should be incentivized to bring revolution in the agri sector in the country. When farmers of the country would be prosperous and financially sound and good then there will increase yield and address the growing need of food in the country. Shah while talking to a delegation of farming community here on Saturday described sale of wheat sac at Rs6500 was tantamount to "rub salt on wound" of the farming community,

which should be addressed forthwith. He demanded an immediate relief should be granted to farmers in seed, fertiliser and 'Abyana' (water cess). The last drop of blood of marginalized and smaller segments is squeezing by further strengthening grip around them, the party chief said. Shah said everything, ethics, humanity and rights have been snatched owing to economic disparity and political degradation in the country. He said politicians and institutions should themselves step up for reform in the system. The ATP chief witnessed political downgrading surging up. He advised the government and institutions should try to settle matters with unanimity. Faiq emphasized the

eradication of 'one man show', tug of war and politics of corruption forever. He called upon political parties to promote democratic culture by abandoning heredity. Unfortunately, the political parties are foes of democracy and people, he added. He maintained parties are only greedy for positions, power and are fighting to protect their personal interests. Shah said rulers doing business in Pakistan, properties and medical checkup abroad so ordinary citizens hate such form of rule and power. He proposed 100 per cent increase in health and education budget in the financial year budget 2024-25 to create public awareness and remove darkness of illiteracy and provide best health facilities for all.



## In brief

### Residents hold protest F.P. Report

LARKANA: A 55-year-old woman Mubyna Gul Umrani, dead who was admitted to the emergency ward of Larkana's for necessary treatment in the hospital but due to nothing presence of duty doctors she was died. The relatives accused the duty doctors of negligence, took actions against the doctors and brought them to justice. On that occasion, the deceased woman Meena Gul, the wife of Haji Rasool Bakhsh Umrani, born Rashid Ali Umrani, told that we are the residents of Sarai Muhammad Nawaz Umrani, a village near Andhi Mori of Chandui, because my mother-in-law's condition deteriorated due to blood pressure, she was admitted to Chandka Hospital. We brought him to the emergency ward around 2 o'clock. The protestors accused and said that the secret dispensers for our women are only good at doing their own make-up, while we searched for the duty doctor and made repeated complaints to show the nature, but they did not listen to a single one and the secret staff only applied drapes to my mother-in-law. There was a reaction that has died down quickly. They demanded from chief justice of Sindh high court to take immediate notice and take action against the negligent doctors and staff.

### Teachers demand early promotion F.P. Report

LOWER DIR: The Secondary School Teachers (SST) welfare association on Saturday demanded the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government and high ups of the elementary and secondary education department to ensure the promotion of eligible senior teachers to the posts of headmaster and subject specialist before May 30. The demand was made by the association's district president Malik Imran, Sajid Khan, Sher Bacha and others while talking to local journalists at Timergara after attending a cabinet meeting. They said that promotion of female SST had been pending for the last six years. The association's office bearers said that SSTs occupied a key position in the whole education system but the cadre had been deprived of its rights. They pointed out that the Peshawar High Court and the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government had decided to grant grade 17 to all SSTs but the decision was yet to be implemented by the department. The association also demanded an increase of science teaching allowance from Rs 200 to Rs 5000. It demanded an equal amount of allowance to PhD and M.Phil degree holder teachers in the province like that given in Punjab, Sindh and Balochistan provinces. Malik Imran said that the departmental promotion committee (DPC) meeting for promoting senior SSTs to the post of headmaster and subject specialist had been held but the placement was being unnecessarily delayed. He demanded the concerned authorities to ensure the placement of eligible teachers before May 30 so that the promoted teachers could get their annual increments. He also demanded an appropriate increase in the salaries of all government employees in the upcoming budget. He said the SSTs welfare association had planned to come onto the roads if their demands were not met soon.

# PHC CJ inaugurates Judicial Complex in Khadukhel Buner

## F.P. Report

BUNER: Chief Justice Peshawar High Court Justice Ishtiaq Ibrahim inaugurated Judicial Complex at Totalai tehsil Khadukhel Buner on Saturday. The Chief Justice Justice Ishtiaq Ibrahim participated in the swearing ceremony of the newly elected cabinet members the Khadukhel Bar Association.

The Chief Justice was accompanied by Justice Sahibzada Asadullah, Additional Registrar Peshawar High Court Mingora Swat Bench Arbab Aziz Ahmed. He also announced the establishment of the court of Additional Sessions Judge in Khadukhel. Chief Justice Ishtiaq Ibrahim said that all possible steps are being taken to provide smooth justice and the districts which lack facilities are being made to fulfill it.

The chief justice said that soon Tehsil Khadukhel will be connected with Dar-ul-Qaza Swat and



District Court Buner through video link. This will reduce the problems of the local people, he shared. On this occasion, the newly elected President of Tehsil Bar Association Mohammad Hanif Advocate, President of Peshawar High Court Bar Mingora Bench Shamsul Hadi Advocate, President of District Bar Buner Mian Naeem u din Advocate, Member Bar Council

Mubasher Khan Advocate, Sagheer Khan Advocate, Mian Faheem Akbar Advocate, Sessions Judge Buner Sameera Wali also spoke.

District Judge Swabi Ashfaq Taj, DC Buner Hamid Ali, DPO Buner Shah Hasan and Judicial Officers of Districts Buner Swabi and lawyers community from Buner have participated in large numbers.

# KP people grievances to be redressed: Toru

## F.P. Report

MARDAN: Provincial Minister for Food Zahir Shah Toru said that the Sunni Ittehad Council (SIC) provincial government was organizing open Katcheries in different areas to solve problems faced by people at their doorsteps, but that did not mean that the people should not come to government offices.

He said that people might feel free to come to government offices and contact them in case of any problems. He was addressing an open katchri organized by the Deputy Commissioner's Office in Khanjar kali Mardan.

Besides District Health Officer Mardan Dr Javed Iqbal and Assistant Commissioner Revenue Ibrahim Khan, district officers of various provincial departments participated in the open court.

On this occasion, the people of the area welcomed the provincial food minister and all the district heads on their arrival in Khanjar kali. Elders, elected representatives and social workers highlighted the problems faced by the area. Various problems were discussed between the administrative and district heads and orders were issued on the spot to solve some problems.

Provincial Food

Minister Zahir Shah Toru said that the doors of our offices are always open for the public. He instructed the concerned departments on the spot about the district level problems and directed them to find solutions to the problems and submit a report in this regard.

Assistant Commissioner Revenue Ibrahim Khan assured to resolve the issues through the concerned departments.

The community thanked the Minister Food, District Administration and District Heads for this initiative for coming to their doorsteps and finding out their problems and issuing instructions and orders for their proper solution.

# Concrete steps to control Leishmania demanded

## F.P. Report

WANA: The rising numbers of Leishmania patients have raised concerned among local residents, who are pressing the government to take immediate action to address the crisis. According to local health workers, over 500 children in the region are suffering from the disease, which causes painful scarring wounds on the face and body.

Many parents are struggling to afford the costly medicines required to treat the disease. "The situation is critical," said a doctor. "We need immediate action from the government to provide free vaccines and treatment to affected children and take measures to eliminate the sandflies that spread the disease."

"A local resident whose child is suffering from Leishmania, expressed his concern: "I'm worried

about my child's future. If the government doesn't act now, my child will be left with permanent scars and a lifetime of suffering."

Local leaders are demanding that the government take immediate action to address the crisis, including providing emergency funding for treatment, launching a public awareness campaign to educate residents about the disease, and implementing measures to control the sand fly population.

It is pertinent to be mentioned that long-term effects of Leishmania on children can be devastating, leading to permanent scarring, social stigma, and even death in severe cases.

**Awareness seminar held:** A seminar and walk were held at District Headquarters Hospital Wana, on World Hypertension Day to raise awareness about the condition.

# Tehsil Council urges police to end illicit business, crimes

## F.P. Report

MARDAN: A meeting was held at Tehsil Municipal Administration (TMA) office Rustam under the chairmanship of Maulana Mubarak Ahmad, Chairman of Tehsil Council Rustam with police officials to discuss law and order situation in the premises. The members of Rustam Tehsil Council Haji Muhammad Abid, Hilal Bacha, Alam Zeb Akhundzai, Ramdad Khan, Ali Khan, Malik Muhammad Zubair, Muhammad Rukhsar, Syed Munir Khan and others asked SP Nawab Khan to take actions against those involved in street crimes.

Installation of CCTV cameras in Rustam Bazar, deployment of traffic officers in Main Chowk, drug dealers, interest underplay, night police patrolling, ban on women prostitutes and other issues were mentioned. SP Rural Nawab Khan after hearing the problems from the members of the council

said that team work has already started on all the problems mentioned by the council and anti-social elements will be eradicated soon, chairman of 26 village councils of Tehsil Rustam identify those who disturb the law and order in the society and especially the drug peddlers.

Maulana Mubarak Ahmad, chairman of Tehsil Council Rustam, thanked SP Rural and DSP Rural before the collective prayer and said that the members of the council have played their full role in this war against drugs by cooperating with you in every way with the administration. In the end, the members of Rustam Tehsil Council made a special prayer for the elevation of Shaheed SP Ijaz Khan Sherpao.

**Transfer orders of SHOs issued:** District Police Officer Mardan issued orders for transfer of SHOs and other police officers of various police sta-

tions across the district. Sub-Inspector Dawood Khan SHO Toru Police Station to SHO Parhoti Police Station, Sub-Inspector Riaz Khan SHO Par Hoti Police Station to Toru Police Station, Sub-Inspector Humayun Khan SHO Jabar Police Station to SHO Garhi Kapura Police Station, Sub-Inspector Tahir Khan In-charge Baghdad to SHO Jabar, Sub-inspector Zakir Khan in-charge Gujar Garhi to SHO Rustam, Sub-inspector Sabir Khan in-charge Akbar Banda to SHO Chora, Sub-inspector Ali Akbar Khan in-charge Sri Bahlul to SHO Taktbhai Police Station, Sub-Inspector Khaista Rehman Khan from SHO Police Station Lundkhar to SHO Police Station Shergarh, Sub-Inspector Shafiq Ahmed from Police Line to SHO Police Station Lund Khwar, Sub-Inspector Niaz Ali Khan from Police Station Saro Shah to SHO Police Station Baizai.



HYDERABAD: Health workers administering anti-typhoid epidemic vaccination to a child during campaign.

## Public mandate must be accepted F.P. Report

TOBA TEK SINGH: Former City President of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Chaudhry Kamran Ahmad Nusrat said that the people of Pakistan gave the mandate to the political party. However, this mandate is not recognized which is unfair to the people.

PTI's founding chairman is true and public leaders whom people love with their heart and soul. He further said that PTI founding chairman is a patriotic leader who always loves his country's institutions.

Pakistan Army, Police and other institutions are the valuable capital of the country and their sacrifices can never be forgotten. He said that our problems can never end without the rule of law and constitution. It will continue its democratic struggle for the rights of the people.

The major challenges facing the country are before all of us. The economy of any country is not strengthened on the basis of debts, but for this, the environment should be made favorable for all kinds of business. What kind of economy can run in the way inflation is increasing in the country. From the beginning, PTI has had the same position that if the country is to be taken forward, the rule of law must be implemented.

## Attacks on Pakistani students played F.P. Report

HARIPUR: Majlis Wahdat Muslimeen (MWM) Khyber Pakhtunkhwa general secretary Shabir Hussain Sajdi condemned the attacks on Pakistani students in Kyrgyzstan and expressed his grief.

In his statement, informing the people of Pakistan about the reality of the attacks, he said that the recent attacks are a heinous attempt to kill innocent Pakistani students. In fact, there was some conflict between the local Kyrgyz people and the Egyptian students.

Hundreds of Kyrgyz Egyptian students were attacked inside the hostel. After the videos of the clash of Kyrgyz and Egyptian students in the hostel went viral, local residents entered the hostels of foreign students and attacked the students. Raids will be carried out in which the lives of some students have also been lost.

Expressing his concern, he said that the lives of Pakistani students are in danger. Students are screaming for help. Our rulers are not moving forward with lip service. The dignity of female students including male students has been violated.

He demanded the President and other officials including the Prime Minister that the state machinery needs to take practical steps to help thousands of Pakistani students on an emergency basis. There is uneasiness among the people in the dimensions of Pakistan. The Pakistani Embassy in Kyrgyzstan immediately rushed to assist the students on an emergency basis.

# Decline of cultivable land in Tribal districts

## Habib-ul-Hassan Yad

**THE diminishing cultivable land in tribal districts, particularly exemplified in Bajaur, is a complex issue intertwined with historical, economic, environmental, and legislative factors. Delving deeper into each facet provides a comprehensive understanding of this critical problem and offers insights into potential solutions.**

Historical Dynamics and Economic Shifts: Bajaur's agricultural landscape began shifting notably after the decline of the tribal chieftain (Nawab) and the subsequent power shift to peasants who were once servants of the Nawab. This transition led to the fragmentation and sale of agricultural lands by small landowners, spurred by economic pressures. In 2001, a local landlord highlighted the economic rationale behind land conversion, citing inadequate crop incomes as a reason to sell land and venture into other businesses.

Infrastructure Development and Urbanization: The rapid pace of infrastructure development, particularly in housing and commercial sectors, has been a major driver of land reduction. In rural areas, the trend of building large houses without consideration for agricultural preservation has

accelerated. Over the past decade, picturesque green valleys and plains have given way to concrete structures, erasing forests, fruit orchards, and arable lands.

Environmental Concerns and Ecological Impact: Encroachments on fertile lands along rivers like Mamound and Ambar have raised serious environmental concerns. The construction of housing and commercial structures on flood-prone riverbanks exacerbates environmental risks, making human settlements vulnerable to flash floods. This disregard for ecological balance and land-use planning poses long-term threats to biodiversity and sustainability. Raza Khan Tanoli, Director of the non-governmental organization "Protect Echo Now" (PEN), emphasized the critical threat posed by desertification to the environment. According to him, safeguarding agricultural and forest lands is paramount and demands immediate attention.

Legal Framework and Implementation Challenges: Despite legislative initiatives such as the Land Use and Building Control Authority Act of 2021, effective implementation remains a challenge, particularly in tribal areas where regulatory enforcement is often weak. The failure to enforce environmental regulations and land-use policies con-

tributes significantly to the degradation of cultivable lands and natural habitats.

Community Engagement and Policy Recommendations: To address these complex challenges, a multifaceted approach is necessary. Public awareness campaigns, community mobilization, and stakeholder engagement are vital. Collaborative efforts between government agencies, local communities, environmental organizations, and agricultural stakeholders can lead to the formulation of clear land-use policies and sustainable development strategies.

Empowering communities with knowledge and resources to adopt eco-friendly practices, promote agroforestry, and preserve agricultural lands is crucial. Additionally, investing in green infrastructure, such as sustainable housing solutions and water management systems, can mitigate the adverse effects of urbanization on agricultural lands and natural ecosystems.

In conclusion, a holistic and inclusive approach that integrates historical insights, economic realities, environmental considerations, legal frameworks, and community participation is essential to address the decline of cultivable land in tribal districts like Bajaur and ensure a sustainable future for generations to come.

# Jirga announces protests against load shedding

## F.P. Report

MARDAN: Grand Jirga members announced to launch an aggressive protest against the relevant officials of Water and Power Development Authority from next Friday if they did not stop unannounced and prolong electricity load-shedding in their area.

The grand Jirga comprised of the residents of union council Bagh-Iram made the announced in a press conference held in Mardan Press Club here on Saturday. They alleged that the officials of WAPDA had started unannounced and prolonged power outage from last several days which had badly affected their daily life routine. They said that they complained time and against before the quarters concerned but to no avail.

The speakers pointed out that some WAPDA officials told them that they had started unannounced and prolonged power outage due to electricity-theft in the area concerned, adding that it was causing too much line losses to the government. They lamented that it was not justice and fair that people of the area was being given punishment in shape of unannounced and prolonged load-shedding. They stressed that it was the duty of WAPDA department take stern action against those who were fund responsible for electricity-theft.

The Jirga blamed that the officials of WAPDA themselves were involved in electricity-theft as they

were showing method and ways of electricity-theft to some people and in return, were receiving bribe from them.

They deplored that the elected representatives both provincial and national assemblies as well as relevant high-ups had totally failed to resolved issues and problem of people. They alleged that the government officers were not coming out of their offices to perform their due role and responsibility. They threatened that they would come to street till fulfillment of their demands from next Friday if the quarters concerned did not take up the issue seriously or failed to take effective steps for its solution.

**AWKUM Finance & planning committee 28th meeting held:** The 28th meeting of Finance and Planning Committee of Abdul Wali Khan University Mardan was held under the chairmanship of Professor Dr. Muhammad Tahir, Vice Chancellor. Director Finance Dr. Shaista Irshad Khan presented the revised budget for 2023/24 and the proposed budget for 2024/25 to the Finance and Planning Committee, which was unanimously approved by the meeting.

In which the additional salary of the government including six months of arrears was approved in the budget of June 2023, these recommendations will be further presented in the upcoming syndicate meeting for approval. Professor Dr. Muhammad Tahir said on this occasion that now

Abdul Wali Khan is trying to fulfill the long-standing demand of the employees.

## Sports festival for inmates held Sahibzada Afridi

KOHAT: A Sports Festival has been arranged for prisoners in Central Jail Kohat by district administration. In light of the direction of the Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa an Inmate Sports Festival held, in which the DC Kohat Dr. Azmatullah Wazir was the chief guest.

Authorities concerned of the Sports Department and Jail Administration Kohat also attended the Festival. Volleyball, Tug-of-War, Musical Chairs and other games were organized for the Jail inmates in the Festival in which the prisoners were enthusiastically participated.

