

**Yasmin berates Nawaz**  
**F.P. Report**  
LAHORE: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leader Dr Yasmin Rashid berates Nawaz Sharif and asks him to stop issuing false statements. In her letter from jail, she has criticised Nawaz Sharif and Maryam Nawaz, stating that they give sermons about no political revenge but on the other hand, the PTI leaders and workers are being political victimised.

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# Muslims begin Hajj in exhausting summer heat

MAKKAH (AP): Muslim pilgrims converged on a vast tent camp near Makkah called Mina on Friday, officially opening the annual Hajj pilgrimage. Ahead of their trip, they circled the Kaaba in the Grand Mosque, Islam's holiest site.

More than 1.5 million pilgrims from around the world have already amassed in and around Makkah for the Hajj, and the number was still growing as more pilgrims from inside Saudi Arabia joined. Saudi authorities expected the number to exceed 2 million this year.

This year's Hajj came against the backdrop of the raging war in the Gaza Strip between Israel and Palestinian militants, which pushed the Middle East to the brink of a regional war between Israel and its allies on one side and Iran-backed militant groups on the other. Palestinians in the coastal enclave of Gaza were not able to travel to Makkah for Hajj this year because of the closure of the Rafah crossing in May when Israel extended its ground offensive to the strip's southern city of Rafah on the border with Egypt.

"We pray for the Muslims, for our country and people, for all the Muslim world, especially for the Palestinian people," Mohammed Rafeeq, an Indian pilgrim, said as he headed to the tent camp in Mina. Palestinian authorities said 4,200 pil-

grims from the occupied West Bank arrived in Makkah for Hajj. Saudi authorities said 1,000 more from the families of Palestinians killed or wounded in the war in Gaza also arrived to perform Hajj at the invitation of King Salman of Saudi Arabia. The 1,000 invitees were already outside Gaza — mostly in Egypt — before the closure of the Rafah crossing.

"We are deprived of (performing) Hajj because the crossing is closed, and because of the raging wars and destruction," said Amna Abu Mutlaq, a 75-year-old Palestinian woman in Gaza's southern city of Khan Younis who had planned to perform Hajj this year but was unable to. "They (Israel) deprived us from everything." This year's Hajj also saw Syrian pilgrims traveling to Makkah on direct flights from Damascus for the first time in more than a decade. Syrians in rebel-held areas used to cross the border into neighboring Turkey in their trip to Makkah for Hajj.

"This is the natural thing: Pilgrims go to Hajj directly from their home countries," said Abdel-Aziz al-Ashqar, a Syrian coordinator of the group of pilgrims who left Damascus this year for Hajj. The pilgrimage is one of the Five Pillars of Islam, and all Muslims are required to make the five-day Hajj at least once in their lives if they are physically and finan-



cially able to do so.

It is a moving spiritual experience for pilgrims who believe it absolves sins and brings them closer to God, while uniting the world's more than 2 billion Muslims. For many Muslims, the Hajj is the only major journey that they make in their lives. Some spend years saving up money and waiting for a permit to embark on the journey in their 50s and 60s after raising their

children.

The rituals during the Hajj largely commemorate the Quran's accounts of Prophet Ibrahim, his son Prophet Ismail and Ismail's mother Hajar — or Abraham and Ismael as they are named in the Bible. Male pilgrims wear an ihram, two unstitched sheets of white cloth that resemble a shroud, while women dress in conservative, loose-fitting clothing with head-

scarves and forgo makeup and perfume. They have been making the ritual circuit around the Kaaba in the seven-minaret Grand Mosque since arriving in Makkah over recent days.

Saudi authorities have adopted security restrictions in and around Makkah, with checkpoints set up on roads leading to the city to prevent those who don't have Hajj permits from reaching the holy sites. Security authorities arrested many people who attempted to take pilgrims to Makkah who didn't have Hajj permits, said Lt. Gen. Muhammad al-Bassami, head of the Hajj Security Committee. Most were expelled from the country, while travel agents faced jail for up to six months, according to the Interior Ministry.

Many pilgrims whose documentations were not complete paid fines to be allowed into Makkah. On Friday, the pilgrims made their way to Mina, officially opening the Hajj. They then will move for a daylong vigil Saturday on Mount Arafat, a desert hill where the Prophet Muhammad is said to have delivered his final speech, known as the Farewell Sermon. Healthy pilgrims make the trip on foot, others use a bus or train.

The time of year when the Hajj takes place varies, given that it is set for five days in the second week of Dhu al-Hijjah, the last month in the Islamic lunar calendar. Most of the Hajj rituals are held outdoors with lit-

tle if any shade. When it falls in the summer months, temperatures can soar to over 40 Celsius. The Health Ministry has cautioned that temperatures at the holy sites could reach 48 Celsius.

Many pilgrims carried umbrellas to use under the burning sun, and in Mina charities distributed cold water and cooling stations sprayed pilgrims with water to cool them down. The faithful set up in their tents, resting in the rows of cubicles and praying together to prepare for the coming rituals. After Saturday's warship in Arafat, pilgrims will travel a few kilometers to a site known as Muzdalifa to collect pebbles that they will use in the symbolic stoning of pillars representing the devil back in Mina.

Pilgrims then return to Mina for three days, coinciding with the festive Eid al-Adha holiday, when financially able Muslims around the world slaughter livestock and distribute the meat to poor people. Afterward, they return to Makkah for a final circumambulation, known as Farewell Tawaf. In recent years, the annual pilgrimage has returned to its monumental scale after three years of heavy restrictions because of the coronavirus pandemic. In 2023, more than 1.8 million pilgrims performed Hajj, approaching the level in 2019, when more than 2.4 million participated.

## More relief in petrol price announced

**F.P. Report**

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Friday slashed the petroleum prices by up to Rs10.20 per litre for the next fortnight.

According to a press release issued by Prime Minister Office, the premier decreased the petrol price by Rs10.20 per litre and diesel by Rs2.33 per

litre.

On June 1, the government reduced the price of petrol by Rs 4.74 per liter and diesel by Rs 3.86 per liter.

According to the Prime Minister's Office, a total relief of Rs 35 per liter in petrol prices has been provided to the public so far.

Information Minister Atta Tarar announced that

the new prices for petrol and diesel will take effect from midnight tonight. Earlier, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif took a historic step to boost industry and exports by reducing the electricity price for industries by Rs 10.69 per unit. The electricity price for the industrial and export sectors has been set at Rs 34.99 per unit.

## Investment pacts with friendly countries PM for consultation with renowned firms

**FP. Report**

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Friday instructed the relevant authorities to hold consultation with the globally reputed consultancy firms to realize the investment agreements with the friendly countries.

The prime minister, in a meeting with a delegation of an international consultancy firm headed by former State Bank Governor Raza Baqir, also directed for consultation with the reputed firms to reduce the volume of government infrastructure and enhance effectiveness of the governance system. He told the delegation that there existed a huge potential for

investment in minerals and energy sectors.

Appreciating the key role of the private sector in national economic development, the prime minister assured of all-out facilitation by the government for economic revival. Federal ministers Ahsan Iqbal, Ahad Khan Cheema, Dr Musaddik Malik, Muhammad Aurangzeb, Awais Ahmed Leghari, ministers of state Ali Pervaiz Malik and Shaza Fatima Khawaja and relevant senior officials attended the meeting.

Meanwhile, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has approved the initiation of legislation regarding the Ease of Doing Business Act.

The Prime Minister granted the approval while chairing an important review meeting on

measures regarding ease of doing business and investment, in Islamabad. Speaking on the occasion, the Prime Minister said promotion of business and investor friendly environment in Pakistan is the top priority of the government.

The Prime Minister said documentation procedures should be simplified for business and business community under one window operations. In this regard, he directed to obtain assistance from Chinese experts regarding the establishment of one-stop shop facility center on the pattern of established project in Shenzhen, China. The meeting was briefed on Ease of Doing Business and other initiatives.

# بنائیں محفوظ فضائیں قیمتی قومی اثاثے بچائیں

اسیرپورٹ کے اطراف میں گندگی کے ڈھیر لگانے جب کہ عیدالاضحیٰ کے موقع پر تیربانی کی آلاشیں جگہ جگہ بھینکنے سے گریز کر کے اس کو مقدر کردہ معامات پر ہی تلف کریں۔ یہ پرندوں کو راغب کر کے فضائی حادثات کی صورت میں قیمتی حیوانوں اور قومی املاک کی تباہی کا سبب بن سکتے ہیں۔

فضائی حادثات اور سنگین نقصان کا باعث بننے والی دیگر سرگرمیوں پر ہوائی اڈوں کے اطراف میں سختی سے پابندی ہے

کبوتر بازی

ہوائی فائرنگ

لیزر بیم کا استعمال

پرندوں پر فائرنگ

پتنگ بازی

ذمہ دار شہری بنیں۔۔ قومی اثاثوں اور انسانی زندگیوں کو محفوظ بنائیں

حکومت خیبر پختونخوا  
محکمہ اطلاعات و تعلقات عامہ

INF(P)1414/24





# Zhao Shiren discusses China's global initiatives and impact on Pakistan's future



## DISPOSE OF OFFAL AND TRASH PROPERLY THIS EID TO PREVENT BIRD ACTIVITY NEAR AIRPORTS AND MAINTAIN SAFE AIR TRAVEL ATTENTION PLEASE!

During Eidul Azha, it's important to maintain cleanliness around the airport to ensure the safety of flight operations. Leaving offal and trash outside can attract birds, increasing the risk of bird strikes and jeopardizing flight safety. Please dispose of animal remains properly in designated bins or bury them. Let's work together to keep our surroundings clean, protect our environment and make air travel even more safer.



Director General,  
Pakistan Civil Aviation Authority  
[www.caapakistan.com.pk](http://www.caapakistan.com.pk)

PID-K-3547/23

## INVITATION FOR BIDS MEDICAL SUPERINTENDENT DHQ TEACHING HOSPITAL TIMERGARA DIR LOWER

DHQ Hospital Timergara Dir Lower invites sealed bids under Rule 6 (2b) of KPPRA Rules 2014 (Single stage two envelope procedure for purchase of the following items for DHQ Hospital Timergara Dir Lower for the financial year **2024-2025**. The sealed bids should reach through courier service/post registered in the office of the undersigned on or before **09-07-2024 at 10:30 am** and will be opened on the same day at **11:00am** in presence of the bidders their authorized representatives if they wish to attend. The document of bid received after stipulated time will not be acceptable nor entertained in bidding process.

(Quotations For the following or required)

S.No	Name of Item	CDR Amount
1.	Laboratory Chemicals, Regents	100,000
2.	Purchase of Local Drugs/Medicine	200,000
3.	Surgical disposable	50,000
4.	X-ray, CT Scan Film	60,000
5.	Beading clothing	20,000
6.	Medical gases	200,000
7.	Dialysis disposable	20,000
8.	Dental items/materials	20,000
9.	Contingency/washing items	10,000
10.	Stationery items	10,000
11.	Zakat medicine	10,000
12.	ECG roll Three challel/&Ultrasound/ECG jelly	5000

- The quoted rates must be valid up to **30.06.2025**.
- The quotations must be computer printed and should be no cutting. Hand written quotation will not be accepted.
- Bid must be accompanied with bid security as per amount mentioned against each category separately in shape of call deposit receipt (CDR) original in name of Medical Superintendent DHQ hospital timergara.
- The bidders must be registered with FBR and sales tax department and on FBR Active Tax payer list, registration must be attached with quotation.
- If the documents submitted by the bidder in response to the tender are found to be fake or bogus during scrutiny, the bid security of that firm/bidder shall be forfeited in favor of the procuring entity, after providing the bidder an opportunity to explain within one week from the notice.
- The bidders are requested to give their highest possible discount on Maximum Retail Price (MRP) for Local purchase of Drugs/Medicine/zakat medicine.
- All taxes applicable by the levied Government shall be deducted from the bill of bidders.
- Bidder must attach affidavit/certificate regarding non-blacklisting by any Government/Semi-government/Autonomous body on stamp paper of Rs.100/- duly sign by bidder and attested by Notary public/Oath Commissioner.
- The procuring entity may reject all bids or proposals at any time prior to the acceptance of a bid or proposal. under clause 47 of KPPRA Rules.
- Interested bidders may obtain Bid solicitation documents/ detailed terms and conditions on written request from Medical Superintendent DHQ teaching hospital Timergara office before **09-07-2024**.

**MEDICAL SUPERINTENDENT  
DHQ HOSPITAL TIMERGARA DIR LOWER**

INF (P) 1407/24

### F.P. Report

LAHORE: Chinese Consul General Mr Zhao Shiren Explores China's Expanding Role in Global and Regional Politics and its Benefits for Pakistan at CASS Lahore.

The Centre for Aerospace & Security Studies (CASS) Lahore, hosted His Excellency Zhao Shiren, the Consul General of the People's Republic of China, for an enlightening guest lecture titled "China's Growing Influence in Global and Regional Politics: Benefits for Pakistan" on 14 June 2024.

Mr Ameer Abdullah Khan, Senior Researcher, CASS Lahore, introduced the speaker. The distinguished guest highlighted the importance of global peace. He argued that multipolarity with inclusive stakeholder engagement is more favourable than unipolarity and bipolarity for the developing world. He elaborated China's major initiatives under President Xi Jinping: the BRI, Global Development Initiative, Global Security Initiative, Global Civilisation Initiative, and proposed Global AI Governance Initiative as crucial steps in this regard. He praised the strong partnership between

Pakistan and China and noted significant trade growth and investment opportunities under the CPEC.

Emphasising Pakistan's future economic and social growth, he highlighted the importance of embracing global, green, and digital initiatives. He further highlighted China's mediation efforts in international security, and reaffirmed support for a two-state solution for Palestine and backed Pakistan's stance on Kashmir.

The talk was followed by an engaging and interactive session, during which the participants delved deeper into the various facets and dimensions of the enduring Pakistan-China friendship.

The event concluded with closing remarks by Air Marshal Asim Suleiman (Retd), President, CASS Lahore, who amplified the significance of the enduring partnership between Pakistan and China in all spheres as a vital contributor to the former's economic development and infrastructure.

He stated that this strategic partnership should focus on industrialising through SEZs, developing a long-term export strategy, modernising agriculture, and enhancing cooperation in science and technology, and security. He also acknowledged China's growing global influence and highlighted Pakistan's commitment as a strategic partner in the region and beyond.

The talk provided valuable perspectives on how Pakistan can leverage its strategic alliance with China

to navigate the complexities of global politics and regional developments.

This event also signified the enduring partnership between the two nations.

## PUBLIC NOTICE

### LIFESTYLE HOUSING, TEHSIL SHAH ALAM, DISTRICT PESHAWAR

The public is hereby informed through this notice that Lifestyle Development (SMC-PVT) Limited through Mr. Muhammad Ashraf S/o Sardar Muhammad Address Akakhel stop, Warsak Road, P.O Mathra, Peshawar, Pakistan has applied to Tehsil Municipal Administration Mathra, Tehsil Shah Alam, District Peshawar for sanction of the housing scheme named as "Lifestyle Housing" located at Mouza Panam Dheri & Mouza Ghajli Kandar Khel, Tehsil Shah Alam, District Peshawar for an area of 3000 Kanal.

The detail list of khasra numbers along with mouzas:

Mouza Name	Khasra Number	Area
Panam Dheri	1 to 8, 10 to 21/1, 22, 25, 25/1, 25/2 to 29, 32, 180, to 205, 207 to 225, 227 to 232, 236, 247, 248, 250/1, 1297, 1298, 1300, to 1303, 1305, 1509 to 1517, 1519, 1520, 1523 to 1526, 1529 to 1552, 1554 to 1559, 1562 to 1593, 1596 to 1600, 1603, 1604, 1783, 1785, 1785/1, 1787 to 1791, 1793, 1811 to 1898, 1905, 1907, 1908 to 2092, 2094 to 2099, 2127, 2137	2904 Kanal
Ghajli Kandar Khel	412, 414 to 419, 421, to 442, 449 to 453, 460, 462, 463, 466 to 468	96 Kanal
Total Area		3000 Kanal

Any person having objection against sanction of the scheme "Lifestyle Housing" Peshawar or title/ownership of land may, with in 30 (thirty) days of publication of this notice in newspaper, submit the objections (if any) with valid supporting documents in writing to the undersigned, any objections filed after due date shall not be entertained. This notice shall not be taken as commitment from the Tehsil Municipal administration, Mathra, Peshawar for sanction of the said housing scheme.