Chief guest distributed trophies among the winners and encouraged the jail inmates for showing keen interest in the games. DC said, without peace, no society can achieve the goal of progress and prosperity adding that each and everyone has to play its role in the development of the country.

At the end of the Festival, DC took a pledge from the inmates to lead a peaceful life after release from jail and to work for the welfare of the society as a useful citizen for the betterment and development of the country.



## India scorched by extreme heat

NEW DELHI (AP): Parts of northwest India sweltered under scorching temperatures on Saturday, with the capital New Delhi under a severe weather alert as extreme temperatures strike parts of the country. India's weather department expects heat wave conditions to persist across the north for the next few days, and has put several states on high alert. Parts of New Delhi reported up to 47.1 degrees Celsius (116 degrees Fahrenheit). The nearby states of Punjab, Haryana and Rajasthan also saw temperatures soar and are likely to stay high over the next few days, said Soma Sen Roy, a scientist at the India Meteorological Department.

Roy cautioned people against going outdoors after the afternoon sun, drink lots of water and wear loose-fitting clothes while those who are especially vulnerable like the elderly should stay indoors. The extreme temperatures in northern India coincide with a 6-week-long general election, with experts worried that the heat wave could increase health risks as people wait in long lines

to cast their vote or candidates campaign aggressively in the outdoors. One minister fainted due to heat last month while addressing an election rally in Maharashtra state. Prime Minister Narendra Modi as well as his main challenger, Rahul Gandhi of the opposition Congress Party, are expected to hold rallies in New Delhi later on Saturday, as the city heads to the polls on May 25. Satish Kumar, a 57-year-old rickshaw driver in the capital, said his work was suffering because of the heat. "People are not coming outside, (markets) are nearly empty," he said. Pravin Kamath, a 28-year-old who runs a cart selling cold drinks, complained that it was so hot he could hardly stand being outdoors. "But I must work. What can I do? I am poor so I have to do it." The main summer months — April, May and June — are always hot in most parts of India before monsoon rains bring cooler temperatures. But the heat has become more intense in the past decade and is usually accompanied by severe water shortages, with tens

of millions of India's 1.4 billion people lacking running water. A study by World Weather Attribution, an academic group that examines the source of extreme heat, found that a searing heat wave in April that struck parts of Asia was made at least 45 times more likely in some parts of the continent by climate change. Climate experts say extreme heat in South Asia during the pre-monsoon season is becoming more frequent and the study found that extreme temperatures are now about 0.85 C (1.5 F) hotter in the region because of climate change. At least 28 heat-related deaths were reported in Bangladesh, as well as five in India in April. Surges in heat deaths have also been reported in Thailand and the Philippines this year, according to the study. Extreme heat is fast becoming a public health crisis in India, with more than 150 people dying last year during heat waves. The government estimates nearly 11,000 people have died during heat waves this century, yet experts say such figures are likely a vast undercount.

## Autumn freeze grips parts of South America

SANTIAGO (AP): Chileans are bundling up for their coldest autumn in more than 70 years mere days after sunning in T-shirts — a dramatic change of wardrobe brought on this week by a sudden cold front gripping portions of South America unaccustomed to bitter wind chills this time of year. Temperatures broke records along the coast of Chile and in Santiago, the capital, dipping near freezing and making this month the coldest May that the country has seen since 1950, the Chilean meteorological agency reported. An unusual succession of polar air masses has moved over southern swaths of the continent, meteorological experts say, pushing the mercury below zero Celsius (32 Fahrenheit) in some places. It's the latest example of extreme weather in the region — a heat wave now baking Mexico, for instance — which scientists

link to climate change. "The past few days have been one of the longest (cold fronts) ever recorded and one of the earliest ever recorded" before the onset of winter in the Southern Hemisphere, said Raul Cordero, a climatologist at Santiago University. "Typically the incursions of cold air from the Antarctic that drive temperatures below zero occur from June onwards, not so much in May." The cold front sweeping in from Antarctica has collided with warm air pushing in from the northwestern Amazon, helping fuel heavy rainstorms battering Brazil, according to that country's National Meteorological system. Chile's government issued frosty weather alerts for most of the country and ramped up assistance for homeless people struggling to endure the frigid temperatures on the streets. Snow cloaked the peaks of the

Andes and fell in parts of Santiago, leading to power outages in many areas this week. "Winter came early," said Mercedes Aguayo, a street vendor hawking gloves and hats in Santiago. She said she was glad for a boost in business after Chile's record winter heat wave last year, which experts pinned on climate change as well as the cyclical El Niño weather pattern. "We had stored these goods (hats and gloves) for four years because winters were always more sporadic, one day hot, one day cold," Aguayo said. This week's cold snap also took parts of Argentina and Paraguay by surprise. Energy demand soared across many parts of Argentina. Distributors cut supplies to dozens of gas stations and industries in several provinces to avoid outages in households, the country's main hydrocarbon company, CECHA, said.

## EU bans four more Russian media outlets

BRUSSELS (AP): The European Union banned four more Russian media outlets from broadcasting in the 27-nation bloc for what it calls the spread of propaganda about the invasion of Ukraine and disinformation as the EU heads into parliamentary elections in three weeks. The latest batch of broadcasters consists of Voice of Europe, RIA Novosti, Izvestia and Rossiyskaya Gazeta, which

the EU claims are all under control of the Kremlin. It said in a statement that the four are in particular targeting "European political parties, especially during election periods." Belgium already last month opened an investigation into suspected Russian interference in June's Europe-wide elections, saying its country's intelligence service has confirmed the existence of a network trying to under-

mine support for Ukraine. The Czech government has imposed sanctions on a number of people after a pro-Russian influence operation was uncovered there. They are alleged to have approached members of the European Parliament and offered them money to promote Russian propaganda. Since the war started in February 2022, the EU has already suspended Russia Today and Sputnik among several other outlets.

## S Africa ends rescue efforts at collapsed building

CAPE TOWN (AP): An exhaustive rescue operation to find missing construction workers trapped in the rubble of a collapsed building in South Africa ended after nearly two weeks, as authorities released a major revision of their figures and said they now believe that no one else is missing. They confirmed that 33 workers died in the collapse of the five-story apartment building that was under construction in the city of George on South Africa's south coast. Authorities in the city had said that 19 workers were still unaccounted for and believed to be buried in the rubble of the unfinished building that came crashing down on May 6.

But as rescue crews and other personnel finished moving concrete and clearing the debris, the city said that it now believed that a total of 62 construction workers were at the site when the building collapsed, and not 81 as it previously announced. The conclusion came after more consultations with the building company, police and other new sources of information, the city said. That meant that all workers were now accounted for: the 33 dead and 29 rescued, the city said. Of the dead, 27 were men and six were women, the city said.

The tragedy was one of South Africa's worst building collapses. South African President Cyril Ramaphosa visited the collapsed building to show support for the victims' families, emergency workers and others who had been on the site for more than 250 hours, working night and day in shifts to try and locate and rescue survivors. Five of the victims were taken out of the building alive but later died in the hospital, authorities said. Ten people remain in the hospital.

More than 1,000 emergency responders, rescuers, volunteers and other personnel were part of the search efforts. There were some remarkable stories of survival amid the thousands of tons of concrete that collapsed, including a man who was found alive after being trapped for six days without food and water. Rescuers said he incredibly had only minor injuries.

As the rescue operation ended and became a clear-up operation, the building will be handed over to the national department of employment and labor to conduct an investigation into the collapse, the city said. There will be several other investigations, including by police and the provincial Western Cape government. "This was a devastating tragedy," said Western Cape Premier Alan Winde, the head of the provincial government. "We need to understand what happened and what steps need to be taken to ensure that we do whatever we can to hold those who need to be held to account." Many of the workers were foreign nationals from Mozambique, Zimbabwe and Malawi.



LUCKNOW: A rickshaw puller sweats while asleep as severe heat grips India.

## Candidate, 5 other people killed in gunfire at campaign rally

MEXICO CITY (AP): A mayoral candidate and five other people were killed when gunmen opened fire at a campaign rally in the violence-wracked southern Mexico state of Chiapas, officials said. State prosecutors said a young girl was among the six people killed in the gunfire, along with mayoral candidate Lucero López Maza. Two others were injured, they said.

A confrontation broke out between armed civilians during a political campaign event," prosecutors said in a statement. It was unclear whether López Maza was the intended target of the attack, because shootings have become so common and widespread in the area. The mass shooting took place at a crossroads in the rural town of La Concordia, Chiapas, about 80 miles (125 km) from the border with Guatemala.

The area near the Guatemalan border is a major smuggling route for drugs and migrants and Mexico's two main drug cartels have been fighting for control of the region. On Sunday, 11 people were killed in shootings in a village in the township of Chicomsuselo, Chiapas, a few dozen miles (kilometers) away from La Concordia. The killers wiped out one entire family and burned their bodies.

The Roman Catholic Church said

drug gangs had carried out the killings in Chicomsuselo because residents there had refused to leave their homes or refused to work for the gangs. "These men and women refused to leave their homes, despite violence, threats and harassment by criminal gangs to make them join their ranks," according to the statement by the Roman Catholic Diocese of San Cristobal de las Casas.

The church statement said the heavily indigenous state of Chiapas "is awash in violence generated by (fights for) territorial control, and the interest on the part of some criminal groups to continue mining." It did not specify what mines the cartels were trying to run, but the accusation is not outlandish or unprecedented in cartel-dominated regions of Mexico. In 2013, authorities in the western state of Michoacan acknowledged that the Knights Templar cartel had basically taken over iron ore mining in the state. They said exporting ore to China was one of the cartel's main sources of income.

The surge in violence in Chiapas proved embarrassing for President Andrés Manuel López Obrador as he visited the border state for a meeting with Guatemalan President Bernardo Arévalo. As usual, López Obrador — who has refused to confront the drug

cartels — sought to minimize the problem of violence.

"There are those who maintain that Chiapas is on fire, no, as I've explained, the problem is in this region and we are going to solve it," the president said during a news briefing in Tapachula, Chiapas. Killings also cast a spotlight on the fact that the runup to Mexico's July 2 elections has been marred by violence, with about 20 candidates killed so far in 2024.

The old ruling Institutional Revolutionary Party confirmed that two of the five dismembered bodies found scattered on a street in the resort city of Acapulco belonged to a candidate for a town council seat in the nearby town of Coyuca de Benítez and his wife. "We demand justice for this atrocious crime," the party said of the murder of Aníbal Zúñiga and his wife, Rubí Bravo.

Again, López Obrador sought to downplay the violence and depicted those who report the killings as "vultures" seeking to smear his administration. "Fortunately, there have been fewer attacks than in other elections, but nowadays there is a lot of sensationalism, it is very unfortunate, there are a lot of people seeking to profit from the killings and the human suffering," he said. "This is a time of vultures."

## Lebanon's economic crisis endures, as does the EU's 'fear' of refugees

BEIRUT: Lebanon and the Lebanese people are still suffering a debilitating economic crisis that has gripped the country since 2019. The pound has plummeted to less than 10 percent of its value before the crisis, savings have disappeared both in terms of exchange rates and actual deposits as banks announce they have no cash to release, and more and more people worry about simply staying alive.

About 80 percent of the population is below the poverty line and 36 percent is below the "extreme poverty line", living on less than \$2.15 a day. A recent deal worth 1 billion euros (\$1.06bn) with the European Union may have been seen as a godsend in such circumstances, but it has brought to the fore even more problems. EU grants over the past three years are not purely to help Lebanon's economy.

Rather, they are mostly to "ensure the wellbeing of host communities and Syrian refugees", as European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen said. Nearly three-quarters of the package is earmarked for that in hopes that refugees will be dissuaded

from heading for Europe. Lebanon has taken in millions of Syrian refugees who have fled their country's 13-year war. As more Lebanese people found their lives devastated by the economic crisis, hostility towards refugees has risen, encouraged by a public campaign backed by mainstream Lebanese media and state figures.

The EU package was strongly criticised by human rights workers and analysts, who said the deal rewards the state's financial mismanagement and mistreatment of the Syrian community. More than 300 Syrians have returned — or been returned — to their home country in what Lebanese authorities call a "voluntary return" programme. But rights groups have panned the initiative, which comes off the back of 13,000 forced deportations of Syrians in 2023 alone, violence towards refugees in Lebanon and ongoing conflict in Syria itself.

"Human Rights Watch has documented the summary deportation of thousands of Syrians in 2023 and [the] deportation of opposition activists and army defectors this year," Ramzi

Kaiss, a researcher in the Middle East and North Africa Division at the right group, told Al Jazeera. "Among those documented deportations were Syrians who were attempting to flee Lebanon by sea and returned to Lebanon by the Lebanese armed forces and subsequently deported." "The fact that the EU would provide funds to encourage that behaviour is shameful."

Another enduring issue in Lebanon renders the assistance less than helpful. "The biggest problem is the total absence of accountability," Karim Emile Bitar, professor of international relations at Saint Joseph's University in Beirut, told Al Jazeera. "Even the Lebanese minister of finance acknowledged that local corruption could be a major [issue]." The country's poor do not benefit from money coming into the country, left to fend for themselves. "In this country, we live by the blessing of God Almighty, ... and people help each other," Abu Omar, the owner of a clothing shop in Tripoli, Lebanon's second largest and poorest city, told Al Jazeera. — Aljazeera

## International students risk immigration status to engage in Gaza protests

NEW YORK: Israel's war in Gaza is personal for Columbia University student Mahmoud Khalil. A 29-year-old Palestinian refugee raised in Syria, Khalil wanted to get involved in the on-campus activism against the war, but he was nervous. Khalil faced a dilemma common to international students: He was in the United States on a F-1 student visa. His ability to stay in the country hinged on his continued enrollment as a full-time student.

But participating in a protest — including the encampment that cropped up on Columbia's lawn last month — meant risking suspension and other punishments that could endanger his enrollment status. "Since the beginning, I decided to stay out of the public eye and away from media attention or high-risk activities," Khalil said. "I considered the encampment to be 'high risk'."

He instead opted to be a lead negotiator for Columbia University Apartheid Divest, a student group pushing school administrators to sever ties with Israel and groups engaged in abuses against Palestinians. "I'm one of the lucky ones who are able to advocate for the rights of Palestinians, the folks who are getting killed back in Palestine," Khalil said, calling his advocacy work "literally the bare minimum I could do".

Khalil explained he worked closely with the university to make sure that his activities would not get him in trouble. Based on his conversations

with school leaders, he felt it was unlikely that he would face punishment. Still, on April 30, Khalil received an email from Columbia administrators saying he had been suspended, citing his alleged participation in the encampment. "I was shocked," Khalil said. "It was ridiculous that they would suspend the negotiator."

However, a day later — before Khalil could even appeal the decision — the university sent him an email saying his suspension was dropped. "After reviewing our records and reviewing evidence with Columbia University Public Safety, it has been determined to rescind your interim suspension," the short, three-sentence email said. Khalil said he even received a call from the Columbia University president's office, apologizing for the mistake. But legal experts and civil rights advocates warn that even temporary suspensions could have severe consequences for students who depend on educational visas to stay in the country.

Naz Ahmad, co-founder of the Creating Law Enforcement Accountability & Responsibility project at CUNY School of Law, told Al Jazeera that when a student-visa holder is no longer enrolled full time, the university is obliged to report the student to the Department of Homeland Security within 21 days. That department oversees immigration services for the US government. Students must then make plans to

leave — or risk eventual deportation proceedings.

"If they don't leave right away, they would begin to accrue unlawful presence," Ahmad said. "And that can affect their ability to apply again in the future for other benefits." Ann Block, a senior staff lawyer at the Immigrant Legal Resource Center, told Al Jazeera that most schools have a designated official to monitor the status of international students. "They generally are international student advisers, and they're the ones that help people get into the school, get their visas to come to the school from abroad initially and normally help advise them," Block explained. Even outside of an academic context, non-citizens face the possibility of heightened consequences should they choose to protest.

While non-citizens enjoy many of the same civil rights as US citizens — including the right to free speech — experts said that laws like the Patriot Act may limit how those protections apply. Passed in the aftermath of the September 11 attacks, the Patriot Act includes broad language that could be used to interpret protests as "terrorist" activity, according to civil rights lawyer and New York University professor Elizabeth OuYang. And the law empowers the government to restrict immigration to anyone engaged in such activity, she added.

"Section 411 of the Patriot Act bars entry to non-citizens who have used their 'position of prominence with any within any country to

endorse or espouse terrorist activity,'" OuYang said. "And what constitutes terrorist activity? And that's where the secretary of state of the United States has broad discretion to interpret that." The high level of scrutiny towards the campus protests has amplified fears that such consequences could be invoked.

Criticism of Israel, after all, is a sensitive subject in the US, the country's longtime ally. While a study released in May indicated that 97 percent of US campus protests were peaceful, politicians on both sides of the aisle have continued to raise fears of violence and anti-Semitic hate. Just last week, Republican Representative Andy Ogles introduced a bill called the Study Abroad Act that would take away student visas "for rioting or unlawful protests, and for other purposes".

He cited the recent wave of university protests as a motivation for sponsoring the legislation and compared the demonstrators to terrorists. "Many elite American universities have damaged their hard-earned reputations by opening their doors to impressionable terrorist sympathizers," Ogles told The Daily Caller, a right-wing site. Some international students who spoke to Al Jazeera said the charged political atmosphere has forced them to avoid the protests altogether.

"We cannot take the risk as international students to even be caught at the scene at all," said one student journalist at the University of

California, Los Angeles (UCLA), who requested anonymity in order to speak freely. Another student added that he does not even feel comfortable reporting live on the protests for UCLA Radio, the student-run station where he works. Other students explained that they have pursued peripheral roles in the protests, offering supplies and services instead of manning encampments and clashing with police.

An undocumented student at Columbia University, originally from Mexico, said she joined a supplies "platoon" to help distribute materials and move tents. She asked to be identified only by her first initial, A. "None of it means no risk," she said. "I feel I could find my way out. But I'm not necessarily going to put myself in front of a cop." On April 29, student organisers at Columbia even warned their classmates over megaphones to leave the encampment if they were attending school on a visa, for fear of suspensions. A, the undocumented student, said her parents also encouraged her not to participate in the protest.

"It just is so hard to be a bystander when it would be going against my convictions," she explained. "I cannot watch children die." One Columbia student from South Africa, who asked for anonymity out of concern for her immigration status, said it was, in fact, the US tradition of campus activism that attracted her to the school. "I came here knowing that there were protests against apartheid

South Africa. There were protests in '68 about Vietnam, about Harlem," she said.

But after facing disciplinary warnings for her activism this year, she explained she had to scale back. "The combination of xenophobia and extreme surveillance make how I decide to participate in this movement different from if I were a citizen," she said.

The police crackdowns on campus protests have also had a chilling effect, several international students told Al Jazeera. Estimates put the number of campus protesters arrested over the last month north of 2,000. Just this, 47 people at the University of California, Irvine, were taken into custody, according to campus officials.

Olya, a Columbia undergraduate from Thailand, was among those who participated in the encampment at her school in its early days. She provided Al Jazeera with her first name only, also citing immigration concerns. But when school administrators set a deadline for the protesters to disband or else face suspension, Olya decided she had reached her limit.

"That was when I stopped going to the encampment more frequently because it made me realize that you really don't know what admin's gonna do," Olya said. "I think that my fears of possibly getting arrested sort of overshadows my interest in advocacy and activism in general. Especially in this country." — Aljazeera

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## Navigating the Administrative quagmire in KP

**I**N Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP), a province known for its rugged terrain and resilient people, an administrative crisis is unfolding that threatens to stifle its progress. The stalemate over the removal of the Chief Secretary, mandated by the Chief Minister but stalled for lack of federal approval, is emblematic of a broader governance breakdown that impacts every facet of life in KP.

Two months have passed since the directive to remove the Chief Secretary was issued, yet the summary remains unactioned. This inaction not only undermines the Chief Minister's authority but also contributes to an atmosphere of uncertainty and inefficiency within the provincial administration. A former senior officer suggested that a more effective method could have been employed to handle this transition, indicating a possible gap in strategic administrative planning and execution. The root of the problem lies deeper than just bureaucratic inertia. The appointment of Nadim Aslam Chaudhry during the tenure of the Pakistan Democratic Movement's interim government hints at political overtones influencing administrative appointments and removals. Such politicization of administrative roles can lead to resistance against necessary reforms and changes, especially when they threaten entrenched interests.

Furthermore, the province is grappling with significant financial woes, compounded by the delayed removal of the Chief Secretary. The Chief Minister has reportedly written numerous letters to the federal government highlighting these financial issues. Yet, without a functioning head of administration willing to enact necessary changes and sign off on crucial decisions, these letters amount to little more than cries in the wilderness. Amidst this administrative turmoil, the broader socio-economic challenges of KP - militancy, poverty, underdevelopment, illiteracy, and inadequate infrastructure - continue to mount. The province's potential for economic revival is substantial, but this potential can only be realized if the government functions efficiently and harnesses its resources effectively. Access to funds and resources guaranteed under various constitutional provisions could stabilize KP's precarious financial situation and address its endemic poverty.

The current paralysis in the Chief Secretary's office, where numerous summaries sit pending and the unwillingness to make decisive moves has become apparent, is a glaring example of how administrative dysfunction can exacerbate already dire conditions. This stagnation trickles down through the ranks, leaving Grade 18 officers in Grade 17 positions, several districts without Assistant Commissioners, and many Deputy Commissioners reportedly engaged in non-productive tasks. To navigate out of this quagmire, KP needs a swift resolution to its administrative crisis. The federal government must recognize the urgency of the situation and facilitate the necessary approvals to instigate change at the top. This change, however, must be part of a larger, more comprehensive strategy to overhaul the administrative framework of KP, ensuring that it is resilient, responsive, and reflective of the needs of its people.

In conclusion, the administrative crisis in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa is a wake-up call for the federal and provincial governments to revisit and reform their approaches to governance. Without clear, decisive, and effective leadership, the province will continue to struggle under the weight of its historical and contemporary challenges. For KP's sake, let bureaucratic red tape not bind the hands that need to build its future.

## US breaching commitments

**F**OR a long time, the United States has openly claimed that preserving the "status quo" across the Taiwan Strait is in its, and every stakeholder's, best interest. In the name of safeguarding peace, Washington has issued persistent warnings against any party seeking to "unilaterally change the status quo".

The alarm is being raised again as the island prepares to inaugurate a new team of leaders on Monday. But this time it is Beijing's turn to say that to Washington. Because what the latter has been doing may effectively make the present state of affairs across the Taiwan Strait status quo ante. Each time when a representative of the Democratic Progressive Party becomes leader of the local authorities on the Chinese island, Beijing reiterates it will have no truck with independence seekers.

But such a warning carries greater weight this year with Washington openly pushing for far-reaching changes to the "status quo". The joint military drills the US conducted with Taiwan in April only provided an additional reason for Beijing to question Washington's commitment to the three joint communiques the two governments have so far recognized as being the cornerstone of the China-US relationship. No matter how Washington interprets the US' "one-China" commitment, it has a legal obligation to not develop official relations with the island.

Although the April drills were dubbed "unplanned sea encounters", they were patently anything but. They reportedly involved a half dozen vessels, including frigates and supply and support ships, lasted for days, and covered operations from communications to searching for underwater targets. They certainly were not "I am dining in this restaurant, and you also happen to be here", as some sources in Taiwan tried to spin them to be. Last month, the island's "naval chief" visited the US to discuss how to boost cooperation. This month, the Taiwan armed forces' "chief of general staff" attended the change-of-guard ceremony for the US' "Indo-Pacific" Command in Hawaii. Beijing has protested the increasingly brazen ties between the US military and the island's armed forces, which are clearly intended to be a demonstrative snub of its communicative commitments without crossing, technically, Beijing's redline. Nonetheless, it is a betrayal of bilateral obligations and a violation of international law.

But Washington's latest attempts at reinterpreting UN General Assembly Resolution 2758 are a more direct challenge, because they are aimed at the jurisprudential foundation of the one-China principle. Though the US' proclaimed purpose is to facilitate Taiwan's "meaningful participation" in international organizations, it is intended to do more than that, with US officials calling Taiwan's status "undetermined" and calling for Taipei's "meaningful participation" in the United Nations system.

Like the US' recent claim that UN Security Council Resolution 2728 demanding an immediate cease-fire in Gaza is "nonbinding", the US' distorting of UN General Assembly Resolution 2758 shows its hubris in placing itself above international law. But no matter what it tries, the US cannot change the fact that Taiwan island is part of China.

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## Sri Lanka's killing fields cast a long shadow

Madura Rasaratnam &amp; Ambikai Akilan

**T**ODAY we mark the 15th anniversary of the bloody end of Sri Lanka's three-decades-long civil war. This anniversary comes around at a critical historical juncture, amid the humanitarian catastrophe unleashed by Israel's assault on Gaza.

The global response to Gaza, across many states, peoples and international institutions, shows that there is a strong will to uphold international norms on protecting civilians and a strong will to address the underlying political injustices of the conflict itself, rather than seeing it merely as a problem of security and terrorism. The international failure to translate this will into concrete action is appalling but sadly not unprecedented.

The state of Sri Lanka, 15 years after the end of the armed conflict there, shows what happens when mass atrocities are unaddressed and the political fault lines that led to them in the first place remain unresolved and are arguably exacerbated. There are also striking and unavoidable similarities between the events still unfolding in Gaza and those that took place in the Vanni, the area of northern Sri Lanka where the war ended.

In the final months of the conflict, the Sri Lankan military besieged and bombed a civilian population of 330,000 along with an estimated 5,000 Tamil Tiger fighters, corralling them into ever thinner strips of land in the Vanni. The offensive was brutal and unconstrained. It destroyed and defeated the Tamil Tigers' armed group LTTE but also made a raging bonfire out of international humanitarian law, the laws of war and basic norms of civilian protection.

The Sri Lankan military bombed and shelled food distribution centres, hospitals and civilian shelters even though it had received the precise coordinates of these from the United Nations and International Committee of the Red Cross. It ordered civilians into ever-shrinking "no-fire" zones that it would then relentlessly attack using unguided artillery shells and multi-barrelled rocket launchers, firing hundreds and sometimes thousands of shells a day. The last of the no-fire zones was a mere 2-3 square kilometres and the death toll often reached 1,000 civilians a day, sometimes more. Sri Lanka also limit-

ed the supply of food and essential medicines including anaesthetics in moves calculated to compound and exacerbate the humanitarian distress.

Subsequent UN investigations concluded that the Sri Lankan military's campaign amounted to the "persecution of the Vanni population". At least 40,000 people were reported killed in the fighting, but some estimates based on population figures suggest the death toll could be as high as 169,000.

At the end of the war, the Sri Lankan authorities summarily executed LTTE cadres and others who surrendered and herded the remaining civilians into barbed wire-ringed internment camps, allegedly for "processing". The government only released them after immense international pressure.

Sri Lanka justified its campaign as the only way to defeat "terrorism" and proclaimed its "victory" over the LTTE as a military model that other countries could follow. It has consistently and vehemently rejected international demands for meaningful accountability and has also refused to implement political changes that would ensure real political equality for the Tamils and address the root causes of the conflict.

Yet, Sri Lanka's trajectory after 2009 shows that mass atrocities and the "victory" they secure entail consequences that rebound and not just for the Tamil population. After the war ended, Sri Lanka simply doubled down on its repression of Tamils. The high-intensity bombardment turned into a suffocating and all-pervasive de facto military occupation that continues to this day. Five out of seven of the army's regional commands are stationed in the northern and eastern provinces and in some districts, there is one soldier for every two civilians. The military is also participating in the ongoing process of "Sinhalaisation" and "Buddhisisation" of the northeast. Military personnel accompany Buddhist monks and Sinhala settlers as they violently seize Tamil lands and places of worship so that they can be converted into Sinhala ones.

Finally, military personnel exercise a constant surveillance of everyday Tamil social, cultural and political activities that has a chilling

effect on everyday life and makes meaningless any talk of "reconciliation" or even a return to "normalcy".

Yet Tamils in the former war zones and the now extensive diaspora have not been cowed into submission. They have worked to keep alive the struggle for justice and accountability. These efforts have kept Sri Lanka on the back foot internationally with repeated UN investigations and resolutions at the UN Human Rights Council. Sri Lankan officials also have to live with the ever-present danger of sanctions and possible prosecutions for their involvement in war crimes and crimes against humanity.

The war and its aftermath empowered the Rajapaksa family and their unvarnished form of Sinhala Buddhist nationalism. From 2005 until 2022, they dominated the Sinhala electorate, lauded as the leaders who had finally vanquished the Tamil separatists. Yet, their reckless and nepotistic approach to the economy and international politics brought financial ruin and increasing isolation. Colombo sought to play off the geopolitical rivalries of India, China and Western states but this failed to secure any tangible material benefits and also could not avert the escalating debt crisis. In April 2022, Sri Lanka defaulted on its debt amid acute shortages of food, fuel and essential medicines. The outrage and rolling protests triggered by the economic meltdown ousted the last Rajapaksa president but Sri Lanka is yet to find a viable or stable post-Rajapaksa settlement.

Meanwhile, the same militarisation and repression used against Tamils are now being deployed against other communities. Sri Lanka has used "high security zones" extensively in the Tamil-speaking areas to confiscate land, displace civilians and militarise public space. This same tactic has now been deployed to restrict protests in the capital city of Colombo. The anti-terrorism measures that were normally reserved for use against Tamils are now being deployed against other dissidents and critics.

In the years after the end of the war, Muslim and Christian communities have also become targets of violence and hatred. Buddhist monks have led attacks on Muslim homes and businesses and on

churches. They have led campaigns against Halal meat and the headscarf. During the pandemic, Muslims who had died as a consequence of COVID-19 infection were forcibly cremated for spurious "public health" reasons.

The impunity with which Sri Lanka's security forces operate is now a threat to all communities on the island. There is no better illustration of this than Cardinal Malcolm Ranjith's ongoing campaign calling for an international investigation into the Easter Sunday terrorist attacks that killed 250 people. Cardinal Ranjith had previously been a staunch Rajapaksa ally and had opposed Tamil demands for international accountability for the crimes committed at the end of the war. He is now calling for an international investigation because he is convinced, like many on the island, that elements of Sri Lanka's security state were aware of the plans for the appalling Easter Sunday attacks but did not take action in order to bolster the eventually successful 2020 presidential campaign of Gotabaya Rajapaksa.

The effects of Sri Lanka's massacres have extended well beyond May 2009 and the killing fields of the Vanni. They are evident in the ongoing de facto occupation of the Tamil-speaking areas by a military that eats up the scarce resources of a now effectively bankrupt state. They are evident in the political instability and growing repression in Colombo. They are also evident in security forces who have become such a power unto themselves that they have been accused by a formerly loyal cardinal of allowing brutal terrorist attacks to take place to secure electoral victory for their preferred candidate.

Israel's assault on Gaza has rightly brought international attention and focus on the need to uphold and defend humanitarian law. Sri Lanka shows what happens when states that commit mass atrocities are allowed to go scot-free.

Remembering and effectively addressing the Vanni atrocities is not just about the past, it is also about the future. Most immediately, it is about Sri Lanka's future. But it is also about re-building and securing the viability and integrity of international humanitarian law and the possibility of securing genuine and lasting peace, security and prosperity.

Aljazeera

## Biden-Netanyahu standoff complicates Gaza conflict

Talmiz Ahmad

**A**MID the extraordinary carnage in Gaza, the international community is witnessing with surprise and bemusement the spectacle of the American president standing eyeball to eyeball with the Israeli prime minister, with neither of them signaling any desire to give way. This spectacle is particularly astonishing since Joe Biden has consistently prided himself on being Israel's best friend and, during the Gaza war, has proffered almost unstinting support to Israel's war effort.

Ties between the US and Israel, two of the world's closest allies, have generally been described with words such as "tightly knit," "unwavering support" and "iron-clad." What, then, has gone wrong? It now appears that the large-scale killing of Palestinians in Gaza and the widespread pro-Palestine agitations in the US and several European cities have finally awakened the US president's conscience, or just rudely reminded him that he is losing support in the presidential race.

After seven months of wanton death and destruction, he is now counselling restraint just as Benjamin Netanyahu is preparing to order a fresh assault on Rafah, in southern Gaza, where nearly 2 million displaced Gaza residents have found temporary, albeit squalid, refuge.

All through March, the US president repeatedly conveyed to Netanyahu the need for a ceasefire and increased humanitarian supplies to the beleaguered enclave. Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer described Netanyahu personally as a liability for Israel. Finally, in an unprecedented move, the US declined to veto a UN Security Council resolution that called for a cessation of hostilities and increased flow of humanitarian aid.

Living up to his reputation as a master political manipulator, Netanyahu then adroitly shifted attention from Gaza to Iran by attacking the Iranian consulate in Damascus, killing seven senior Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps officers, including two generals. The prospect of an Iranian retaliation pushed the US immediately back on to the Israeli side. After the October 7 attack, Biden said that, "we will make sure Israel has what it needs to take care of its citizens (and) defend itself," while Secretary of State Antony Blinken gushed: "... as long as America exists, you will never ever have to (defend yourself). We will always be there by your side." Fortunately for regional security, April's tit-for-tit exchanges between Iran and Israel were largely mere demonstrations of technology and capacity, with both sides deciding not to escalate matters further.

This brought Gaza back to America's attention, amid widespread demonstrations on numerous university campuses expressing support for Palestinian aspirations, referring to a Biden as "Genocide Joe" and calling for an immediate end to the conflict. On May 6, Biden advised Netanyahu not to invade Rafah. The Israeli prime

minister immediately ordered aircraft to hit targets in southern Gaza, while a brigade seized the Rafah border crossing with Egypt. Another brigade moved to the border with eastern Rafah.

Two days later, in an interview on CNN, Biden publicly set out his red line, saying: "If they (Israelis) go into Rafah, I'm not supplying the weapons that have been used to deal with the cities." He also ordered a pause in the delivery of 3,500 bombs to Israel. Netanyahu remained unfazed. He categorically stated: "If we must, we shall fight with our fingernails."

Israel has not yet conducted a full-scale assault on Rafah, but it continues to launch regular attacks on targets there and intense bombing at the Rafah-Egypt border. Several dozen Palestinians have been killed. Israel has also dropped leaflets warning civilians they will face "extreme force" if they remain in the area. On Sunday, Israel hit a UN vehicle carrying emergency medical supplies to Rafah, while intensifying attacks in northern Gaza. Blinken has warned helplessly that the Rafah attack will inflict "terrible harm" on the population.

The stakes for Netanyahu are very high. A ceasefire, without Hamas having been "annihilated," would diminish the prime minister's standing among his right-wing support-base and could even lead the extreme right to topple his government. As soon as he ceases to be prime minister, Netanyahu will face the revival of criminal cases against him and possible imprisonment. Hence, he has every reason to continue the conflict in Gaza, at least until Hamas' military commander, Yahya Sinwar, has been apprehended or killed and he can proclaim victory.