Office of the Tehsil Municipal Administration

Address: Talab Road, Nothia Qadeem, Old District Council Office, Peshawar Phone: 091-9214164

**Mr. Gul Wali Khan (TMO, TMA Mathra) | Mr. Muhammad Haseeb (TO, (I&S) TMA Mathra)**  
**Mr. Waqas Khan (TO, (R) TMA Mathra | Ms. Rabia Noreen (Architect, TMA Mathra)**

INF(P) 1386/24

## TENDER NOTICE

- Sealed bids on the basis of "Items Rate System" are hereby invited from the contractors / firms already registered with this office for project **"Construction of 5 x Male/Female Joint Check Post at Khyber and Bajaur Tribal Districts** for a total estimated cost of Rs.574.494 million.
- Tender form & complete set of bidding documents can be collected from the date of appearance of the advertisement in the press from the office of undersigned on production of call deposit (original) till **2<sup>nd</sup> July 2024**.
- The bidding shall be carried out on the basis of **"item rate system"**, wherein the bidders are required to Quote in % on project cost in the BOQ, in case of non schedule item no % will be allowed.
- The bids shall be accompanied with the earnest money/Bid security @ 2% of bid cost in favour of the IGFC KP (North) in shape of call deposit from any scheduled bank of Pakistan.
- As per provincial Govt. notification no. SO (FR)/FD/9-7/2011/VOI-1-11 Dated 05-11-2014, in case of quoting bid upto 10% below on the engineer estimate, the bidder will furnish an additional security with the bid, in shape of call deposit/bank guarantee. Further, in lieu of bank guarantee/call deposit, an equivalent insurance coverage of a company having at least AA rating from PACRAMR shall also be acceptable from contractors/bidders, subject to verification by the scheduled bank, whereas bank guarantees will be obtained from the contractors/bidders quoting more than 10% below on engineer estimate. These guarantees will be discharged on expiry of the defect liability period of the contract.
- The bids must reach to the office of the undersigned up to **2<sup>nd</sup> July 2024 on 1100 hrs** through registered courier services. Wherein the bids will be opened on the same day at 1200hrs in the presence of bidders / their representatives, who may like to attend, in the office of the IGFC KP (North), Works Branch HQ Frontier Corps KP Peshawar. The late bids received will not be entertained.
- Bids will be valid for 90 days from the date of acceptance of tender by the competent authority.
- Any item not reflected in the bill of quantities (BOQ) and required at the site, shall be paid in accordance with MRS rates, subject to prior approval.
- Incomplete/disfiguring/over-writing/by-hand/delayed bids will be considered non-responsive.
- In case of equal bids 1st, 2nd and 3rd etc, the lowest bidder would be decided through toss/ draw by the undersigned.
- The procuring entity may reject all bids or proposals at any time prior to the acceptance of a bid or proposals. The procurement entity shall upon request communicate to any contractor who submitted a bid or proposal, the ground for rejection of all bids or proposals as per PPRA.
- The bidders are liberty to seek any clarification or further information from the office of undersigned, if desire on any working day during office hours.

**Lieutenant Colonel  
GSO-I (Works)**

**For Inspector General Frontier Corps KP (North)**

## NOTICE FOR INVITING E-BIDDING

(Single Stage Two Envelope Procedure)

The Chief Engineer (Merged Area) Irrigation Department, Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Peshawar, through Executive Engineer, Mohmand Irrigation Division Mohmand invites Technical and Financial proposals in accordance with KPPRA procurement rules 2014 on Single Stage Two Envelop Procedure for the following works.

S#	Name of Work / Sub Work	E/Cost (million)	Earnest Money	PEC Category / Relevant Code
(A)	<b>Construction of Irrigation Tube Wells / Lift Irrigation Schemes and Solarization of existing Irrigation Tube Wells in Merged Areas (AIP) ADP No. 210588(2023-24)</b>			
1	Construction of new Irrigation Tube Well at Sadu Khel Kamali Halimzai District Mohmand (Solar Component)	3.564	71280	C-6 & EE-11
2	Construction of new solar Irrigation Tube Wells in District Mohmand (02 Nos) (Solar Component)	7.12	142400	C-6 & EE-11
3	Construction of new solar Irrigation Tube Wells in Lower Mohmand (02 Nos) (Solar Component)	6.90	138000	C-6&EE-11
4	Construction of new solar Irrigation Tube Well in Lower Mohmand (Solar Component)	3.470	69400	C-6&EE-11
5	Solarization of Existing Irrigation Tube Wells in District Mohmand (02 Nos. at Ekka Ghund, 02 Nos. at Pindiali, 02 Nos. at Ambar and 04 Nos. at Prang Ghar) (Solar Component)	32433	648660	C-5&EE-11
6	Solarization of Existing Irrigation Tube Wells in District Mohmand (02 Nos at Ekka Ghund, 04 Nos at Pindiali, 03 Nos at Ambar and 05 Nos at Prang Ghar) (Solar Component)	46702	934040	C-5&EE-11
7	Solarization of 15 Nos Existing Irrigation Tube Wells in Hassan Khel Sub Division Peshawar (Solar Component)	50373	1007460	C-5 & EE-11
8	Solarization of Existing Irrigation Tube Wells in District Mohmand (07 Nos at Halimzai, 03 Nos at Safi & Qandhari and 06 Nos Khawazai / Baizai) (Solar component)	56900	1138000	C-5 & EE-11
9	Solarization of Existing Irrigation Tube Wells in District Mohmand (05 Nos. Khawazai / Baizai, 07 Nos. at Safi, 07 Nos. Halimzai 03 Nos. Dawazai Ambar, 03 Nos. at Prang Ghar and 03 Nos. at Pindiali) (Solar Component)	85263	1705260	C-4 & EE-11

### TERMS AND CONDITIONS

- Bid Solicitation Documents containing all the terms and conditions and other relevant instructions for the works can be downloaded from the Irrigation Department and/or Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Public Procurement Regulatory Authority websites ([www.irrigation.gkp.pk](http://www.irrigation.gkp.pk)) ([www.kppra.gov.pk](http://www.kppra.gov.pk)).
- Electronic bidding shall be done on **"Above/Below system"** on BOQ / Engineer's estimate.
- The bidder shall submit their bids on the following address **"Executive Engineer Mohmand Irrigation Division, Gate No: 03 (DC Peshawar Complex) Khyber road Peshawar"** through reliable courier Service on or before the deadline along with required documents as per details mentioned in Bid Solicitation Documents.
- All bidders are required to have valid registration with Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Revenue Authority (KPPRA).
- The bidder shall submit 02% bid security of the estimated cost as mentioned above, in the shape of deposit at call (Original) enclosed along with their bid before closing date and time in the name of Executive Engineer, Mohmand Irrigation Division, Mohmand.
- Notifications issued by Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Public Procurement Regulatory Authority pertaining to procurement process issued from time to time shall be applicable.
- If the evaluated electronic bid costs of two or more bidders are equal, then the successful bidder will be declared through draw/toss.
- Pre-Bid meeting will be held on **25-06-2024 at 11:00 A.M** in the office of Chief Engineer (Merged Area) H# 18 / BB-1, Park road, University Town Peshawar.
- The last date & time for Submission of the Technical & Financial Bid along with relevant documents is 04-07-2024 upto 2:00 P.M. The Technical bids will be opened on the same day at 02:30 P.M in the office of Executive Engineer, Mohmand Irrigation Division, Mohmand in presence of Contractors and their representatives who wishes to attend.
- The Financial Bids of the Technically Approved Contractors / Firms only, will be opened on 19-07-2024.
- The defect liability period of 2 years (for all allied accessories) & warranty for solar panels of 25 years shall commence from the date of commissioning of the tube wells.
- Any bidder who provided incorrect information shall stand disqualified as per KPPRA Act Section 29 (I) rule (43).
- The procuring entity has the authority to reject any E-bid or all E-bids assigning valid reasons.
- Bid security of 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> lowest bidders will be retained till the approval of bids by the competent authority.
- All Govt. Notifications/Rules/Taxes updated from time to time shall be applicable.