Netanyahu is on solid ground at home. He faces little domestic opposition to the conduct of the war, except from the families of the hostages. No influential group is calling for halting the Rafah attack or for an increase in humanitarian assistance.

The Israeli PM believes he can face off with Biden. He has already taken on a Democratic president, Barack Obama, on his home turf, when in March 2015 he attacked the nuclear agreement with Iran at a joint session of Congress. Now, he again enjoys the full backing of the Republicans who are criticizing Biden for betraying Israel's interests by halting military supplies.

In this stand-off, it is Biden who seems to have the weaker hand. In the presidential campaign, polls are still placing him neck and neck with Donald Trump, with the latter even marginally ahead in the swing states. The pause in supply of munitions is hardly likely to make much difference, given that Israel already has enough weaponry for the Rafah assault and billions of dollars of US supplies are ready for delivery. A Biden climbdown is very likely. As an observer has noted cynically, "US red lines with Israel have been known to turn pink."

Arab News

## Gulf states may benefit from Turkish-Greek detente

Sinem Cengiz

**T**HE Gulf states have increasingly shown an interest in the Eastern Mediterranean over the past few years. Their involvement in the region initially coincided with escalating tensions between Türkiye and Greece, ultimately entangling them in that rivalry as they aligned themselves with the conflicting parties.

As Turkish-Greek relations strained over drilling rights in the Eastern Mediterranean, the relations between Greece and the Gulf states — in particular Saudi Arabia and the UAE — intensified. In February 2021, Bahrain, Saudi Arabia and the UAE participated in an event held in Athens called the "Philia Forum" (philia means friendship in Greek) — a meeting that caused unease in Ankara.

Egypt, France and the Greek Cypriot administration also participated. During that period, Türkiye's relations

with most of the countries that Greece invited to the forum soured.

Also, the growing convergence and cooperation in energy and security matters in the Eastern Mediterranean between Greece, Israel and Arab states, which was institutionalized in 2019 through the East Mediterranean Gas Forum, became a significant concern for Ankara. The exclusion of Türkiye from such platforms, due to its strained ties and disagreements with most member states, at times intensified tensions, most notably with Greece.

However, the present situation differs significantly from those times. Since 2021, Türkiye has engaged in a normalization process with the Gulf states, Egypt and Israel. Ankara's normalization with these stakeholders became significant in terms of detangling them from Türkiye's dispute with Greece in the Eastern

Mediterranean. With the recent mending of ties with Athens, Ankara is now at the final stage of its regional normalization phase.

Greek Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis met Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan during his visit to Ankara this week. These two leaders, who were both reelected last year, have started taking high-profile steps to strengthen the normalization process. This was their fourth meeting in a year. Last year, they agreed to put their disputes aside and focus on areas where they can find agreement. This was confirmed this week, as Erdogan and Mitsotakis underscored that there were "no unsolvable problems" between their countries.

Ankara and Athens are now trying to find a way to compartmentalize their issues and build the new era on a "positive agenda" that

will include cooperation in the trade, energy, education and cultural realms. It seems like this positive agenda is clearly bearing fruit in terms of their cooperation on migrant flows, as well as on tourism. Mitsotakis stated that Greece would back additional EU funding to Türkiye for the migrant issue. In regard to tourism, the increasing number of Turkish citizens visiting the Greek islands in the eastern Aegean is promising, strengthening the two countries' political, economic and cultural ties alike.

The changing dynamic in the Eastern Mediterranean is expected to affect countries with interests in the region, including the Gulf states. Although the Gulf states' increased involvement initially coincided with regional rivalries and geopolitical tensions, it is crucial to recognize that shared antagonism toward Türkiye was

not the sole driver behind their engagement in the region.

Turkish-Greek normalization will be a win-win situation, especially at a time when Israel's war in Gaza is jeopardizing the security of the Eastern Mediterranean. Prior to the Gaza war, natural gas discoveries in the area offered attractive prospects and promised new development opportunities. The prolonging of the war in Gaza carries potential risks to the interests of Türkiye, Greece and the Gulf states.

Lastly, the Gulf states, which are currently diversifying their policies domestically and abroad according to their various "Vision" plans for the future, consider closer ties with both Türkiye and Greece key to their quest of extending their soft power. The cultural and tourism sectors play a central role as they seek to diversify their economies away from oil.

The Gulf states could

also contribute to the moderate atmosphere in relations and strengthen the positive agenda between Greece and Türkiye. This could start with Türkiye's inclusion in the cooperation and friendship mechanisms in the Eastern Mediterranean, which stand as a convergence point of geopolitics and geoeconomics. This would contribute to the development of an interconnected Eastern Mediterranean region. From energy cooperation to maritime security and from tourism to trade, there are several initiatives that the Türkiye-Gulf-Greece trio can explore. The Eastern Mediterranean's security landscape is likely to be significantly influenced by the two contradictory trends of Israel's Gaza war and the improving relations between Greece and Türkiye. While the former poses challenges, the latter offers opportunities for the Gulf states.

# West has yet to grasp we have moved fast into a world crisis that leads to war

Charles Moore

**ISOLATIONISM is a good instinct but a bad policy. The difference between home and everywhere else is vital to the human psyche and to national existence. Logically, it leads to respect for others: they have their homes, too, so neither should interfere with the other.**

Sometimes, though, others do interfere. When that happens, isolationist voices, like those Republican congressmen who held up aid to Ukraine for six months, say: “What’s it got to do with us?” Paradoxically, they make foreign interference more likely. Enemies are interfering now. Western public opinion and many Western governments still won’t face what it means. Rishi Sunak’s remarks this week about the coming insecurities were an attempt, somewhat policy-light, to do so.

I spent Thursday on Romney Marsh, that strange expanse of the south coast which was reclaimed from the sea in the Middle Ages. The 700-year-old Corporation of Romney Marsh has a motto: “Serve God, honour the King, but first maintain the sea wall.” On the marsh, the sea wall is an ever-present physical fact. Without it, the place would go under water. For a country like ours, it offers a vital metaphor. Our nation will not survive naturally and unaided, but by our own constant efforts to maintain it.

Because we have been a global power for 300 years, Britain is well placed to take a large view of these efforts. We know that it is not only a matter of defending our own coast, but of sea-lanes, trade routes, air space, and now of cyber-space; also of diplomatic links, military alliances, common political and legal cultures, shared language and more. For over a century, we have understood the concept of a “World Crisis” (the title of Churchill’s history of the Great War), and therefore

of the need, in extremis, to fight world wars. Though the cost was terrible in both of them, we won.

A similar understanding of global threats led the West to fight the Cold War. Nowadays, as China, Russia and Iran become more menacing, some people say: “Oh, we mustn’t have another Cold War.” They are forgetting that it was so-called not because it was unfriendly (though it was), but because it avoided a hot war of fighting and killing. The Western victory in 1989 therefore seemed less dramatically glorious than in 1918 or 1945, but really it was much better. Yet in that great year of 1989, a young KGB officer in East Germany, Vladimir Putin, watched with dismay and, it seems, vowed revenge. In China, the ruling Communist Party (CCP), frightened by the world’s new liberty virus, decided to massacre thousands of students in Tiananmen Square. The CCP was determined not to go the way of the Soviet Union.

Xi Jinping’s China has been more successful than Putin’s Russia in imposing its own dictatorial power across the world. His Belt and Road Initiative is a huge strategic network to alter the control of sea and land routes and therefore the flow of natural resources in China’s favour. He has been more comprehensive than Putin in corrupting Western elites, businesses, and universities. But the commonalities between the two are strong. Like Hitler, Putin and Xi have ransacked history to develop their own self-justifying theory of conquest.

Before invading Ukraine in 2022, Putin wrote a long essay (recently regurgitated on television to a credulous Tucker Carlson) asserting that Ukraine had never really existed at all. Xi’s “Thought” claims that Taiwan has always been part of “One China”. Last year, he pointedly visited China’s National Archives

to consult “The Great Qing Dynasty’s Complete Map of All Under Heaven”, which is taken to indicate that Taiwan and various Japanese islands were parts of the Chinese empire. In both countries, patriotism is being, almost literally, weaponised to justify nationalist/imperialist expansion.

(By the way, those Hamas supporters shouting “From the river to the sea” on London streets are attempting a similar historical trick – erasing the rights of another nation, Israel, to claim land as their own.) The West let this happen. Putin several times tested our resolve to prevent the borders of Europe being changed by force – most notably in Crimea in 2014. He found it wanting and took his chance. He has still not been defeated and has freely

rearmed. Faced by the same sort of freedom-seeking threats as terrified the CCP in Tiananmen Square, Xi Jinping tore up the “One Country, Two Systems” Hong Kong treaty between China and Britain and brought the territory directly under Beijing’s tutelage. We rightly took refugees but wrongly accepted the fait accompli. Even today, some senior British judges sit on the Hong Kong Court of Final Appeal though the rule of law has been razed all round them. This week, the security minister, Tom Tugendhat, was bold enough to criticise them for this.

In the case of Iran, particularly during Barack Obama’s US presidency, we were faced with nuclear proliferation. Instead of preventing it, we sought to manage it by a “comprehensive” agreement. Perhaps, in all these cases, we longed to be considered warm rather than cold. If so, it has not worked. We fell into the 1970s “détente trap” which dangerously weakened US power against the Soviet Union.

We tend to restrain friend, not foe. President Joe Biden has the strange habit of supporting an ally – Ukraine, Israel – and then publicly telling it what it must not do, such as attacking Rafah or firing US-made missiles into Russia. “Red lines” are normally drawn to deter enemies: Biden employs them to deter friends. No wonder that, in Taiwan, mainland Chinese propaganda has a special phrase for the thought that America won’t, whatever it says, defend the place. Of all the current threats to world peace, the case of Taiwan seems the most remote from British concerns. Some in the United States compound the danger by arguing that the West should divide its responsibilities, with America concentrating on China, leaving Ukraine and even the Middle East to Europe.

Xi, he argues, sees himself as the architect of a new order. As the Chinese leader departed Moscow after visiting Putin last year, he was captured on video telling his Russian counterpart: “Right now there are changes, the like of which we haven’t seen for 100 years, and we are the ones driving those changes together.” Xi sees world conquest as destiny.

The only remedies against this are the severe deterrents of overwhelming force and unbearable economic cost. The hard economic facts – hard, it must be emphasised, for both sides – are that 50 per cent of global maritime trade crosses the 100-mile strait between mainland China and Taiwan, so the world economy crashes if China attacks. The key US/Japanese military aim is to make it so difficult for Chinese forces to reach Taiwan’s beaches at all that they won’t dare try. But the biggest point for the West to grasp is that we have moved fast into a world situation that leads to war. Until we understand that, we cannot prevent it.

The Telegraph

# Madinah embodies spirit of new Saudi Arabia

Jean-Philippe Linteau

**I recently embarked on my first visit to the holy city of Madinah. The visit was significant as it was the first such trip to Madinah by a Canadian ambassador to Saudi Arabia in more than 10 years. It was part of my broader engagement with Saudis at all levels and across different regions of the Kingdom, following the restoration of full diplomatic relations between Canada and Saudi Arabia in 2023. I greatly enjoy meeting Saudis in Riyadh and across the Kingdom and am always impressed by their warm hospitality, their drive to deliver on Vision 2030 and their hopes for the future.**

With this visit, I wanted to recognize the religious, cultural and economic importance of Madinah to Saudi Arabia. The Two Holy Mosques, the two holiest sites in Islam, are under the custodianship of King Salman. The second of these holy sites, the Prophet’s Mosque, is in Madinah, a city that therefore continues to play an important role in advancing Saudi Arabia’s traditional leadership of the Muslim world.

The visit was also intended to convey to the 2 million Muslims residing in Canada (who make up more than 5 percent of the total population) that I am focused on the issues that matter to them as their ambassador to Saudi Arabia, especially because the Kingdom plays an important role in facilitating a fulfilling pilgrimage experience for them. With the start of the Hajj season, many Muslim Canadians will be traveling to the Kingdom to perform pilgrimage rituals and will be safely and warmly welcomed.

More broadly, millions of Muslims from different countries flock to Madinah for Hajj and Umrah every

year, including an increasing number of Canadians. In fact, as part of the Vision 2030 Pilgrim Experience Program under the leadership of Hajj and Umrah Minister Tawfiq Al-Rabiah, the Kingdom is aiming to receive 30 million pilgrims by 2030, up from about 15 million this year. I witnessed firsthand during my visit how Madinah is embracing this challenge, upgrading its hospitality offerings and diversifying its destination options to include more religious and nonreligious options for pilgrims who visit the city.

I also held constructive discussions with Saudi interlocutors, including a fruitful meeting with Madinah Governor Prince Salman bin Sultan, as well as Mayor of Madinah Fahad Al-Bulihshi. Under their leadership, great strides are being made in the city in terms of delivering on the Vision 2030 Quality of Life Program for the benefit of Saudi residents and visitors alike.

While delivering on Vision 2030 and developing touristic offerings, the Saudi leadership still manages to preserve and protect Madinah’s authenticity and integrity. I was pleased to be able to experience the city’s rich Islamic and historical heritage by visiting the Museum of the Prophet’s Biography and Islamic Civilization and other sites such as Mount Uhud. It is evident that Madinah Province has much to offer Canadian and international visitors, including rich archaeological landmarks and heritage sites to behold, such as the UNESCO World Heritage Site of AlUla and sublime natural locations near the Red Sea.

In Canada, sustainability is also integral to our national ethos. We recognize the importance of harmonizing our efforts with

Saudi Arabia’s priorities, particularly in advancing sustainable development and mitigating climate change. While in Madinah, I had a chance to ride Careem bikes, the first public network of electric bicycles in Saudi Arabia. What a joy it was to bike around Madinah. Canada’s PBSC Urban Solutions is a partner in this project, which offers a sustainable transport option for visitors to explore the city in an ecofriendly manner, reducing traffic congestion and noise levels.

This commitment to sustainability is also reflected in the development and rehabilitation plan for Wadi Al-Aqeeq, one of the most famous geographical and historical landmarks in the Madinah region and which is being shaped into a green oasis within the city. I was able to walk through the wadi and see firsthand an innovative example of rehabilitation and urban development under the Al Madinah Regional Development Authority, which is seeking to establish environmentally friendly and modern spaces that still maintain their natural integrity.

My visit to Madinah was truly eye-opening. I was able to see how important this holy city is for Muslims from around the world. I also saw how, as is the case across the Kingdom, Madinah is changing under Vision 2030 to offer an improved experience to everyone. The integration of livability and sustainability in the transformation was evident.

I was so warmly welcomed and felt a remarkable sense of peacefulness in Madinah. I left with many ideas to work on to enhance the partnership between Saudi Arabia and Canada through collaborative endeavors and innovative solutions. I cannot wait to go back.

# The misogyny of the anti-protest

Aya Gruber

**“Fat”, “ugly”, and “bitch” are just a few of the invectives hurled at female anti-war protesters by “counter-protesters”, a name the press has given to pro-Israel demonstrators, angry mobs, and frat boys gathered to jeer and perform monkey dances alike. Counter-protesters routinely shout that they hope female protesters voicing support for Palestinians in Gaza are raped. Pundits descend that the antiwar protesters are coddled, silly, ahistorical, and misguided.**

Female professors, like the former chair of Dartmouth’s Jewish studies department, Annelise Orleck, and Emory’s philosophy chair Noelle McAfee and economics professor Caroline Fohlin, have attempted to intervene in male officers’ “duty” to violently clear pro-Palestine student encampments only to be met with humiliation and brutality. “Get on the ground,” an enraged male police officer screamed breathlessly at Frohlin. When she did not take her place immediately at his feet, officers forced her there, smashing her head on the concrete. The taunts of the pumped-up bro attacking the UCLA encampment summed it up, “You stand no chance old lady.”

This is more than good old-fashioned sexism rearing in the heat of the moment. The female antiwar protesters have broken the unwritten rules of being a woman in the

United States. They are neither on display for men nor acting like men. Hypermasculine antifa tactics are at a minimum, if not absent. The peaceful – even “culturally feminist” – encampments feature meditation, lectures, song and dance, and yoga.

These performances are not for the male gaze. Female students are swaddled in masks and keffiyehs and using social media for political messages, not painted in makeup and using Kardashian-filtered visages to amass likes. Why would any woman choose the former over the latter? Megyn Kelly has the answer. They are “homely”, she declares, adding that “attractive” women would not protest.

One viral video shows the Los Angeles police, after their nighttime invasion of the UCLA encampment, stripping a handcuffed young Asian woman of her head coverings and facing her into the glare of news camera lights, almost reminiscent of the public stripping of heretical women in the dark ages. The LA police’s grotesque display of arrestees is nothing compared with the NYPD’s propaganda videos after its military-style raid of Columbia’s Hamilton Hall to arrest a handful of students within.

These women are not there to please the media either. They are wary of mainstream reporters who

have portrayed them as pro-Hamas terrorists. They know to avoid opportunists who seek viral soundbites to prove protesters are silly and stupid or deadly serious and dangerous. They are tight-lipped and letting their presence, and copious posters, do the speaking.

One social media “influencer” sought clicks by “checking out” the UCLA encampment. Striding up, blond hair flowing behind, she said she wanted to just “speak to them”. After being referred to media liaisons, who said they “didn’t want to talk to someone who is going to push us”, she went back to a group of women, still demanding an impromptu interrogation. When they regarded her in silence, she called them “intimidating” and began to cry. The prototype of the crying, fearful woman has a long pedigree in this country, and the anti-protest camp’s publicity frequently features young, frightened women who feel “unsafe”.

Exemplifying the utter discomfort at female protesters’ unwillingness to play the role of people-pleaser is Wall Street Journal reporter Peggy Noonan’s hit piece on the Columbia demonstrators. At best, she says, these kids are clueless: “Critical thinking isn’t your strong suit, emotion is.” When have women heard that before? But, Noonan argues, something more nefarious is going on, as evidenced by the protesters hiding their faces, doxing risk notwithstanding, and not talking to her. “Friends, please come say hello and tell me what you think,” Noonan called to a group of women. Only the “beautiful girl” made eye contact and laughed at a quip Noonan made, but her grim “friends gave her a look and she conformed”.

Anti-protesters fault female demonstrators for being on the side of Palestinians, whose culture they say does not permit women to do things like protest. The apogee of this argument was a celebrity calling LGBTQ protesters “idiots” because Hamas would decapitate them and play with their heads “like a soccer ball”. Such characterisations of Gaza society are Islamophobic and overexaggerate sexism, but regardless, calling to end the slaughter of a civilian population does not make one a proponent of that population’s social mores. There is indeed a sublime hubris in invoking the argument that Hamas does not let women speak in one’s effort to shut female protesters up.

Our reaction to the students who are protesting against what they see as genocide in real time is eye-opening. From celebrations of militarised and gratuitously demeaning policing to tolerance of extreme misogyny as long as it is directed against the right women, this moment speaks volumes about who we are.

# Beware the Biden factor

Jonathan Freedland

**THE smile was the giveaway. Asked whether he was “just a copycat” of Tony Blair at the launch of his Blair-style pledge card on Thursday, Keir Starmer positively glowed. He was delighted with the comparison, which the entire exercise was surely designed to encourage. Blair “won three elections in a row”, Starmer said, beaming. Of course, he’s thrilled to be likened to a serial winner. And yet the more apt parallel is also a cautionary one. It’s not with Starmer’s long-ago predecessor, but with his would-be counterpart across the Atlantic: Joe Biden.**

It’s natural that the sight of a Labour leader, a lawyer from north London, on course for Downing Street after a long era of Tory rule, would have people digging out the Oasis CDs and turning back the clock to 1997: Labour election victories are a rare enough commodity to prompt strong memories. But, as many veterans of that period are quick to point out, the circumstances of 2024 are very different. The UK economy was humming then and it’s parlous now. Optimism filled the air then, while too few believe genuine change is even possible now. And politics tended to be about material matters then, tax and public services, rather than dominated by polarising cultural wars as it is now.

All of which partly explains why it’s a comparison to the US president that Starmer should be thinking about – even if it’s not nearly so encouraging. Start with those aspects of the Biden story that can give Starmer heart. The veteran Democrat showed it is possible to win office thanks less to a wave of popular enthusiasm than a hunger for change after years of chaos. He proved that you can make a virtue of a lack of swash and buckle, offering steady solidity

as a respite after frantic drama. In 2020, Biden demonstrated that dependable and capable can be enough to win when voters have had enough of charismatic and crazy. It worked for him after the era of Donald Trump, just as it’s working for Starmer after an era that, for all Rishi Sunak’s efforts, is defined by Boris Johnson and Liz Truss.

In other words, in 2020, Biden showed that playing a hand much like the one dealt to Starmer can be enough to win. The trouble is, in 2024 he’s showing why that might not be enough to win twice. Take a look at the New York Times poll published this week. The headline findings are bad enough, with Biden trailing in five of the six battleground states where the election will be decided. Behind in Nevada, Arizona, Georgia, Pennsylvania and Michigan, he’s ahead in Wisconsin alone. The underlying numbers are worse still with, improbable as it may seem, Trump gaining among Black, Latino and young voters especially. Most alarming for Biden is the finding that 70% think the US political and economic systems need major change – or should be torn down altogether. It makes the 2024 contest a change election in the US, just as it is in the UK – and for an incumbent such as Biden, that is dangerously bad news.

Put another way, the US appetite for change is so great that it is causing the unravelling of key parts of the Obama coalition – minorities and the young – and its reassembly behind Trump. Barack Obama offered himself as the change candidate in 2008, an outsider who would challenge the establishment, and Trump, even though he is a self-described billionaire and a former president less than four years out of office, is suc-

cessfully making the same rebel pitch.

What’s more, those Americans itching for something new are prepared to use as their agent of change a man who incited a violent insurrection against the US government, sought to overturn a democratic election, has made no secret of his dictatorial ambitions for a second term, has been found liable for sexual abuse and is now standing trial on criminal charges in New York. When so many Americans are willing to flock to that person as the alternative, it tells you how much they dislike what they have now.

There is a warning here for Starmer. Not for his prospects in the coming election – Biden’s success in 2020 tells him he can be confident – but for the election after that. The former Conservative cabinet minister David Gauke thinks Priti Patel is a decent bet as the next Tory leader, perhaps offering to keep the seat warm for the return of Boris Johnson. If Trump makes the comeback to end all comebacks in November, do not think Johnson will not be tempted to repeat the trick.

How is it that a second Trump presidency is even conceivable; how is it that Biden can be lagging behind such a flawed, widely loathed rival? The US economy is improving; the stock market is roaring; inflation is falling. The US is set to grow at double the rate of its fellow G7 nations this year. More to the point, through a series of landmark legislative achievements – a record that outstrips Obama’s – Biden has spread the jobs and investment around, even to those parts of the US left derelict by decades of post-industrial decline. Take his gargantuan infrastructure package, the poorly named Inflation Reduction Act:

more than 80% of its green investment dollars have gone to counties with below-average wages. This is levelling up made real.

And yet, Biden is struggling, even in those places he has helped most. It’s a reminder of a core fact that is so often forgotten. That politics is an emotions business, one that turns not on what people think but what they feel. All the economic data in the world won’t help you if voters feel squeezed and reckon the country is on the wrong track.

As the US commentator Joe Klein puts it, politics often comes down to “the art of competitive storytelling”. The successful politician tells a story that goes beyond the practical matters of pay and public services, speaking instead to voters about the way they see their own lives and the future, for themselves, their families and the country. In that competition, Trump beats Biden. His story is dark and vengeful, pitting his people against a menacing other, but it is compelling. Biden has a narrative, too – he will protect democracy and abortion rights from the Trump threat – but it is defensive.

This is the gap Starmer needs to plug – and you can see how he might do it. One Labour luminary says that too many Britons “don’t just feel a loss of income, but a deficit of dignity” and that politicians have to address that. Starmer gets close when he speaks of “dignity at work”, of the human need for respect. It sounds authentic, as if it might even be his animating purpose, when he recalls the way his father, a toolmaker who worked in a factory, “always felt ... that he was looked down on. Disrespected.” Whatever the story is, he needs to tell it. Right now, what Keir Starmer offers will almost certainly be enough to get him into No 10. But the lesson of Joe Biden is that, if he wants to stay there, it will take much more.

The Guardian



## PMEX major role in future market design: MD

ISLAMABAD (APP): Managing Director of Pakistan Mercantile Exchange, Farhan Tahir on Saturday said that Pakistan Mercantile Exchange (PMEX) has a huge role in future market design and market economy on which future market depends.

Talking to APP, the MD, PMEX said that Market Eco-system and Storage is very important on which Pakistan Mercantile Exchange is working.

He said that there is a need to digitize the commodity market across the country, on which our institution is working on research and analytics.

Farhan said that digitization and automation are very important in the global capital market at this time and “we are working on creating the ecosystem of

the commodity market and its role is important in the restoration and development of the country's economy.” He said that keeping in view the importance of the future market, an exhibition has been organized here today, the purpose of which is to provide awareness among the people and harmonize the country's economy with the requirements of the future market.

The productivity p factor in the Pakistani economy is low and more work needs to be done on it which is being followed by PMSX, he said.

MD, PMEX said that storage is very important in the commodity market and our organization is ready to provide facilities to the farmers, which will have a positive impact on our agricultural economy.

He said that currently countries' economies are dependent on research and data, and the future economy is also dependent on this.

Farhan said that the government wants to collaborate with PMSX to modernize the market economy in Pakistan so that the country's economy can move forward.

He said that the role of stakeholders is very important to bring competitiveness in the economy and to bring it into harmony with the global market.

He said that PMSX is providing a good platform to integrate stakeholders in the agricultural economy.

Talking to the APP on this occasion, Habib Mamsa, Regional Manager Business Development of Pakistan Mercantile

Exchange said that Future Market is very important in the country's economy at this time, which will increase competitiveness in the economy.

He said that Economic Competitiveness and Productivity are important for competition in the global market.

On this occasion, Head of Project and Project Development Syed Hamid Reza said that commodity market is very important in the future market and the role of data is very important for it.

He said that it is very important to provide storage for all the major crops of Pakistan including wheat and corn and similarly it is important to stop wastage of grains and fruits.

Meanwhile, Senior Manager Product PMEX Irfan Kisana said that the future market is very important in the country's economy and its integration is important for the Country's economy.

## IT exports surges to stunning \$310 million

ISLAMABAD (INP): The IT services export remittances surged to US\$ 310 million in the month of April, 2024, an astounding increase of 62.3 per cent in comparison to US\$ 191 million in April 2023.

Minister of State for IT and Telecommunication Shaza Fatima Khawaja in a statement said that it is for the first time in the history of Pakistan that IT exports saw this outstanding increase just in one month.

ICT export remittances have surged to US\$ 2.593 billion during July 2023 to April 2024 of FY2023-24 in comparison to US\$ 2.135 billion reported for the same period last year.

Shaza Fatima said that the government has first priority to increase IT exports of the country, adding that this record increase in IT exports is due to relentless efforts of the Prime Minister of Pakistan.

She said that Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif prevented the country from default in last PDM government and stabilised the economy and its positive outcomes are now coming. She said that steps are underway for increasing IT exports.

With the robust support from Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC), Ministry of IT and Pakistan Software Export Board are actively working to boost IT exports, she said.

In comparison to previous month of March 2024, ICT services export remittances have increased by US\$ 4 million (1.31% growth) in April 2024.

ICT sector exports of US\$ 2.593 billion are the highest among all Services (40.25% of total export of services) with ‘Other Business Services’ trailing at US\$ 1.308 billion.



MULTAN: A large number of traders participating in bidding of seasonal fruit Melons at fruit market.

## SNGPL issues Notices to the defaulting consumers

### F.P. Report

LAHORE: Sui Northern Gas Pipelines Limited (SNGPL) has issued reminder notices to the following public sector organizations/departments for payment of dues. SNGPL would like to inform all such public sector organizations and institutions to pay dues on an immediate



basis to avoid further action. The final notices have

been served to these defaulters during April 2024,

Teaching Hospitals of the Punjab Province: Rs.338,649,438/- and RHC/DHQ/THQ Hospitals of Punjab: Rs.72,578,881/- Punjab Police: Rs.188,152,966/-, KPK Police: Rs.36,711,285/-, Islamabad Police: Rs.37,076,230/- District/Central Jails of Punjab: Rs.363,837,192/-, District/Central Jails of PAK Public Works Department (PWD): Rs.102,914,418/- Capital Development Authority (CDA): Rs.139,542,755/- DC/AC Offices/Circuit House Buildings of Punjab: Rs.6,643,262/-

## World Hypertension Day organized at SIUT



### F.P. Report

KARACHI: The World Hypertension Day is celebrated on May 17th every year. At the Sindh Institute of Urology and Transplantation (SIUT), in 2024, a Seminar was organized by the Department of Pediatric Nephrology about “Childhood Hypertension: Call to Action for Early Diagnosis and Management.” This Seminar was fully endorsed by the International Pediatric Nephrology Association (IPNA), Asian Society of Pediatric Nephrology (ASPNA), Pakistan Society of Nephrology (PSN), Pakistan Pediatric Association Nephrology Group (PPA-Nephrology) and the Accreditation Council for Continuous Medical Education.

It was a whole day activity in which about 100 in-person registrants and there about 400 online registrants from 30 countries. The target audience was all the healthcare workers who are involved in the care of children who are diagnosed with hypertension. Among the participants, there were Nephrology trainees and Consultants of both Adult and Pediatric Specialties as

well as a large number of Pediatric Consultants and Trainees.

Hypertension is known to be a “silent killer”. It slowly damages almost all the vital organs including the heart, kidneys, eyes, and the brain. Its manifestations are usually seen in adults when they present with end-organ damage. In children, hypertension is not as common as in adults, however, a globally increasing number of children are being diagnosed with hypertension. In the past, most of the children with hypertension had an underlying condition like kidney failure, tumor, or a birth defect leading to high blood pressure. Nowadays, with the increasing prevalence of obesity, sedentary lifestyle, and drug abuse in teenagers, the prevalence of primary hypertension in children is also increasing.

This seminar was moderated by the Department of Pediatric Nephrology at SIUT. There were national and international invited speakers who discussed at length the diagnosis and management of all the varieties of Childhood Hypertension. The International

Speakers included Dr. Rupesh Raina and Irfan Agha from the USA, Dr. Swasti Chaturvedi from Australia, and Dr. Zainab Arslan from London while national speakers included Dr. Amir Hameed from Ziauddin University, Salman Kirmani from AKUH and Dr. Shazia Mohsin from SIUT. All the speakers shared their expertise on specific topics which was followed by an academic discussion with special emphasis on the approach towards children residing in countries with limited resources.

The need for screening all healthy children after 3 years of age by checking the blood pressure at least once and screening and monitoring children with risk factors like obesity, premature birth, kidney disease, heart disease, and other chronic conditions was endorsed and emphasized during the seminar. Early referral to specialists with expertise in specific areas is also known to prevent future complications. Specific diagnostic tools were also discussed.

All the speakers and participants the end thanked SIUT and the Department of Pediatric Nephrology for organizing such an event. Academic collaboration by sharing knowledge and expertise between institutions and encouraging the upcoming doctors to obtain structured training in sub-specialties was also emphasized.

## Poultry meat dropped

BAHAWALPUR (APP): Poultry meat rate has dropped in local market of Bahawalpur as it was sold out at Rs 419 per kilogram on Saturday. APP learnt on Saturday that price of poultry meat has dropped from Rs 750 per kilogram to Rs 419 per kilogram in local market of Bahawalpur. In last month of April 2024, its price had surged to Rs

750 per kilogram. However, due to measures taken by the Punjab government, its price has gradually decreased during last 20 days.

However, it was also being sold out at Rs 430 to Rs 460 in some areas of the city.

“The government officials concerned have been monitoring the price of poultry price on daily basis,” said Qureshi, a shopkeeper dealing with business of poultry.

## Court Notice

In the Court of Jauhar Ali Safi Civil Judge-I/Alaqa Qazi Buner at Daggar. Suit No. 87/1. Institution 22/11/2022, date of hearing 20/5/2024. Mst. Meena Vs. Anwar Shad etc. Notice to No. (4) Mst. Zshazia d/o Nordad Shah, (24) Asmatullah Khan, (28) Zaref Kgan s/o Babozay, (29) Nowsherwan s/o Rahim Khan, (34) Abdur Rashed s/o Said Hakim Shah, (35) Hamesh Gul, (36) Gul Rahim, (37) Mohamad Rahim, (38) Said Rahim sons of Gul Mohamad resident of Torwarsak Tehsil Daggar District Buner. Whereas, in the above mentioned case the mentioned defendants cannot 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 8:00 a.m. dated 20/5/2024 the proceeding will be taken ex-parte. Given under my hand and seal of this Court.

In the Court of Shafqat Qadeer Civil Judge-XIV/Bannu. Suit No. 66/1. Institution No. 22-04-2024, next date of hearing 28-05-2024, case title “Dil Nawaz Khan Vs. Qismat Ullah Khan”. Notice to Qismat Ullah Khan s/o Zafar Ullah Khan R/o Amal Khel Tarkhoba Kala P/O Domil Asparka side one Tehsil Domil & District Bannu, presently in abroad. Whereas, in the above mentioned case it has been proved to the satisfaction of the court that the above mentioned defendant cannot be served in the ordinary way, it is, therefore, proclaimed that if the said defendants will /shall not appear personally or through a duly authorized agent or pleader in court at 8:00 a.m. on 28-05-2024, the proceedings will be taken ex-parte. Given under my hand and seal of this Court.

KARACHI (PPI): Pakistan Business Forum on Saturday recommended the federal government in its budget proposals to simplifying the tax system to reduce complexity and make it easier for businesses to comply, especially the newly introduced “Tajir

## Court Notice

In the Court of Abdul Halem Civil Judge-V/Alaqa Qazi Buner at Daggar. Suit. No. 71/1, Institution 3/5/2024, date of hearing 29/5/2024. Mst. Samighat Vs. Sher Bahadur Khan. Notice to No. (2) Said Zaman Khan s/o Murad Khan resident of Sura Chamla Tehsil Mandan District Buner. Whereas, in the above mentioned case the mentioned defendant cannot be served in the ordinary way, it is, therefore, proclaimed that if the said defendant will/shall not appear personally or through dually authorized agent or pleader in the court at 8:00 a.m. dated 29/5/2024 the proceeding will be taken ex-parte. Given under my hand and seal of this Court.

Dost Scheme” for traders, along with rationalising tax rates and eliminating tax exemptions to create a fair and equitable tax system including automating the tax processes to reduce human interaction.

Central Vice President of PBF, Ahmad Jawad told on Saturday that in custom duties we suggested the tariff reduction on raw materials and machinery to 0-5% could encourage industrial growth and exports. The removal of additional customs duty (ACD) and regulatory duty (RD) on imported raw materials and machinery and Rationalization of customs tariff structure to eliminate anomalies and disparities with the alignment of customs tariff according to international best practices to enhance competitiveness.