**Executive Engineer,  
Mohmand Irrigation Division Mohmand**

INF(P)1360/24

## Jamaat-e-Islami rejects Sindh Budget 2024-25

KARACHI (PPI): Following the proposal of budget for the fiscal year 2024-25, Jamaat-e-Islami (JI) expressed strong disapproval of the Sindh government's budget 2024-25 on Friday.

Mohammad Farooq, the Parliamentary Leader of Jamaat-e-Islami in the Sindh Assembly, highlighted several key issues and demanded justice for the people of Karachi.

Farooq criticized the budget for providing tax waivers to agriculture, specifically benefiting large landowners. He emphasized that this policy favors the wealthy elite at the expense of broader economic equity.

The JI leader argued that instead of waiving taxes for big landowners, the tax tariffs should be increased for holdings between 100 to 1000 acres. This, he suggested, would ensure a fairer distribution of the tax burden and contribute more effectively to provincial revenues.

A major point of contention for JI is the alleged neglect of Karachi in the budget. Farooq highlighted that there is "nothing for Karachi" in the financial plan, underscoring the city's critical needs and the absence of adequate funding to address them.

He demanded a substantial allocation of 500 billion PKR specifically for the development of Karachi, asserting that the city's infrastructure and public services require significant investment.

Earlier in the day, Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah, who also holds the portfolio of Finance Minister, presented a Rs3.056 trillion budget for the next fiscal year 2024-25, proposing a massive hike of 22 to 30 pc in salaries and a significantly higher development expense of Rs959 billion.

Addressing the budget session of the Sindh Assembly, CM Murad Ali Shah said that the total outlay of the budget for the province is estimated at Rs3.056 trillion.

## Correction

My address in Pakistan Engineering Council namely M/S Abdul Wajid & Sons Govt: Contractor License # 24883, written as Moh: Choi, Village Noorpur Haripur. now my address is changed to Bilal Town Dheri Road Sikanderpur Haripur please use new address in future.

## Name Correction

My name is Zenab Riaz daughter of Riaz. However, in my educational documents it is written as Zenab Riaz daughter of Riaz Shamsul Qamar. Therefore, correction be made in my documents.

## CORRIGENDUM

Enclosed please find herewith (7) copies of corrigendum to be published in daily newspapers for the works **Rehabilitation of Existing Protection Bund in Urban Area Development Authority Dera Township D.I.Khan and Reconstruction of Urban Area Development Authority office Dera Township D.I.Khan** advertisement regarding e-bidding 1st time already published in daily newspapers vide INF (P)1268/24.

INF(P) 1411/24

### Deputy Director

Urban Area Development Authority  
Dera Ismail Khan



**The Khyber Institute of Child Health & Bashir Bilour Memorial Children Hospital Hayatabad Peshawar**

## CORRIGENDUM / ADDENDUM

Reference Advertisement No. INF (P) 974/24 dated: **16.05.2024**, appearing in different newspapers. The submission date of the same tender is hereby extended to **25-07-2024 for all Bids at 11:00 am and Bids will be open at 11:30 AM on the same day** in the presence of Tender Opening Committee & bidders.

**Note:** The remaining Terms & Condition of the previous advertisement shall be same.

### Project Director

**KICH & Children Hospital, Hayatabad Peshawar  
Phase-V, Near Passport Office, Hayatabad Peshawar**

Say No to Corruption

INF(P)1402/24



# Police meeting discusses security arrangements

Syed Adnan

PESHAWAR: In a concerted effort to ensure peace and security in Peshawar during the upcoming religious festivals of Eid al-Adha and Muharram, a high-level meeting was held under the chairmanship of Capital City Police Officer (CCPO) Peshawar, Qasim Ali Khan.

The meeting took place at Malik Saad Shaheed Police Lines and included senior police officers and officials from various administrative institutions.

The primary focus of the meeting was to review and enhance the overall security arrangements within the city, specifically for the upcoming religious events.

CCPO Qasim Ali Khan emphasized the importance of maintaining robust coordination among

religious leaders from different sects, the business community, scholars, and all relevant administrative bodies to ensure timely identification and resolution of any security issues.

Key participants in the meeting included SSP Operations Kashif Zulfikar, SSP Coordination Muhammad Waqas Khan, Chief Traffic Officer Saud Khan, SP Headquarters Rahim Hussain Khan, SP Security Arshad Khan, divisional SPs, SDPOs, and SHOs.

CCPO Qasim Ali Khan reiterated the commitment of the Peshawar police to utilize all available resources to safeguard the lives and properties of citizens. He instructed a comprehensive security audit of all Imambargahs, mosques, and other significant religious sites, followed by the formulation

of a detailed security plan based on the audit findings.

Special attention was given to establishing security checkpoints and increasing snap checking at all entry and exit points of the city.

The CCPO also addressed the issue of unauthorized Afghan migrants, mandating strict legal action and enhanced surveillance of suspicious individuals at city borders. Further, he directed the police to monitor hotels and inns closely and conduct information-based search and strike operations in peripheral areas.

To ensure foolproof security during Muharram, CCPO Qasim Ali Khan ordered the review and activation of all CCTV cameras for effective monitoring of processions and routes.

He stressed that no lapses in security would be tolerated, and a high state of alertness would be maintained. Local police would be deployed at all checkpoints and entry points, and control rooms would be set up for real-time monitoring.

Additional forces, including the Rapid Response Force, Quick Response Force, Ababeel Squad, City Patrolling Force, Elite Unit, and sniffer dog and BDU squads, along with plainclothes officers, would also be deployed to bolster security measures.

The meeting underscored the collaborative efforts required to maintain peace and security in Peshawar, ensuring that the religious events proceed without incident and with the highest level of safety for all citizens.



PESHAWAR: Commissioner Peshawar and CEO WSSP Riaz Mehsud chairing a meeting on Eid Operation Plan.

## PHC seeks response from PCB within 15 days

Humayun Khan

PESHAWAR: A divisional bench of Peshawar High Court (PHC) comprised Justice SM Attique Shah and Justice Shakeel Ahmad reissued notice to the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) seeking response within 15 days on a petition filed against the removal of the chairman of scrutiny committee, on Friday.

During hearing PHC informed that the petitioner's Arbab Altaf, who was removed as chairman of the scrutiny committee by PCB Chairman Mohsin Naqvi is illegal and against the law.

The petitioner's counsel argued that appointment of Mohsin Naqvi as PCB Chairman is also illegal because caretaker Prime Minister did not have the authority for this appointment.

The petitioner's removal by an illegally appointed chairman was also unlawful, PHC told.

Peshawar High Court reissued a notice to PCB seeking response within 15 days while adjourned further hearing till 27th June.

## As many as 265 cases disposes of before Eid

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: District Session Judges and Judicial Magistrates disposed of 265 cases of petty while prisoners were released for Eid-ul-Azha across Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

Chief Justice Peshawar High Court Justice Ishtiaq Ibrahim issued special directions to District & Sessions Judges of all the districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa along with the Judicial Magistrates to conduct jail visits in their respective jurisdictions ahead of the Eid-ul-Azha.

During the visits, an aggregate of 265 cases of petty nature were disposed of, and resultantly the confined accused persons were released from jail to celebrate Eid festivities with their families.

## Govt removes BoD chairperson of Qazi Hussain Medical Complex

Umair Muhammadzai

PESHAWAR: The provincial government has removed the chairperson of Board of Governor of Qazi Hussain Medical Complex, Nowshera, Dr Muhammad Ashfaq Khan.