The PBF has also put forth certain legislative measures concerning FBR in order to modify sections 25(A) and 25(D) of the Custom Act 1969 (“Act”) and grant permission to domestic manufacturers. Likewise, the misuse of the Afghan Transit Trade (ATT) poses a significant

problem for formal sector companies, whether they are engaged in manufacturing or imports. Furthermore, the illicit smuggling from Iran is inflicting irreversible damage on both the industry and FBR revenues. In light of this, goods transported under ATT from Pakistan to Afghanistan should be subject to duties and taxes in accordance with Pakistani laws, with the resulting revenue being transferred to the Afghan Government.

Jawad viewed a quantitative restriction should be applied on goods moving under ATT on the basis of consumption. Further the government of Pakistan should take up the issue of smuggling from Iran. Similarly rate of minimum tax of 1.25% under section 113 is extremely high and unrealistic. To promote industrialization, the minimum tax should be abolished for all listed companies as these companies are subject to stringent regulations and audit. For other companies, rate of minimum tax should be reduced gradually by 0.25% on an annual basis so that by Tax Year 2027 the rate is 0.5%.

Since exports do not contribute towards Output tax, therefore, the condition of 50% should be amended to 10% on monthly basis for all exports irrespective of any sector otherwise it would not be possible for registered person to absorb the amount of input tax paid for the purposes of manufacturing of items for local and export sales and consequently, the same would discourage export of goods. This amendment is necessary to encourage local manufacturers with excess production capacity to look for export opportunities for unutilized capacity. At present, due to restriction under section 8B, manufacturers are reluctant to venture into export markets. PBF also urged to re-evaluate on the super tax Super Tax as it was imposed on the documented sector retrospectively through the Finance Act, 2022. This is a penalty on the well-organized documented sector that creates jobs and disposable incomes for millions and also generates substantial tax revenues for the country. Moreover, under section

4C, super tax is not progressive in nature and is applied on the entire profit once a threshold is crossed. This is contrary to the concept of marginal tax rates under the progressive basis of computing tax liabilities. Further under the Sales Tax Act, Section 8B, a company is not allowed to adjust input tax in excess of 90% of the output tax for that period.

Considering the recent unprecedented increases in gas / electricity prices coupled with extraordinary depreciation of the Pak rupee, cost of manufacturing has increased exponentially. As a result, it has become almost impossible to absorb the amount of input tax.

On top of this, application of section 8B further aggravates the situation by placing embargo on claim of total input tax and results in piling up of huge sales tax carry forward balance with huge increase on a month-on-month basis; if restriction under section 8B is removed, there won't be any revenue loss to the Government as the amount paid under section 8B is ultimately refundable after

end of the financial year.

Similarly limited companies and their subsidiaries should be taxed under the normal tax regime instead of the minimum tax regime and rate of WHT under section 153(1)(b) for the aforesaid companies may be reduced to 3% in the federal budget. PBF also stated that on Massive under-invoicing especially by Commercial Importers is destroying domestic industry in this regard special measures should be taken seriously in the budget. However PBF further proposed transparency in collection of taxes will discourage mis-declaration, measures to discourage evasion of taxes and duties will help industry to fairly compete with unscrupulous imports and also Government stands to benefit from the increased indirect taxes revenues.

Including value addition to increase the share of horticulture and agriculture exports. In this regard, a tax holiday of three (03) years may be considered in the budget for the setup of machinery, including Control Atmosphere (CA) stores.



In brief

PSB approves key decisions

ISLAMABAD (APP): The 29th meeting of the Pakistan Sports Board, chaired by Federal Minister for Inter-Provincial Coordination and Planning, Ahsan Iqbal, has approved several key decisions to promote sports and support athletes. The meeting, held in Islamabad, was attended by Federal Secretary for Inter-Provincial Coordination, Nadeem Irshad Kiani, Director General Pakistan Sports Board, Zahoor Ahmed, managing director NESPAK and other members. The minister declared 2025 as the "Year of Sports Revival" and approved a comprehensive Calendar of sports activities for the year. He announced plans to host National Games and Inter-Provincial Tournaments in 2025, as well as South Asian Games and Champions Trophy in the beginning of 2025. Emphasizing the importance of merit and transparency, Ahsan announced that the Director General of Pakistan Sports board will be appointed on merit and through a transparent process. He also announced the formation of a committee to grant funds to federations based on their performance and merit. To ensure transparency, the committee will conduct third-party audits of the granted funds. Additionally, the Endowment Fund 2024 was also approved in the meeting to support the welfare of athletes and their families. The minister stressed that talented, hardworking, and professional individuals are the valuable assets of any organization. He also announced plans to establish a performance evaluation system to assess the performance of federations. The meeting was aimed to revitalize sports in Pakistan and provide support to athletes to excel in national and international competitions.

Trials to be held on Friday

ISLAMABAD (APP): The trials of the Sindh team for the Inter-Provincial Women's Softball Championship would be held on May 24 (Friday). Sindh Softball Association President, Prof. Dr. Farhan Essa Abdullah told on Saturday that the Softball Championship would be played in Karachi from May 30 to June 1. The trials for the event will be held on Friday at 4pm in the afternoon at Karachi Port Trust (KPT) Football Stadium near Aga Khan Jamaat Khana in Kharadar, he said. The selection committee, headed by Chairperson of women's wing of the Sindh Softball Association, Dr. Huma Bukhari, including Tehmina Asif, Mohammad Nasir, Shahid Aftab and Faraz Ijaz, have been formed to announce the names of the selected players for the championship after the final trials and training camp. He said the hosting of the Inter-Provincial Women's Softball Championship on behalf of the Softball Federation of Pakistan in Sindh was an expression of confidence in us. "We will try to organize the said event in a dignified manner so that it is a memorable and exemplary championship," he said. Essa said all possible steps should be taken to provide accommodation, food, transport and other facilities to the teams participating in the event. Cash awards will be rewarded to the players who will show the best performance from Sindh in the Championship, he said.

## Pak wins 2 medals in Bodybuilding Championship



HUNGARY (Monitoring Desk): Pakistan has won two medals in the European Bodybuilding and Physique

Championship 2024, held in Hungary, marking a historic moment for the nation in this sport.

Competing for the first time at this prestigious event, Pakistan's Ahsan Baig and Shehzad Qureshi won silver and bronze medals, respectively.

Ahsan Baig earned the silver medal in the Sports Physique category, showcasing remarkable dedication and skill.

Meanwhile, Shehzad Qureshi brought home the bronze medal in the 90-kilogram weight category.

Sohail Anwar, the Secretary of the Pakistan Bodybuilding Federation, expressed immense pride and joy over this achievement.

"This is the first time Pakistan has participated in the European Bodybuilding Championship, and our athletes have won medals. It is a proud moment for the entire nation," Anwar stated.

Adding to the celebratory spirit, Pakistan's Ambassador to Hungary, Asif Hussain Memon, was present at the event.

He extended his support and encouragement to the Pakistani bodybuilders.

## Trials for Inter-Region Games to held on 23rd

PESHAWAR (APP): The trials of Peshawar Region for the forthcoming Inter-Region Games would be held here at different venues across Peshawar district on May 23, Regional Sports Officer Peshawar Region Kashif Farhan told APP here on Saturday.

Kashif Farhan said that athletes, both male and female from Peshawar, Charsadda, Nowshera, Mohmand and Khyber District would appear in the trials to be held on May 23 in Peshawar for the selection of teams.

Regional Sports Officer Peshawar Kashif Farman said that the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Under-23 Regional Games under the management of the Directorate General Sports Khyber Pakhtunkhwa has

announced the trial schedule for the selection of teams from Peshawar, Charsadda, Nowshera, Mohmand and Khyber.

The trials of the players of the region will be held on May 23 at different places in Peshawar to prepare the various sports teams for the U-23 games. He said the cut of date for the eligibility to participate in the Games is June 1, 2001. Players born after June 1, 2001 are eligible to participate in the trials, he added.

The players have been advised to bring Form B and National Identity Card to verify their age group.

For cricket, the trials were held at Muazzul Khan Cricket Academy Peshawar Sports Complex, while for football,

Tahamas Stadium was selected. Athletics trials will be held at Hayatabad Sports Complex at 10,00 am in the morning.

The selection of volleyball, badminton, squash, table tennis, karate and taekwondo players will be held at Peshawar Sports Complex Qayyum Stadium at 3.00 pm in the afternoon. Throw ball trials will be held on the same day, May 23.

It will be held at Tahamas Stadium in Peshawar city at 3.00 pm in the afternoon. The players selected in these trials will be provided kit, shoes and TA/DA by the Directorate General of Sports.

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa whereas no TA and DA will be given during the trials.

## Verstappen beats McLarens to take Imola pole



IMOLA (Agencies): Red Bull's Max Verstappen beat McLaren's Oscar Piastri and Lando Norris in a tight battle for pole position at the Emilia Romagna Grand Prix.

Verstappen was just 0.074 seconds quicker than Piastri, who pipped Norris by 0.017secs with the final lap of the session.

Ferrari's Charles Leclerc was fourth, 0.224secs behind Verstappen, but 0.263secs quicker than team-mate Carlos Sainz who is right behind him. Mercedes' George Russell took sixth ahead of RB's Yuki Tsunoda and the second Mercedes of Lewis Hamilton.

It was Verstappen's eighth pole position in a row, matching the all-time record set by Ayrton Senna across the 1988 and 1989 seasons, 30 years after the great Brazilian was killed

on this circuit at the 1994 San Marino Grand Prix.

But it came as a surprise, because Red Bull had appeared to be struggling all weekend - and his team-mate Sergio Perez could qualify only 11th.

Verstappen said: "Really difficult weekend so far, even this morning, so incredibly happy to be on pole. I didn't expect that. We made some changes before qualifying and it seemed to feel a bit better and this track is unbelievable.

"To be so fast, so close to the gravel. I touched the gravel a little on my final lap. I'm still pumping. The adrenaline is incredible."

Norris, who took his maiden grand prix victory in Miami last time out, said: "Tiny margins, but as a team we have done a great job so far. Exciting we're close and I can't wait

until tomorrow." Piastri faces an investigation for impeding Haas driver Kevin Magnussen in the first part of qualifying.

Sixth and eighth is around the new normal for Mercedes, but Hamilton was unhappy to be 0.270secs slower than Russell when the two had been almost impossible to separate for most of the weekend. At the back, Fernando Alonso paid the price for an unusually error-strewn day in his Aston Martin. His team had a race against time to prepare the car for qualifying after the two-time champion crashed at Rivazza in final practice.

Alonso then went off again early in the first qualifying session, this time at the Tamburello chicane, and qualified down in 19th place. He said that he had been caught out because the distance boards approaching the first chicane had been wiped out by a crash at the start of the Formula 2 race which preceded the F1 qualifying.

"I was lapping laps today and we put fuel in the car for qualifying and just to be able to do some pit stops. Eventually I did my best lap on the very first lap with a lot of fuel in the car so I think there is more pace, but one of those days."



MANCHESTER, : Emma Hayes, Manager of Chelsea, celebrates as she holds the Barclays Women's Super League title trophy following the team's victory in the Barclays Women's Super League match.

### Pink panther Pogacar extends Giro lead after time trial

DESENZANO DEL GARDA (AFP): Team UAE Emirates star Tadej Pogacar extended his overall lead on the Giro d'Italia after finishing second in Saturday's 32.1km individual time trial at Lake Garda won by Italian Filippo Ganna.



Time-trial specialist Ganna timed 35min 02sec on this 14th of 21 stages with Pogacar in second place just 29sec down. Pogacar left the starting ramp dressed from head to toe in the overall leader's pink colours and with the 'Pink Panther' movie theme playing.

And while he didn't win the stage itself he arrived on the shores of Lake Garda 3min 41sec ahead of Geraint Thomas in the overall standings with Dani Martinez at 3min 56sec in third and Ben O'Connor in fourth at 4min 35sec.

Pogacar has extended his overnight lead in the rankings ahead of Sunday's stage, which he described as "a monster" and whose finish line is at an altitude of almost 2,400m (7,874ft).

Pogacar has worked a lot on the time trial this winter, in particular his aerodynamic position, after losing 1min 38sec over 22km to Jonas Vingegaard in the last Tour de France.

"I raced hard over the opening section with all the turns and people," said Pogacar. "But the final flat 10km was harder."

The 25-year-old is now more than ever the man to beat as he towers above the field in his debut Giro after a boldly declared bid to win both the Italian race and the Tour de France this season.

For Ineos Grenadier Ganna it was a stressful day, the Italian rider having been pipped at the death by Pogacar in the Giro's first time trial last week.

An early starter, Ganna cut a grim figure whilst watching the rest of the field dash across narrow country lanes. "I suffered a lot, I had to wait two hours to see If I had won," said Ganna after what was his seventh win on the Giro, six of them in time trials.

"It's like a second home for me here at Lake Garda though so that made it easier," he added. Welshman Thomas was fourth on the day but climbs to second overall, Albacit ceding 45sec to Pogacar on Saturday.

## Chelsea clinch WSL title in Hayes' last game

MANCHESTER (AFP): Chelsea were crowned Women's Super League champions for a fifth successive season as boss Emma Hayes bowed out in style with a title-clinching 6-0 rout of Manchester United on Saturday.

Hayes' side went into the last day of the season ahead of second-placed Manchester City on goal difference in a thrilling finish to the title race.

Chelsea raced into a four-goal lead by half-time at Old Trafford and, with City unable to match that spree in their 2-1 win at Aston Villa, the silverware was destined for Stamford Bridge once again. Level on points with City, the Blues finished on top with a +53 goal difference compared to City's +46.

It was a fitting finale for Hayes, who was saying farewell to the club she has brought so much success during 12 years in charge.

Hayes is leaving to take over as United States Women's boss after winning seven Super League titles, five FA Cups and two League Cups. The 47-year-

old's legacy is not just the silverware in Chelsea's trophy cabinet, but also her key role in helping the huge growth in popularity of the women's game in Britain.

City had hoped to spoil Hayes' leaving party by winning the title for the first time since 2016. But Chelsea had spent 153 days on top of the table, compared to 64 for City, and they rounded off their seventh title in eight seasons in blistering fashion.

City's fate was out of their hands after a 2-1 loss to Arsenal in their previous game, with Chelsea overturning their goal difference deficit with a 8-0 rout of Bristol City.

Chelsea made a dream start against Women's FA Cup winners United in the second minute as Guro Reiten's cross picked out Mayra Ramirez and she rose highest to head home.

Ramirez was a surprise starter from Chelsea on her return from injury, underlining Hayes' knack of making the right call when the stakes are highest.

Six minutes later, Hayes was punching the air in

delight as Johnanna Kaneryd clipped a composed finish past United keeper Mary Earps. Over at Villa Park, Mary Fowler gave City hope with a powerful strike in the 21st minute. But Ramirez ensured Chelsea would not have to worry about being caught by City.

Surging away down the right flank, Ramirez's pinpoint cross was tapped in by Sjoekie Nusken in the 43rd minute. And Ramirez waltzed through the hapless United defence and smashed a thunderous drive into the roof of the net in first half stoppage-time.

Hayes' team showed no mercy and Melanie Leupolz scored their fifth in the 47th minute with a close-range effort. Their title hopes gone, City conceded a 67th minute equaliser to Rachel Daly before Lauren Hemp at least ensured the visitors finished off a winning not.

Fran Kirby, making her final Chelsea appearance after nine years, capped her own farewell with the sixth goal in the 85th minute as the title celebrations started in earnest.

## Singh warns India of 'tricky' Pakistan challenge

NEW DELHI (Agencies): Former Indian cricketer Harbhajan Singh termed Pakistan a tricky challenge for India ahead of their much-anticipated ICC Men's T20 World Cup 2024 clash.

Two of the most fierce competitors in the game of cricket — Pakistan and India — will lock horns at Nassau County International Cricket Stadium in New York on June 9.

Meanwhile, former spinner Harbhajan, while talking to a local news channel, asserted that the seizure of the bilateral series between the two cricketing nations will make the encounter a tricky one.

"At the end of the day, playing against Pakistan is always (tricky) as both countries do not play much against each other. We do not know much about their strong and weak zones but the Indian management keeps track of every player and their strong and weak zones," Harbhajan said.

Harbhajan Singh also acknowledged Pakistan's bowling department's mental and physical strength but insisted that

the Indian team will counter them.

"In the bowling department too, Pakistan bowlers keep themselves mentally and physically strong. These aspects will be taken care of by the Indian team. These things will come into play when both sides will battle it out on the field," he said.

Earlier, Harbhajan Singh slammed at the idea of drop-in pitches for the blockbuster clash of the ICC Men's T20 World Cup 2024, raising concerns about the unpredictability of the surface.

"Pitches there [Nassau Cricket Stadium] are known to none to be honest. Even the pitch curators might not know how many times will this pitch last. How much heat would be there how much water has been put in? How much bounce would it offer?," Harbhajan said during a press conference.

"Once those practice games are played there, then we will get to know how the pitch is acting. And then we can think about combinations. Prior knowing that, we can't say about team combinations."

### Nida Dar becomes leading wicket-taker in women's T20Is

NORTHAMPTON (Web Desk): Nida Dar became the highest wicket-taker in women's T20Is during Pakistan's second match against England in Northampton.

Dar overtook Australia's Megan Schutt (136 wickets) to lay her claim at the top of the leading wicket-takers chart in women's T20I on Friday, 17 May. She is the only Pakistan woman in the top 10 list.

The Pakistan skipper and all-rounder was on 135 at the start of the game, having come close to the milestone in Pakistan's home series against the West Indies earlier in the month. She went wicketless in the first encounter against England in Birmingham, which Pakistan lost by 53 runs.