"In exercise of powers conferred under Sub-Section-3 of Section-5 of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Medical Teaching

Institution Reforms, Act 2015 (Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Act No.IV of 2015) amended from time to time), the Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa is pleased to remove Dr Muhammad Ishfaq Khan from Chairperson Member of Board of Governor of Medical Teaching Institution, Qazi Hussain Ahmad Medical Complex, Nowshera, with immediate effect in the best public

interest," said notification issued by the KP health department.

Similarly, the Chief Minister Ali Amin Khan Gandapur has acceded approval to appoint Dr Nausherwan Burki as Member of Board of Governors for MTI Lady Reading Hospital (LRH) Peshawar.

As per the notification, the approval was given on the the recommendations of Search and Nomination Council. Dr Burki, cousin of former premier and PTI founder Imran Khan, had been replaced with Dr Zubair Khan, retired doctor in LRH by the caretaker government of KP.

He is best known for introducing much publicised health reforms in the province.

Naushirwan Burki has been elected as Member Board of Governors for

LRH Hospital for the period of three years. According to a notification "Maj Gen R Salahuddin Qasim has been appointed as the Chairman of the Board of Governors (BOG) of the Swabi Medical Complex, while Maj Gen Amjad Fahim has been appointed as the Chairman of the BOG of the Hayatabad Medical Complex."

Dr Shahnaz Nawaz also appointed as a member of the BOG LRH while Malik Akhtar Hussain and Khalid Rasheed have been elected members of BOG Hayat Medical Complex (HMC).

Taimur Shah, Rubina Nauman were named as members of Khyber Teaching Hospital (KTH) hospital. Dr Asif elected member of BOG Peshawar Institute of Cardiology after the approval of CM-KP.

## Acting mayor directs cleanliness on Eid

PESHAWAR (APP): Acting Mayor Peshawar Akhunzada Zahidullah Shah Friday said that the Capital Metropolitan staff with their collective happiness would ensure cleanliness during the forthcoming Eid-ul-Adha.

He also warned action against all those who will be found negligent in the duty during the Eid-ul-Adha.

The acting Mayor Peshawar was addressing during an emergency meeting called in the Capital Metropolitan Government Peshawar with acting mayor Ahmed Khalil

Muhammad Ismail Capital Metropolitan, Assistant Director Ayaz Khan, Deputy Director Zil Hajja Ilyas, Deputy Director West Zone Ayaz Durrani, Saud Khan, Shah Faisal, Mahmoodul Hasan, Wah Wah Khan, Tahir Zareen, Wali Muhammad, Gulistan and Rehmat Shah and others participated in this occasion.

Regarding the problems in their areas, the WSSP officers were informed that the coordination of the MI chairmen of each NC will be maintained because the chairman is aware of the sanitation situation in his area as long

as the local elected representatives and the officials of the institutions interact.

On this occasion, Acting Mayor Peshawar Akhunzada Zahidullah Shah said that all arrangements should be completed regarding Eid-ul-Adha because cleaning is also done on the occasion of Eid-ul-Fitr.

The situation was worse due to which there were piles of garbage in the areas, so we need best arrangements on the occasion of Eid-ul-Adha.

He also appealed to the people not to throw their garbage in different areas rather throw the same in the specified areas.

## Admin bans tomatoes transportation, closes down illegal cattle markets

PESHAWAR (APP): District administration Peshawar under Section 144 of the Criminal Procedural Code (CrPC) has banned the transportation of tomatoes from the district to any other district on Friday. The restriction has been imposed while taking notice of the unregulated transportation of tomatoes from district Peshawar to cause a shortage of this essential commodity within the district, leading to a significant increase in the prices, which adversely affects the general public. The order would remain enforce for a period of 10 days from the date of the issuance, unless modified or withdrawn earlier. However, government agencies involved in the transportation of tomatoes for official purposes and licensed traders with valid permits issued by the district administration Peshawar are exempted of the ban. Deputy Commissioner (DC) Peshawar has directed police and other law-enforcement agencies to enforce the ban strictly and prosecute anyone found violating the order under Section 188 of the Pakistan Penal Code (PPC).

## APNS rejects 10% GST on newsprint, appeals PM for exemption

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: The All Pakistan Newspapers Society (APNS) has strongly rejected the imposition of a 10% General Sales Tax (GST) on the import of newsprint and has urged the federal government to exempt the print media from GST.

In a joint statement, APNS President Naz Afrin Sehgal Lakhani and Secretary General Sarmad Ali stated that the imple-

mentation of GST on newsprint imported by the newspaper industry would prove disastrous for the already struggling print media. They highlighted that all the newsprint and other materials used by newspapers are imported, and the unprecedented devaluation of the Pakistani rupee has significantly increased the costs for newspapers.

Consequently, the prices of newspapers have risen, severely affecting their circulation.

Financial difficulties have been further exacerbated by the long-standing non-payment of dues by federal and provincial governments.

APNS officials mentioned that the newspaper industry had hoped for supportive measures, including a 35% increase in government advertisement rates. Instead, the Finance Minister's announced financial bill included the imposition of GST. APNS emphasized

that the print media is the fourth pillar of the state and serves the nation by safeguarding the public's right to information and expression.

Therefore, the government must support public access to information, especially in times of widespread misinformation and propaganda.

APNS appeals to Prime Minister Mian Shehbaz Sharif to instruct the Finance Minister to withdraw the GST on newsprint.

## Fatimid Foundation observes Blood donor day

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Fatimid Foundation organized observed World Blood Donor Day while Chairman Blood Donation Committee of Rotary International District Pakistan and Administrator of Peshawar Model Degree College

Younus Sethi was chief guest, on Friday.

Government College Professor Sabih Ahmed, PMDC Vice principal Fazal Haq and large number of blood donors and representatives from various walks of life attended the ceremony.

Chairman Blood donor

committee in his address, said that he has been donating blood since 1984 and has donated four times a year. He said that the Fatimid Foundation has so far provided over 18,000 blood bags to patients suffering from thalassemia, hemophilia, and other blood disorders.

Fatimid Foundation trustee Dr. Tufail Muhammad Khan, thanked the guests and presented a shield to Younus Sethi. The ceremony also included the distribution of certificates to blood donors and fund donors, and a walk was also organized.

## BRT Peshawar service to remain operational during Eid

PESHAWAR (APP): The Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) system of Peshawar will remain operational throughout all three days of Eid for the convenience of the public.

According to a spokesperson from the TransPeshawar,

evening operating hours of the ER-01 route will be extended on the Sunday after Eid (23 June) to further accommodate passengers.

The spokesperson explained that the purpose of extending the hours for the ER-01 express route is

to facilitate residents of Peshawar returning home after the Eid holidays. The service hours for this route will be extended by one hour, until 8 PM.

On the first day of Eid, the BRT service will commence at 10 AM and will operate until 10 PM. On the

second and third days of Eid, the service will start at 6 AM and continue until 10 PM.

The spokesperson from TransPeshawar stated, "Our organization is constantly striving to provide the best transport facilities to the public."

## Health minister visits RBC, attends ceremony to mark World Blood Donor Day

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: On the occasion of World Blood Donor Day, Health Minister Syed Qasim Ali Shah visited the Regional Blood Center (RBC) Peshawar. Accompanied by Dr. Kaleem ullah, CEO of Blood Transfusion Authority, and Dr. Noor-e-Saba, Manager RBC Peshawar. The Minister participated in a cake-cutting ceremony. Managers from other RBCs (Swat, Abbottabad and DI Khan) were also participated. In his statement, Minister Shah emphasized the crucial role of the RBC in a densely populated city like Peshawar. He urged the youth to donate blood generously and assured full support for the RBC. He also announced plans to link the Blood Transfusion Authority with HIV, Hepatitis program and the Healthcare Commission to enhance its effectiveness. Dr. Noor Saba, Manager of the RBC, provided an overview of the center's operations. She highlighted that the RBC Peshawar serves hospital blood banks eight major hospitals, including MTIs.

# Role of media in polio eradication discussed

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) Khyber Pakhtunkhwa with the support of United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) organized a one-day orientation session on the role of media in polio eradication here at a local hotel on Thursday.

The workshop focused on orienting the participants with increased programmatic knowledge and sensitizing them on how to accurately report polio eradication efforts, counter misinformation and negative propaganda, enabling them to understand the significance of polio eradication and their critical role in achieving it.