Opting to bat first, England put on a modest 144/6 with useful contributions from Maia Bouchier, Alice Caspey, and Nat Sciver-Brunt. Pakistan bowlers were largely impressive, stemming the flow of runs and picking up wickets at regular intervals.

Dar first took the wicket of Caspey in the 12th over, equalling Schutt and then dismissed Amy Jones while bowling the last over.

## PCB confirms PSL expansion from 2026 with 2 new teams

KARACHI (Espncrioinfo): The PSL will get two new franchises from 2026, making it an eight-team league. This was officially confirmed in a statement by the PCB on Friday, which called the upcoming season in 2025 - the tenth edition - the "last six-team event".

While this had been likely from the day the PCB and the PSL franchises agreed not to add further teams until after the tenth season, this is the first time the PCB has publicly confirmed the PSL expansion. Multan Sultans' entry in 2018 has been the only addition to the original five so far. The process for deciding which cities the new teams represent has not begun yet.

The year following the tenth season is potentially one of sizeable flux and jeopardy for the

PSL, with the ten-year lease ownership agreements the PSL reached with franchise owners expiring in 2025. ESPNcricinfo understands Sultans' lease is also up for renewal next year, despite them joining the PSL two years after the rest. All six owners have right of first refusal, meaning ownership of a franchise only goes up for sale in the event of a current owner declining to match the franchise's valuation.

What is more contentious, however, is when the PSL will be played from next season onwards. The Champions Trophy will be played in the traditional PSL window in February-March, and with the ILT20 and the SA20 cutting in on PSL territory, the PCB wants a more reliable window. Their

current preferred solution is the move the PSL into April and May, carving out a six week window from April 7 to May 20 next year, and clashing directly with the IPL. More contentiously, the PCB aims to make this the PSL's permanent window rather than an ad hoc solution to a crowded calendar next year.

There is by no means universal agreement for this option. Most of the PSL franchises initially opposed the idea because of the implications it would have on player availability and the inevitability of playing second fiddle to the IPL, and at least three of the six franchises remain firmly opposed to it. A PCB official, though, told ESPNcricinfo they remain confident the franchises will come

around to it. It is also worth noting that franchise opposition to the idea cannot necessarily stop it happening; those decisions are made by the PSL governing council. De facto, that means the PCB could decide to play the tournament in any window, with or without the support of the franchises.

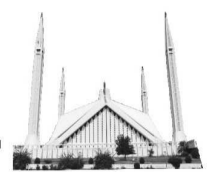
The PCB has offered to tweak player recruitment rules and open up fiscal space to allow franchises to sign one marquee player independently of the draft to alleviate concerns around player availability. With their current broadcast partnership ending in 2025, the next season could effectively become a test case for the future viability of hosting the league at the same time as the IPL. In addi-

tion, the league's expansion to eight teams would have necessitated a larger window anyway, with the three-month window currently carved out for the IPL providing enough time for a slightly extended PSL.

However, this also necessarily means the PSL will effectively only have overseas players available to them who go unselected at the IPL, given the large financial disparity between the two leagues. This, for example, effectively rules out Rashid Khan turning out for the Lahore Qalandars - one of the franchises opposed to the window - for the foreseeable future. Qalandars opted to retain him for PSL 2024 despite knowing he would not be fit to ensure they would be able to keep the

Afghanistan legspinner the following year. However, it is likely he would turn out for the IPL if the two leagues clash.

ESPNcricinfo also understands the PCB is seriously exploring the possibility of hosting the playoffs and final of PSL 2025 in the UK if this April/May window is finalised. Lahore is unseasonably hot in mid-May - temperatures are currently hovering in the mid-40s. The move to the UK, according to the PCB, does more than mitigate against the weather, though; it also globalises the reach of the PSL. The UK is also believed to be a more cost-effective option than the UAE, which has, in the past, hosted every PSL match that did not take place in Pakistan.



## In brief

### One killed in accident

ISLAMABAD (APP): At least one person was killed and another injured after a speeding trailer ran over a car carrying two passengers in the limits of Loni Kot Police Station on M-9 Motorway. According to police, the car, traveling from Karachi to Hyderabad, was struck by the trailer, causing severe damage and resulting in the tragic death of one passenger, a private news channel reported. The other individual sustained injuries and was rushed to the nearest hospital for medical assistance by rescue officials. The police officials have reported that the trailer driver fled the scene of the accident, leaving the victims to fend for themselves.

### DC reviews health services

RAWALPINDI (APP): Deputy Commissioner Murree, Agha Zaheer Abbas Shirazi has said that practical steps were being taken to provide the best health-care facilities to the people. Basic Health Units (BHUs) provides quality health facilities to the public at the local level he said. DC expressed these views during his visit to BHU Lehtrar and UC Karor here on Saturday. The DC reviewed availability of medicines, health facilities, staff attendance and the hygienic situation at the BHUs. He also inquired from the patients about the provision of health facilities in the BHU. He directed the BHUs administration to further improve the sanitation situation.

### Obaidullah remembered

ISLAMABAD (APP): The 26th death anniversary of the famous poet of modern Urdu Obaidullah Aleem was observed on Saturday. He was born on June 12, 1939, in Bhopal, British India. Obaidullah Aleem completed his post-graduation in Urdu from Karachi University. Obaidullah Aleem was ranked among the best Ghazal writers of modern times. He started his career with Radio Pakistan and later, he joined Pakistan Television as a producer. His famous books of poetry are "Chand Chehra Sitara Ankhhen", "Veeran Saray Ka Diya" and "Nigar-e-Subah ke Ummed Main". He died on this day in 1998 at the age of fifty-eight in Karachi.

### 252,500 cusecs water released

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Indus River System Authority (IRSA) on Saturday released 252,500 cusecs water from various rim stations with inflow of 249,500 cusecs. According to the data released by IRSA, the water level in River Indus at Tarbela Dam was 1468.27 feet and was 70.27 feet higher than its dead level of 1,398 feet. The water inflow and outflow in the dam was recorded as 72,200 cusecs and 90,000 cusecs respectively. The water level in River Jhelum at Mangla Dam was 1175.60 feet, which was 125.60 feet higher than its dead level of 1,050 feet. The inflow and outflow of water was recorded 64,100 cusecs and 50,000 cusecs respectively. The release of water at Kalabagh, Taunsa, Guddu and Sukkur was recorded as 149,300, 100,300, 59,500 and 14,000 cusecs respectively. Similarly, from River Kabul, a total of 80,900 cusecs of water released at Nowshera and 16,900 cusecs released from River Chenab at Marala.

# Mohsin Naqvi visits Saudi Embassy

ISLAMABAD (APP): Saudi Ambassador Nawaf Bin Said Ahmad al-Maliki on Saturday welcomed Federal Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi and both sides discussed matters of mutual interest, Pak-Saudi relations and cooperation in various fields.

Saudi ambassador Nawaf Bin Said Ahmad al-Maliki assured full support for Islamabad police for which Mohsin Naqvi thanked Saudi Arabia ambassador for arranging housing facility for FC personnel.

They also discussed Saudi Arabia's Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman's visit to Pakistan.

The minister said that the historic brotherly friendship of Saudi Arabia and Pakistan is turning into the most beneficial economic relations. He said that the recent visit of Saudi Arabia's investors to Pakistan was very successful. The people of Pakistan are waiting for visit of Saudi Arabia's Wali Ahad,

said Mohsin Naqvi adding that Saudi Arabia's Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman lives in the heart of Pakistani people.

He said that the visit of Saudi Crown Prince will prove to be a game changer in relations between the two countries because Saudi Arabia has always supported Pakistan in every difficult time. In the present era, relations between Pakistan and Saudi Arabia are reaching new heights, said Mohsin Naqvi.

Saudi Ambassador Nawaf Bin Said Ahmad al-Maliki assured that he will do everything possible to build the Islamabad police on modern lines. He said that Saudi Arabia attaches great importance to its relations with Pakistan.

**Mohsin Naqvi orders crackdown against encroachments in Capital:** Federal Minister for Interior Mohsin Naqvi on Saturday ordered a crackdown against the encroachments in Islamabad.

He directed the Capital Development Authority (CDA) staff to remove and eliminate all encroachments without discrimination and without accepting any pressures from anywhere. He ordered Islamabad administration, CDA and police to conduct joint operation against the encroachment.

Chairman CDA and Chief Commissioner Islamabad Muhammad Ali Randhawa immediately took action on the direction of the federal minister and launched an operation against encroachments in Islamabad. The authorities demolished encroachments of Raja Gulfranz Farm in Sangiani Sasing and sealed another factory.

The farmhouse was built illegally by constructing 10 rooms on 24 kanal area. The Islamabad administration and the police led by the DC and CDA, jointly conducted the operation against encroachments.

## Govt continues extensive crackdown

ISLAMABAD (APP): In response to severe shortages of crucial goods such as flour, sugar, fertilizer, and oil, the government has initiated an extensive crackdown on the smuggling of essential commodities across the country.

From May 5 to May 12, authorities conducted targeted operations resulting in the successful seizure of significant quantities of smuggled items.

According to PTV, a total of 565 metric tons of sugar, 4,127 stacks of cigarettes, 1,322 bags of cloth, and 198,600 liters of Iranian oil were confiscated

during these operations.

The crackdown targeted smuggling networks in major cities, yielding substantial hauls of contraband goods. In Multan, officials seized 99 stacks of cigarettes, 133 cloth bags, and 28,000 liters of Iranian oil.

Karachi saw the confiscation of 164 cigarette stacks, 483 cloth bags, and 19,000 liters of Iranian oil.

Quetta reported the largest seizures, with authorities confiscating 3,864 cigarette stacks, 706 cloth bags, and 135,000 liters of Iranian oil.

Peshawar also con-

tributed to the crackdown with the recovery of 16,000 liters of Iranian oil.

Since the crackdown began on September 1, 2023, authorities have seized a substantial amount of contraband goods, including 3,036 metric tons of fertilizer, 262 metric tons of flour, 34,626 metric tons of sugar, 236,547 stacks of cigarettes, 247,133 bags of cloth, and 6,055 million liters of Iranian oil.

These efforts are part of a broader strategy aimed at curbing smuggling, safeguarding public welfare, and stabilizing the national economy.

## Authorities directed to accelerate operation

RAWALPINDI (APP): Managing Director (MD) Water and Sanitation Agency (WASA) Rawalpindi here on Saturday directed the authorities concerned to accelerate operation against WASA defaulters.

Chairing a meeting held here, the MD WASA Saleem Ashraf warned the officials that negligence on their part would not be tolerated and all-out efforts should be made to ensure 100 per cent recoveries from the defaulters.

According to WASA spokesman, MD WASA on the directives of Director General, Rawalpindi Development Authority (RDA) Kinza Murtaza, had directed the officials to speed up the ongoing campaign against WASA

defaulters. The meeting was attended by the Director Revenue, Deputy Director Revenue and all relevant revenue staff.

The MD on the occasion said, "WASA is a self-sustaining institution and we meet all our expenses from our own resources, so no shortcoming in revenue recovery would be tolerated." He gave a special ultimatum to the WASA officers for 100 per cent recovery of the arrears from all the defaulters. The Revenue Director and Deputy Directors were ordered to immediately disconnect the connections of the defaulters.

The Senior Special Magistrate submitted a report during the meeting that arrest warrants were issued against four default-

ers namely Abdul Qayyum, Muhammad Anwar, Muhammad Parvez Abbasi and Muhammad Qasim Abbasi of Gilani Group of Hostels for non-payment of the arrears.

MD WASA said that the defaulters are being given a last chance till May 31 to clear their arrears, after which late fees and installments of the WASA bills would be banned and strict action in accordance with the law would be taken including property seizure, arrest of the defaulters and disconnection of water and sewage lines.

The MD asked the citizens to play their outstanding bills in time to avert legal action, adding, the crackdown would continue till 100 percent recovery from the defaulters.

## ED SSDO stresses govt to take concrete measures

ISLAMABAD (APP): Executive Director of Sustainable Social Development Organization (SSDO) Syed Kausar Abbas Sunday stressed the government to take concrete measures to implement Civic Education Commission Law 2018 in all formal and non-formal educational institutions.

Talking to App he said that to promote democratic culture, foster social harmony, and instill a sense of civic responsibility among the youth, civic education should be integrated into the curriculum as a subject.

He urged the government to establish a dedicated National Commission for Civic Education aimed at encouraging democratic values and fostering active participation among youth in national and social matters. "By integrating civic education into the national curriculum across all educational levels, we can empower upcoming generations with the necessary skills to engage responsibly in society as respectable citizens, uphold democratic ideals, and contribute positively to national development."

"Civic education equips individuals with knowledge, skills, and ethical

foundations crucial for addressing intricate social issues, exercising their rights, and fulfilling civic obligations," he added.

Syed Kausar Abbas, Executive Director of Sustainable Social Development Organization (SSDO), emphasized the urgent necessity of establishing a dedicated commission for civic education in Pakistan.

"A robust civic education curriculum is essential for fostering a culture of democracy, social harmony, and civic responsibility among the younger generation," he highlighted.

"Civic education plays a crucial role in raising citizens' awareness, enabling them to question matters of public significance, and motivating them to take proactive steps toward resolution." "In Pakistan, the concept of civic education is currently confined to imparting knowledge from social studies books to children," he said.

However, a thorough examination of the current social studies curriculum in Pakistan revealed that it primarily focused on teaching about the government, institutions, and their functions, with minimal emphasis on citizen-

ship education. "Therefore, it is crucial to introduce civic education as an independent subject in the curriculum."

"This initiative can significantly contribute to nurturing civic consciousness and promoting essential civic values among the populace." He added, "Over 300 accredited educational institutions, organizations, and NGOs actively participate in civic education initiatives."

"The Federal Agency for Civic Education in Germany plays a crucial role by providing teaching materials tailored for high school students across 16 federal states, facilitating their understanding of intricate social, political, and economic reforms," he said.

"The absence of civic education in Pakistan has contributed to a toxic political culture that undermines democracy. This deficiency in awareness about national issues and interests has led many Pakistanis to blindly align with some specific political party/parties, disregarding rational and logical political engagement. Consequently, this blind allegiance fosters discord and division within the society," he further added.



ISLAMABAD: Youngsters enjoy bathing in the pond to get some relief from hot weather in the Federal Capital. —APP Photo

### Wildfire erupts in Margalla Hills Park

ISLAMABAD (APP): A wildfire erupted in the scenic Margalla Hills National Park in the late evening hours of Friday due to heatwave impact and strong winds that raged the fire in the three kilometers stretch of Loi Dundee area of the federal capital.

In a statement issued here, PM's Coordinator on Climate Change and Environmental Coordination, Romina Khurshid Alam said all-out efforts were being made by the Ministry of Climate Change and Capital Development Authority (CDA) personnel to contain the raging fire.

Romina said the ongoing heat wave and increased wind speed mounted the intensity of the fire. "The fire has spread over an area of 3 km near Loi Dundee, Rathahoter and Pir Sohawa as due to gusty wind, the fire spread is fast."

She added that around 150 personnel were trying to control the fire, whereas precautionary measures were being taken to avoid any casualties. "Even at this hour of the night, CDA and Ministry of Climate Change officials are present on the spot," the PM's Coordinator said.

### Five members gang held

RAWALPINDI (APP): Police have arrested five members gang involved in motorcycle theft and recovered 09 stolen motorcycles along with batteries and weapons used in the crime from their possession during crackdown here Saturday.

According to police spokesman, Sadder Barooni police held three members involved in bike lifting identified as Usman, Haseen and Irfan and recovered 04 stolen motorcycles from their possession.

Similarly, Waris Khan police held two members gang involved in motorcycle theft namely Tanveer and Aftab and also recovered 05 stolen motorcycles from them. Divisional SPs said that the arrested accused will face charges with solid evidence and will be brought to justice. They emphasized that those who were involved in criminal activities will not escape the law.

### Repair work of One Window completed

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Capital Development Authority (CDA) has completed all the necessary construction and repair work of One Window to facilitate the residents, on the directions of its Chairman Muhammad Ali Randhawa. The working hours of One Window operation have also been extended from 9 am to 9 pm to facilitate the citizens, said a news release.

In line with directions, the authority has established more desks at One Window for the convenience of the residents of the federal capital. Similarly, special information counters have been set up for the citizens, while counters for all facilities provided by CDA have been established at one window. The process of digitisation of the record of CDA has also been started to ensure swift disposal of complaints and provision of all facilities to the citizens under one roof.

## PTI track record of spreading 'Anarchy'

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) senior leader Saad Rafique criticized the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) for its history of fostering "anarchy" in the country.

Talking to a private news channel, he said that "Whenever the country starts to progress, PTI dis-

rupts it. It is inappropriate for Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister Ali Amin Gandapur to use foul language against the centre."

Rafique expressed concerns about Gandapur's leadership in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, suggesting that his actions indicate an inability to manage provincial affairs and a desire to

create disturbances.

Addressing the recent developments within PML-N, Rafique commented on Shehbaz Sharif's resignation as party president.

"Shehbaz Sharif's resignation was accepted with a heavy heart, and his contributions as party president were greatly appreciated," he said.

## ANF seizes 59 kg drugs, 335,880 intoxicated tablets

RAWALPINDI (APP): Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) while conducting six operations across the country managed to recover 59 kg drugs, 335,880 intoxicated tablets and arrested seven accused.

ANF Headquarters spokesman informed on Saturday that in an operation, 335,880 intoxicated tablets were recovered from a container at Karachi port. 19.2 kg hashish, 1.2 kg

opium, 1.2 kg heroin and one kg Ice were recovered from the possession of three suspects arrested near Sangiani Toll Plaza Islamabad.

15.6 kg hashish was seized in Kohat Road Peshawar while an accused was arrested during the operation. 9.6 kg hashish and 4.8 kg opium were recovered from the possession of two suspects netted near Okara bypass.

In the fifth operation, 7.2 kg of hashish was recovered from an accused held in Dera Ismail Khan.

In the sixth operation, 75 grams of cocaine was recovered from a parcel sent from Lahore Airport to Karachi.

Cases under the Anti-Narcotics Act have been registered against the arrested accused while further investigations are under process.

## RDA Enforcement squad intensifies operation

RAWALPINDI (APP): The task force constituted to take strict action in accordance with the law against illegal housing schemes on the directives of the Divisional Intelligence Committee, has accelerated its operation.

According to the Rawalpindi Development Authority (RDA) Spokesman, the RDA Enforcement Squad conducted an operation against four schemes including Century Town, Taqwa Town, Green Enclave, and Rawat Enclave in Mouza Bagga Sheikh Khan, Gurha Bertha and on Main Kallar Syedan Road in Rawat.

The site offices of the illegal housing schemes were sealed besides demolishing containers, boundary walls and other infrastruc-

ture during the operation.

The spokesperson informed that the operation was supervised by Commissioner Rawalpindi Division, Muhammad Abdul Aamer Khattak, along with the Director General (DG) RDA, the Additional DG RDA, Deputy Commissioner (DC) Rawalpindi, and City Police Officer (CPO) Rawalpindi.

He said that on the instructions of the DG RDA Kinza Murtaza, the crackdown on illegal housing societies would continue and strict action would be taken against the rules violators.

He advised the citizens not to invest in illegal housing schemes and to check the status of the housing societies at the RDA web-

site [www.rda.gop.pk](http://www.rda.gop.pk).

The spokesperson informed that despite warnings to stop illegal advertisements, booking of the plots, and development work, the owners of the illegal housing projects were running booking offices in violation of the regulations.

The joint operation team included officials from the RDA, the Police Station Rawat and representatives from the District Administration. Muhammad Usman Bajwa, Assistant Director Building Control RDA/Incharge Enforcement Squad, Shiza Butt, Assistant Director Planning RDA, RDA Scheme/B u i l d i n g Inspectors and other team members took part in the operation.

## International Museum Day marked

ISLAMABAD (APP): The International Museum Day was celebrated in Pakistan on Saturday, like across the globe, to disseminate public awareness about the role of museums in preservation of the rich cultural legacy of nations.

The day was marked under the theme, "Museums for Education and Research" which underscores the essential role of museums as cultural institutions that provide comprehensive educational experiences and support research initiatives.

Public and private departments arranged a variety of events including seminars, conferences and discussion programmes to highlight the significance of the day.

In order to mark the International Museum Day, Pakistan Museum for Natural History (PMNH) offered free entry to its galleries on Saturday.

Among others, the Taxila Museum celebrated International Museum Day with a variety of special

activities and offerings.

The museum opened its doors for free to all visitors, providing an opportunity for everyone to explore its extensive collection without any admission fee. In addition to free entry, the museum organized complimentary guided tours, where knowledgeable guides shared insights and stories about the artifacts and exhibits, enriching the visitors' experience.

The event attracted a diverse crowd, including families, students, and history enthusiasts, who enjoyed the chance to learn more about the ancient city of Taxila, a UNESCO World Heritage Site known for its archaeological significance. The museum's exhibits include an impressive array of Gandhara art, ancient coins, jewelry, and other relics that depict the region's rich cultural and historical heritage.

Museums, as invaluable repositories of artistic, cultural, historical, traditional and fascinating artefacts, offer a wealth of knowl-

edge and insight and play a vital role in educating people about their nation's art, architecture, culture, history and civilisation.

Many artefacts housed in museums are open to the public, providing valuable insights into the lifestyles, tools and creations of ancient civilisations.

The inaugural ceremony of International Museum Day was organised in 1977 by ICOM, following the adoption of a resolution aimed at creating an annual event to unite the creative efforts of museums and raise global awareness about their activities.

Since then, museums worldwide have been invited to participate in IMD each year, promoting their role through events and activities aligned with the annual theme.

The tradition of adopting an annual theme began in 1992, with the introduction of an international poster by ICOM in 1997, which was embraced by 28 countries that year.

### 1,000 migrants deported

KABUL (Khaama Press): The Ministry of Refugees and Repatriations announced the return of nearly a thousand Afghan migrants and the release of 12 prisoners from Pakistani prisons. The ministry stated on Saturday, May 18th, in a newsletter, that 954 Afghan migrants returned to the country after being deported by Pakistan. According to the newsletter, the migrants returned to the country on May 17 and 18 via the Spin Boldak and Torkham borders of Nangarhar province.

## The Frontier Post

Ziqaad 10, 1445 — Sunday, May 19, 2024

### Afghan team met Alexey

KABUL (BNA): Al-Haji Nooruddin Azizi, Acting Minister of Industry and Commerce, led a delegation in a productive meeting with Alexey Overchuk, Deputy Prime Minister of Russia for Eurasian integration, alongside Sergei Pavlov, GD of Russian Railways and Dmitry Zverev, Deputy Minister of Transport of Russia. The meeting revolved around enhancing and balancing bilateral trade, preferential tariffs for Afghan goods, Russian investment in mining projects.

## Hanafi visits Jamhuriat Hospital — renews commitment to quality services

KABUL (BNA): In a recent visit to Jamhuriat Hospital, Mawlawi Abdul Salam Hanafi, the Deputy Prime Minister for Administrative Affairs, expressed his satisfaction with the progress and activities of the hospital.

During the visit, officials highlighted the ongoing process of reforms and standardization at Jamhuriat Hospital, emphasizing to boost efforts to address numerous health issues faced by the citizens.

Deputy PM Hanafi commended the hospital's officials for their dedication, stating that the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan remained committed and



determined to provide high-quality healthcare services to its citizens.

The Deputy Prime Minister further acknowledged the presence of experienced and dedicated specialist doctors leading the

hospital's affairs.

He expressed optimism that with such capable professionals at the helm, the work processes at Jamhuriat Hospital would continue to progress in the best possible manner.

## Ministry hails regional countries for their support

KABUL (BNA): The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan expresses gratitude for the solidarity of regional countries, the world with affected by the recent floods in the country.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs wrote on its X page, as a result of recent floods in Afghanistan, which resulted in hundreds of citizens martyred and thousands of homes destroyed, particularly affecting the residents of Baghlan province more than other regions, citizens suffered greatly, the Islamic Emirate, with all available resources, has begun serious actions and rapid efforts with the help and support of them.

This ministry adds, various countries in the region and the world, as well as international organizations, have also expressed their condolences and solidarity with the Afghan people. In this regard, Qatar, the United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Pakistan, Iran, Turkey, India, Russia, China, Uzbekistan, Azerbaijan, Japan, Egypt, countries in South Africa, the United States of America, the United Nations, the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, and the European Union have expressed sympathy and shared sorrow for the humanitarian crisis in Afghanistan.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan appreciates the solidarity with Afghanistan and expresses gratitude to the representatives of these countries on behalf of the Afghan people, stating that human solidarity enables people to access problem-solving and assurance, considering it a common feeling of Islamic and human international solidarity.

## UNAMA shocked by attack

BAMYAN (Khaama Press): The United Nations office in Kabul has expressed shock and horror at the "deadly terrorist attack" on civilians and unarmed tourists in Bamyan.

UNAMA has extended its condolences to the victims of this incident and stated its assistance in facilitating investigations.

"UNAMA is deeply shocked and appalled by the deadly terrorist attack on unarmed civilians and tourists in Bamyan, central Afghanistan," the statement said.

Meanwhile, the Embassy of Japan in Afghanistan has also condemned the event, stating that violence must be halted immediately.

The Spanish Foreign Minister has stated that three citizens of Spain were killed in Bamyan, and another citizen of Spain was injured. According to French news agency sources, three other wounded individuals are citizens of Norway, Australia, and Lithuania.

Pedro Sanchez, the Prime Minister of Spain, expressed shock at the news of Spanish tourists being killed in Afghanistan. He promised to follow up on this event.

The Taliban has confirmed that four individuals, including three Spanish citizens and one Afghan citizen, were killed in a shooting in Bamyan on Friday, May 17, with seven others, including four foreign citizens, wounded.

The Taliban claims that four individuals suspected of involvement in this attack have been detained. So far, no group has claimed responsibility for this attack.

Meanwhile, Friday's attack in Bamyan was unprecedented in recent years. In the twenty years of the Republic, Bamyan has been one of the safest and most attractive destinations for both foreign and domestic tourists.

The attack on foreign tourists in the heart of Bamyan challenges the Taliban's claim of providing overall security in Afghanistan.

## Afghan-Russian economic, trade relations take center stage at Kazan summit



KABUL (TOLOnews): Nooruddin Azizi, the acting Minister of Industry and Commerce, held meetings with the president of Mordovia and senior officials of the Russian Federation and Tatarstan on the sidelines of the Kazan Summit.

Akhundzada Abdul Salam Jawad, the spokesperson for the Ministry of Industry and Commerce, said that the discussions focused on increasing and balancing bilateral trade, preferential tariffs for Afghan goods, Russian investment in Afghanistan's mining and water dam projects, and Afghanistan's role in the North-South international transport corridor.

According to him, the meetings also emphasized expanding economic and commercial relations with the Russian Federation, reducing the costs of goods transportation via Russian railways, removing export taxes on raw materials, organizing a delegation trip to the ports of Astrakhan and Makhachkala, and holding a trade connectivity meeting and exhibition of Afghan products in Moscow.

The ministry's spokesperson added: "In this meeting, the President of Mordovia of the Russian Federation said that his country is ready to cooperate with Afghanistan in the wood industry, agriculture, and construction materials."

The Chamber of Industries and Mines described the delegation's visit to Russia led by the

Acting Minister of Industry and Commerce as a significant step in expanding Afghanistan's economic and political relations with Russia and Central Asian countries.

Sakhi Ahmad Paiman, the deputy head of the Chamber of Industries and Mines, said: "The more these economic, transit, and investment relations develop with Central Asian countries and other countries, the more it will contribute to Afghanistan's economic growth."

A number of economic analysts consider trade and transit agreements between Afghanistan and Russia crucial for the country's economic growth and development and view attracting Russian investors as influential in

creating employment opportunities in Afghanistan.

"May this trip yield good results so that they come and invest in Afghanistan. If they invest in infrastructure, mining, and road construction, our economy will advance," said Mohammad Nabi Afghan, an economic analyst.

Earlier, an official delegation from the Chinese Ministry of Commerce, in a meeting with the Deputy Minister of the Industry and Commerce, announced a major exhibition to be held on May 24 in China and said that they would provide good facilities for Afghans to participate in the exhibition and showcase Afghanistan's products.

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## Nicaragua president sends letter of condolence



KABUL (Ariana News): The Afghan Embassy in China announced Saturday that the President of Nicaragua has sent a letter of condolence to the leader of the Islamic Emirate, Mawlawi Hebatullah Akhundzada, following the recent deadly floods in Afghanistan.

Based on the embassy's statement, the letter was handed over by Michael Campbell, the Nicaraguan ambassador to China, to Bilal Karimi, the Afghan

ambassador to China.

In the letter, Nicaragua president, Daniel Ortega, while expressing his sympathy over the floods, expressed his interest in establishing good relations with the Islamic Emirate and cooperation in various fields.

The Nicaraguan ambassador stated that the Nicaraguan people, like the Afghans, achieved independence after a hard struggle against the colonialists, which is a common point

between the two countries.

Meanwhile, Bilal Karimi, Afghanistan's ambassador to China, has said that he will convey the condolence letter of the President of Nicaragua to the leader of the Islamic Emirate. He also assured of maintaining good relations with the country.

Karimi emphasized that all Latin American countries are important, but Nicaragua's taking the initiative is a positive and admirable move.

## Book week celebrated with one-day exhibition



BAMYAN (TOLOnews): A one-day book and Holy Quran exhibition has been held in Bamyan with the aim of promoting reading.

Thousands of different books were displayed at this exhibition by the Directorate of Information and Culture, booksellers, and some private libraries

for public viewing.

The celebration of Book Week is another reason mentioned for organizing this exhibition.

Safiullah Raed, the head of Information and Culture department of Bamyan said: "Today's exhibition of the Holy Quran and books is to encourage and moti-

vate students and writers to come and have access to books."

Most visitors to this exhibition, who are young people and cultural enthusiasts, said that economic challenges have prevented them from being able to buy the books they need.

"Such exhibitions are very useful because an individual can find their favorite book and turn to reading," said Mohammad Zaman, a visitor.

"Such exhibitions cause young people to turn to reading," said Reza Behzad, another visitor.

A number of booksellers participating in this exhibition said that in recent years, book sales in this province have decreased unprecedentedly. "There are two bookstores in Bamyan, and even those are not doing well in this province, which has several faculties and two libraries," said Imam Ali, a bookseller.

"Recently, book sales have significantly declined, and the income is not good either," said Hussain Jan, another bookseller.

## Ministry secures and restores thousands of historical relics

KABUL (BNA): The acting Information and Culture Minister, Mullah Khairullah Khairkhw, announced today, Saturday that a remarkable effort has been made to preserve and protect the country's rich historical heritage.

The ministry has transferred 5,000 historical relics from various regions to the National Museum, prevented the smuggling of 1,500 precious monuments, and restored an additional 2,000, said Acting Minister Khairkhw during an event.

Mullah Khairullah Khairkhw, Acting Information and Culture Minister, emphasized the importance of preserving Afghanistan's cultural heritage by reclaiming historical relics that have been illegally smuggled out of the country.

He declared these precious relics as the national



wealth and property of Afghanistan, urging relevant international organizations to collaborate in their return and ensure their protection.

The Ministry of

Information and Culture has been diligently working to protect Afghanistan's cultural treasures, which bear witness to the nation's rich history and diverse heritage.

The recent achievements reflect the dedication and commitment of the Ministry, further highlighting their efforts to preserve the country's historical legacy.

## Rashid returns home, introduced as AWCC's brand ambassador

KABUL (Ariana News): Afghanistan's cricket superstar Rashid Khan Arman was officially introduced Saturday in a ceremony in Kabul as brand ambassador for Afghan Wireless Communication Company (AWCC).

Rashid Khan returned to the country after several years at the official invitation of AWCC.

Aliullah Sarwari, CEO of AWCC, said at the ceremony that his company strives to ensure all citizens have access to high-quality telecommunications and internet services in the farthest and most remote areas of Afghanistan.

Sarwari added that high-quality telecommunication services, new technology, creating employment and access to the internet for all citizens in the farthest parts of the



country are among the most important objectives of this company.

He also stated that the appointment of Rashid Khan as the brand ambassador for AWCC was made from a commercial and spiritual perspective, Rashid Khan, mean-

while, said it is the first time that he has been chosen as an ambassador and will try to serve the people and the country in the same way that he shines in the area of cricket.

"I am happy and proud that I have been selected as a brand ambassador of

Afghan Wireless for the first time," said Rashid Khan.

Rashid Khan, the captain of Afghanistan national cricket team, has returned to the country after four years for the T20 games, and he was warmly welcomed by the people.

## F.P. Report

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سولہ ناردرن گیس  
Sui Northern Gas  
@ /SNGPLOfficial

# اب بھی سمجھ جاؤ بے نہ ہو کہ پچھتاؤ

## گیس چوروں کے خلاف بلا امتیاز کریک ڈاؤن کا آغاز

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**SNGPL dismantles 4,500-metre illegal pipeline in Lower Dir**

گیس چوری پر مزید 138 کنکشن منقطع، 54 لاکھ جرمانہ

ایک مقدمہ درج کر دیا گیا۔ لاہور پولیٹیکنیکل یونیورسٹی میں شاہراہ ملتان اور کٹرہ ٹرانزیشن کی بجائے جیل خانہ کی طرف سے گیس کی فراہمی کو روکا گیا۔

پشاور میں ایک گیس چور کی گرفتاری ہوئی ہے جس نے 17 کنکشن منقطع کروائے تھے۔ ان کے ساتھ ساتھ 24 دیگر ہزار 24 جنرل ملحقہ و 2 کنکشن منقطع کروائے گئے۔

**Factory's connection severed for using domestic meter**

Unit found using gas worth Rs400,000 to Rs500,000 per month

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**Over 180 gas connections disconnected in anti-theft drive**

**SNGPL detects 325,000 gas pilferage cases, recovers Rs2.4b during crackdown**

پشاور میں ایک گیس چور کی گرفتاری ہوئی ہے جس نے 12 کنکشن منقطع کروائے تھے۔ ان کے ساتھ ساتھ 24 دیگر ہزار 24 جنرل ملحقہ و 2 کنکشن منقطع کروائے گئے۔

**SNGPL intensifies crackdown on gas pilferers**

پنجاب کے پی، اسلام آباد: گیس چوری کیخلاف آپریشن جاری ہے۔ 2436 کنکشن منقطع، 87 لاکھ سے زائد کے جرمانے جانے لگے۔ لاہور پولیٹیکنیکل یونیورسٹی میں شاہراہ ملتان اور کٹرہ ٹرانزیشن کی بجائے جیل خانہ کی طرف سے گیس کی فراہمی کو روکا گیا۔

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**'Massive action' kicks off against gas theft in Punjab, KP**

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**214 gas connections severed, Rs2.7m fine imposed**

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## F.P. Report

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Now the IHC has formed a new bench and IHC CJ Justice Aamer Farooq has recused himself from the bench. Justice Tahir would be part of the new bench, though earlier he had declared the petition non-maintainable.