The workshop was attended by Program Manager UNICEF Dr. Wisam Hazem, President Peshawar Press Club Arshad Aziz Malik, Ex-President PPC Muhammad Riaz, officials of UNICEF, WHO and EOC, senior journalists, bureau chiefs of various media channels and health beat reporters of different print and electronic media

channels.

Addressing the inaugural session of the workshop, Program Manager UNICEF Dr. Wisam Hazem said that the journalists can shape public opinion through their reporting and shaping public opinion in favor of polio vaccination can help us eradicate polio virus. Wisam Hazem added that UNICEF is providing its support in polio eradication in terms of vaccine procurement and community engagement activities to address community concerns, remove vaccine hesitancy, defuse boycotts and create a favourable opinion in favour of polio vaccinations. However, he added, media can also play a key role in creating a favourable public opinion in favour of polio vaccination, countering negative propaganda against these vaccines and removing the existing misconceptions and myths among the people.

In his technical presentation on polio eradication, Dr. Nabeel Liaqat, Provincial Disease Surveillance Officer WHO, focused discussion on



the origin of polio virus, its epidemiology, different types of polio virus and vaccines as well as the significance of polio eradication through regular polio vaccination. He sought media support in build-

ing community trust and changing the perception of the people towards vaccine acceptability so that this virus may be wiped out from the last endemic zone. Shadab

Communication Officer UNICEF, while taking a session of external communications, focused on the significance of proper health reporting and explained that health reporting is essential for main-

taining and improving public health. She added that by providing valuable insights into health trends and issues, health reporting helps in shaping effective public health strategies and necessary legislation in this regard. Referring to polio reporting, she explained that polio reporting requires special skills and technical knowledge and stressed on the participants to master their skills to ensure effective reporting. She appealed to the media to extend their support to convince the people who are hesitant towards polio vaccination through effective human angle stories, developing documentaries and bring forth neutral and trusted voices to change the perception of the people.

Senior journalist and trainer, Safiullah Gul, guided the participants on how to develop effective stories for print and electronic media which may touch the feelings of their respective audience and lead to a change in positive behaviors towards public health. Addressing the concluding

session of the workshop Arshad Aziz Malik, President Peshawar Press Club, thanked EOC and UNICEF for organizing the orientation session for journalists. Referring to the support of media for the national cause of polio eradication, he said that the presence of senior journalists, cabinet members of the press club as well as a large number of health beat reporters of print and electronic media outlets are present in this workshop. Arshad Aziz Malik stressed on the need for conducting capacity building workshops for journalists and added that press club can extend technical support in this regard.

The orientation workshop proved to be a very insightful and interactive session and the participants suggested valuable inputs to further improve polio eradication efforts and ensure the eradication of this crippling disease once and for all.

The session concluded with distribution of shields and certificates among the participants.





## In brief

### KP govt to support investors Shafi Ullah

MINGORA: Provincial Minister for Forests and Climate Change Fazal Hakeem Khan Yousafzai has expressed the provincial government's full support for investors, welcoming them to the region. He stated that the Swat Township project is a prime development initiative for the Malakand Division. Fazal Hakeem Khan made these remarks during his visit to the Swat Township yesterday, where he was given a detailed briefing about the project by Dr. Masood Khan, co-owner of the Swat Township Odigram. The occasion was attended by prominent figures, including Imran Khan from Oman, Iqbal Khan from Dubai, Malik Yasir Khan, and others. Fazal Hakeem Khan Yousafzai emphasized that PTI leader Imran Khan and Chief Minister Ali Amin Gandapur are making every effort to promote tourism and investment in the province. He highlighted that Ali Amin Gandapur's top priority is the promotion of tourism and the provision of all possible facilities, for which all resources are being utilized. Fazal Hakeem Khan assured that no obstacles would be tolerated in the promotion of tourism and the path of investors, affirming the government's full cooperation with the owners and investors of Swat Township. He praised the administration of Swat Township for bringing such a remarkable project to Swat, which has become a hallmark for the entire Malakand Division. At the end of the visit, Fazal Hakeem Khan Yousafzai was presented with a shield by Syed Akbar Shah Lala and other officials of Swat Township Odigram.

### Traders observe strike in Karak F.P. Report

KARAK: The traders observed shutter down strike against shifting of courts from Takht Nusrati Tehsil to Karak city, demanded to reconsider it, on Friday. According to details, people protested against transfer of Takht Nusrati court to Karak Judicial Complex. Against the transfer of the court, the former deputy nazim of tehsil Takht Nusrati Haji Shahabuddin, chairman village councils and tehsil council members Malik Ayaz, Mohit Khan, Malik Shaukatullah, Tariq Akhund, Maulana Shaukatullah Adil, Malik Ilyas, Malik Mujahid Mehboob, Under the leadership of Shahidullah, Malik Imtiaz, Malik Aziz Khan, Maulana Arshad Nawaz Azizi and others, thousands of protesters walked from Takht Nusrati Bazaar to Takht Nusrati Court.

### JUI hold protest in Wana F.P. Report

WANA: Jammiat Ulema-e-Islam arranged protest at Wana and Shakai bazaars against attack on South Waziristan Emir Maulana Mirza Jan, demanding that the government restore peace in Lower Waziristan and apprehend the attackers, on Friday. According to details, JUI Emir Maulana Mirza Jan severely injured in a firing incident by unknown armed men last night on the Wana bypass. The news of the firing spread quickly in the area. JUI Emir was initially taken to the Headquarters Hospital Wana for treatment and later transferred to CMH Peshawar by military helicopter this morning. Sources close to him said that his condition was out of danger. Maulana Mirza Jan has played a key role in maintaining peace in Lower Waziristan.

# JI rejects federal govt budget for taxing poor people

F.P. Report

LOWER DIR: Jamaat-i-Islami, while rejecting both the federal government's budget for 2024-25, announced to devise a future course of action against taxing the poor. Speaking at a news conference here at Timergara the JI deputy provincial chief and former provincial minister Inayatullah Khan said that the government had presented a budget prepared by the IMF team.

The JI district chief Izazul Mulk Afkari, former MNA Sahibzada Yaqub Khan, district general secretary Hafiz Yaqubur Rehman, former MPA Saeed Gul, traders; leader Haji Anwarud Din and president Dir Chamber of Commerce and Industries Syed Noor Alam Bacha, tehsil chairman Samarbagh Saeed Ahmad Bacha, former tehsil nazims Imranud Din, Humayun Khan, Sultanat Yar Bukhari and others were also in attendance.

Inayat said that about Rs 13000 billion new taxes would be imposed affecting the masses indirectly. He said the government had added to the miseries of common people. He said that one year exemption from taxes in Pata and Fata had been announced that was tantamount to deceiving its residents. "There is nothing for poor people in the budget", he elaborated, adding that the budget was a jugglery of words. He said that about Rs 13000 billion would be received as new taxes that would directly affect the poor class.

The JI leader said that according to an agreement Malakand division had been a tax-free zone till 2069 while the government extended its tax free status only for one year. He criticized the government for increasing the levy on petroleum products from Rs 60 to Rs 80 which would affect the prices of all edibles. He said the JI was planning to devise its future strategy against the government after due consultation with trade unions and labour unions.

Meanwhile, former provincial minister for finance and leader of the Pakistan Tahreek Insaf Parliamentarian Muzafar Syed advocate told local journalists at Timergara that the government could not impose taxes in Malakand division without taking its people into confidence. He said that the former states of Dir, Swat and Chitral were merged into Pakistan after an agreement for the next 100 years that the government would not collect taxes from the local residents.

The former minister said that Malakand division was affected by militancy, floods and earthquakes. He said the PTI-P deputy chief Mahmood Khan was meeting the leadership of PPP and PML-N which was a routine matter. He clarified the former chief minister Mahmood Khan was not quitting the party. He criticized the government for dropping the projects of Dir University, Talash tehsil, Gopulum Irrigation Channel and demanded the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government to allocate funds for the Dir Motorway in its recent budget.

**Land disputes:** Two persons were killed and one was injured in different firing incidents at Samarbagh and Mayar over land property dispute.

## IG praises journalists' role in rule of law

F.P. Report

WANA: Inspector General Frontier Corps South commended the courage and resilience of the local journalists, who risked their lives to report on the conflict and promote peace in the region. He also acknowledged the significant contributions of the Ahmadzai Wazir tribe in supporting the security forces in their efforts to maintain peace in Lower Waziristan.

IG FC praised the role of journalists in highlighting

social issues and promoting societal progress. Journalists were also briefed on the measures taken by the Pakistan Army and FC to maintain peace in the region. Additionally, the challenges faced by journalists were discussed, and IG FC announced the renovation and repair of the Wana Press Club.

The IG emphasized that it was the collective responsibility of all stakeholders in Lower Waziristan to remain vigilant against those who sought to sabotage peace in the region. He

assured the journalists that the security forces, in collaboration with local tribesmen, would work tirelessly to restore functional district institutions that had been dormant due to the conflict. The meeting was seen as a significant step towards strengthening the relationship between the security forces, local tribes, and the media in Lower Waziristan. The journalists appreciated the IG FC's gesture and assured him of their continued support in promoting peace and stability in the region.

**University of Malakand passes surplus budget of Rs 1561.8m:** The University of Malakand (UoM) Syndicate; in its 16th emergency meeting passed a total of Rs 1561.98 million surplus budget. The meeting was held at the Committee Room, University of Peshawar with UoM vice chancellor Prof Dr Rashid Ahmad. The participants applauded the university management for presenting a surplus budget. Before the syndicate meeting, the budget was thoroughly discussed and deliberated upon in the Finance and Planning Committee meeting in the same venue.

The meeting was attended by Prof. Dr. Rasul Jan; Prof. Emeritus University of Peshawar, Mr. Javed Iqbal; Additional Secretary HED, Mrs. Beenish Ibrar; Deputy Secretary Finance, Justice (r) Miftahuddin, Prof. Dr. Muhsin as nominee HEC, Mr. Saeedullah; Additional Secretary Establishment and members of the syndicate from University of Malakand including Prof. Dr. Attaur Rahman, Prof. Dr. Arab Naz, Prof. Dr. Gul Zaman, Prof. Dr. Mir Azam Khan, Prof. Dr. Jamil Ahmad, Prof. Dr. Shafiq ur Rahman, Mr. Israrullah, Prof. Dr. Waqar Ahmad, Mr. Ubaidullah, Dr. Zahoor Ahmad, Mr. Ihsanullah, Dr. Salman Zeb, Mr. Saqib Khan, Dr. Muhammad Usman and Mr. Hayatullah Yousafzai, Registrar of the university.

**Community schools' teachers demand release of salaries:** Teachers of the basic community schools have complained that officials of education department working on deputation were getting perks while the teachers were yet to be paid for months. Talking to local journalists at Timergara here on Friday they demanded the Elementary Education Foundation to take notice of their miseries and release their salaries.

They said the employees of other departments, especially the teaching cadre of the Education Department, have occupied the administrative posts of the foundation which was against the transfer and posting policy of the government, the recent decision of the service tribunal, the decree of the Directorate of Education, and the regulations of the Education Foundation.

They said that due to this the Foundation paid them monthly expenses of more than Rs 3.5 millions only to the deputation staff and besides losing the rights of the regular employees of the Foundation. The demanded of the concerned high ups that officials working on deputation should be transferred back to their respective departments so that the unnecessary financial burden on the Education Foundation should be reduced.



QUETTA: A view of traffic jams due to rush on bazaar during Eid shopping.

## Commissioner hold meeting on law, order Sahibzada Afridi

F.P. Report

KOHAT: Commissioner Kohat Muhammad AbidWazir Friday held a meeting regarding review arrangements for a smooth passing of Eid-ul-Azha.

The meeting was also attended by officers from DistrictAdministration, Kohat including officials from Police, Health Department, TME, WSSC Kohat, Rescue1122 and other related departments participated. Commissioner Kohat Division Muhammad Abid Khan Wazir issued a special instruction to allITMAs and WSSC Kohat officers and asked them to take special care of cleanliness on the occasion of Eid-ul-Azha and dispose of animal waste at designated places.

On this occasion, Commissioner Kohat Division Muhammad Abid Khan Wazir issued orders to the Pesco officials to ensure uninterrupted power supply on the occasion of Eid-ul-Zuha and to the officers of other relevant departments.

## Man kills three in Nizampur Syed Waliullah Shah

NEWSHERA: An infuriated man who failed to convince his wife to return to his house, shot dead his mother-in-law, father-in-law and wife in Nizampur area of district Nowshera, police informed on Friday.

According to police the incident occurred in Enziri village of Nizampur where a man shot dead his wife, mother-in-law and father-in-law after failing to take back his wife to home. Those killed in the firing included Mir Akbar Khan (43), his wife (38) and daughter (22). Soon after receiving information about the incident rescue teams from Nowshera reached the site and shifted the bodies to District Headquarters Hospital Nowshera for medico-legal procedure. Police said the accused escaped the area after committing the triple murder adding investigation has been started to arrest him.

## Participants for restrain of drug smuggling

F.P. Report

LANDI KOTAL: People from different walks of life said "No" to narcotics, an awareness session held in Landi Kotal press club, district Khyber on Friday.

The wellbeing activity was initiated under the banner of Colombo Plan and besides the country director of the organization and Chief of Smart Foundation Muhammad Ayub, Tehsil Chairman Shah Khalid, Station House Officer (SHO), Landi Kotal police station Amjad Afridi, President Anjuman-e-Tajeran Landi Kotal Bazaar Yad Wazir Shinwari number of councillors, and member of the civil were among the participants.

Speaking on the occasion Muhammad Ayub said

that being a transit route, Khyber is the one of most drug affected districts. Supply reduction narcotics is the duty of security agencies however through their efforts can decrease demand for drugs. He went on that youth is the main portion of society who have been involved in the curse and bad company is considered, a main cause of it.

Drug addiction is a disease and drug addicts should be dealt with as patients, he added and said proper treatment needs to be given to them. He further added that awareness sessions and counselling is necessary to conscious the youth community of bad consequences of drugs.

Approximately three thousands drug affectees have been treated in

Peshawar therefore he urged the participants to demand the provincial government to set up a rehabilitation center in Khyber for the cure of the drug addicts. Tehsil Chairman Shah Khalid said that it is the duty of parents to have a close check on their children and restrain them from bad companies.

He maintained that smugglers should be discouraged and with joint efforts we can get rid of the curse. SHO, Landi Kotal police station Amjad Afridi assured that effective initiatives will be adapted to curtain drug dealing and peddling in the area. The participants demanded that the authorities concerted to take concrete steps to curtail drug, peddling, dealing and consumption in the area.

## APCA knocks SHC doors against illegal promotions

F.P. Report

LARKANA: A petition has been filed at Sindh High Court Circuit Bench Larkana against illegal promotion of junior clerks at Education's department by All Pakistan Clerks Association (APCA) representative, on Friday.

The plea filed by Abdul Nabi Dayo said that Larkana district, which is considered to be the center of politics in Sindh province, the seniority list of clerks has been manipulated by manipulating the seniority list of the clerks and the newly hired clerks have been illegally brought forward while talking to media. He said that for the past 3 months, the education department has also sent complaints to various officials, but nothing came out, after which the Sindh High Court has filed a case in the circuit bench of Larkana.

After that, the secretary of the education department, director of secondary and primary, DEO secondary and primary, finance department and other parties including some senior clerks for illegally rewarding new contract employees by ignoring senior education department clerks in the seniority list. Notices have been issued to Abdul Nabi Dayo, senior APCA leader of the Department of Education, said that we hope from God that God willing, justice will be done to us because my name is above other employees, but I have been included in the seniority list in an illegal manner. Attempts are made to bypass that will not be tolerated under any circumstances.

**Police recovered hostages:** On the strict instructions of Deputy Inspector General of Police Range Larkana, within twenty-four hours, the police have safely recovered 10 hostages through intelligence-based operations in different areas.

According to the details, 10 hostages who were abducted from different districts of Larkana range have been recovered safely, while the success of the Larkana Range Police under the leadership of DIG has been safely recovered. Jafari, Ghulam Shabbir Lashari, Nawab Ahmad Bahlkani, Irshad Brohi, Mir Hasan Brohi, Shah Murad Jafari and Wahid Bakhsh Jakhro, Muhammad Rahim Jakhro, Owais Ahmed

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Dasti have been saved from being kidnapped while on the other hand Atta Hussain Barro from District Jacobabad has also been safely recovered.

Talking to the media. DIGP Larkana said that the operation will continue until the recovery of the other hostages, while strict instructions have been issued to all the officers of the Larkana range in this regard and it is hoped that all the remaining hostages will be recovered soon.

## Fire breaks out again in Swabi forests F.P. Report

SWABI: A fire broke out again in the forests of Gadoon Gadaf Mountain and Mangalchai Mountain in Swabi on Friday. On receiving information, Rescue 1122 control room, firefighters were dispatched to the accident site.

The fire rescuer teams of Rescue 1122 Swabi reached the spot and started extinguishing the fire. Rescue 1122 fire fighters teams are engaged in extinguishing the fire. However, the cause of the fire is not yet known.

## Renovation works at Mardan Press Club inaugurated

F.P. Report

MARDAN: Deputy Commissioner Fayaz Khan Sherpao inaugurated the renovation and repairing work completed in the building of Mardan Press Club. The renovation and repairing works were completed with the fund provided by the district administration.

Talking to journalists on the occasion, Mr. Fayaz Khan Sherpao said that the press building was national institute which had been performing vital role development and prosperity of country. He pointed out that both media and administration were eminent for each other as media-persons were highlighting problems of people before authorities concerned to take appropriate action that connection.

DC also lauded role of journalists by saying that they had been playing very important role in eradicating of crimes, immoral and other illegal activities being done by negative elements in the society. He also assured members of Mardan

press club that they were committed to resolve their issues on priority bases.

On the occasion replying to a question, the deputy commissioner said that they were committed to provide best services to residents of the district on eve of up-coming three-days of Eid-ul-Azha. "We have devised a comprehensive Eid ul Azha plan according to which Mardan city has been divided into four zones and collection points that comprised of New Ada, Par Hoti, Shamsi Road and Kaskorona," he added.

"On first day of Eid ul Azha, the Eid-gahs will be cleaned and swept before Eid prayers while the cleanliness operation will be started from 12:00 pm and will be continued till the entire city is cleaned of waste and animal remains," he maintained. He told that high-tech modern machinery would be used in the cleanliness operation and animal remains would be shifted to a safe place for safe disposal.

DC was briefed that during the Eid operation, the complaint cell will be remained open till

late night and in case of any inconvenience; the citizens are requested to record their complaints on helpline 1334, 0314-4228999, and 0937-840892. He further added that 600 employees will be deployed and 70 different types of sanitation vehicle will take part in the Eid operations.

Citizen Liaison Cell of the company has already launched an awareness campaign in all union councils for public awareness to dump waste at designated points. Distribution of Awareness brochures has been started in various parts of the city.

He further stated that strict action will be taken against any official found absent. For the efficient and effective execution of the Eid ul Azha monitoring teams have been constituted. Biodegradable bags shall also be distributed among the citizens to manage animal remains.

**Police role praised:** A ceremony was held in the honor of Mardan Police in Darul Uloom Qadria, in which awards were also given to the police officers

for arresting the suspect involved in the blind killing of a student of Darul Uloom within five days.

Provincial Minister of Religious Affairs Allama Muhammad Adnan Qadri was the chief guest in the ceremony. The provincial minister paid tribute to the Mardan police and said that by tracking the blind murder case of Darul Uloom student, the police ended the fear among the students. He said that this incident was a sign of personal enmity.

Without modern scientific investigation, they got access to the real accused and arrested him. Madrasas are the fortresses of religion and we are spreading the message of Islam and peace from here. In the ceremony, prayers were requested for the high status of deceased students and police martyrs.

JUP Provincial President Muhammad Fayaz Khan Mufti Fazal Manan Qadri, Mufti Abdul Wakeel, SP Investigation Arshad Khan, SP City Shafi-ur-Rehman also spoke to the event. Provincial Minister gave shields

and cash rewards to SP Investigation Arshad Khan, SP City Shafi-ur-Rehman, DSP Sheikh Maltoon Izhar Shah, SHO Bakhtzoda Khan and Investigating Officer Mushtaq Khan.

Talking to reporters, the Provincial Minister said that the endowment land is being digitized in the province, with which the record of the endowment land will be preserved; the endowment land will be removed from the mafia soon.

**Official prices to be implemented:** The District Price Committee under the chairmanship of Deputy Commissioner Mardan Muhammad Fayaz Khan Sherpao significantly reduced the prices of sweets and bakery items in the context of the recent reduction in the rate of inflation.

The meeting was attended by Assistant Commissioners, Inspectors of Food Department and officials of Bakers Association. According to the new rate lists, for Class A bakeries, the rates of mixed sweets have been reduced from Rs 700

to Rs 670 per kg, plain sweets have been reduced from Rs 550 to Rs 520 per kg, plain biscuits have been reduced from Rs 670 to Rs 570 per kg, and jalebis are reduced from Rs 550 per kg to Rs.470, toast 400 grams reduced from Rs.100 to Rs.90, toast 800 grams reduced from Rs.200 to Rs.190, Namak para reduced from Rs.500 to Rs.450 per kg.

While for class B bakeries, the rates of sweet mix reduced from Rs 550 to Rs 470 per kg, sweet simple reduced from Rs 450 to Rs 420 per kg, biscuit simple reduced from Rs 500 to Rs 420 per kg, toast 400 grams Rs 100.

The price of 800 grams of toast has been reduced from Rs 200 to Rs 190, the price of jalebi per kg has been reduced from Rs 550 to Rs 420, and the price of namak para has been reduced from Rs 500 to Rs 400 per kg. DC Mardan Fayaz Khan Sherpao directed the Bakers Association to ensure the sale of sweets at official rates and to display the price list prominently in their bakeries.





# US journalist to face trial for ‘CIA work’: Russia

MOSCOW: Russian prosecutors have said US journalist Evan Gershkovich will face trial in the Ural city of Yekaterinburg, where he was detained more than a year ago after he was accused of working for the CIA.

Gershkovich, 32, is accused of "gathering secret information" on orders from the CIA about Uralvagonzavod, a facility that produces and repairs military equipment, the prosecutor general's office said in a statement, revealing for the first time the details of the accusations against him. The statement gave no date for the trial. Gershkovich, a journalist with the Wall Street Journal, has been in jail since he was arrested in Yekaterinburg, about 1,400 kilometres (870 miles) east of Moscow, on March 29, 2023, and was accused of spying. He denies any wrongdoing.

Following the Russian announcement, the Journal said that Gershkovich was facing "a false and baseless charge". A joint statement from Almar Latour, the newspaper's publisher, and its editor-in-chief, Emma Tucker, demanded Gershkovich's immediate release. "Russia's latest move toward a sham trial is, while expected, deeply disappointing and still no less outrageous," the statement said. "Evan has spent 441 days wrongfully detained in a Russian prison for simply doing his

job. Evan is a journalist. The Russian regime's smearing of Evan is repugnant, disgusting and based on calculated and transparent lies."

The United States designated Gershkovich "wrongfully detained" in April 2023, and President Joe Biden has called his detention "totally illegal". Latour and Tucker said they now expected the US government to step up efforts to secure his release. US State Department spokesman Matthew Miller said Washington would continue to work to bring Gershkovich home. "Evan has done nothing wrong. He should never have been arrested in the first place. Journalism is not a crime," Miller said. "The charges against him are false. And the Russian government knows that they're false. He should be released immediately." Gershkovich was the first US journalist to be arrested on spying charges in Russia since the Cold War, as Moscow enacted increasingly repressive laws on freedom of speech after sending troops into Ukraine. Washington has sought to negotiate his release, but Russia's Ministry of Foreign Affairs said Moscow would consider a prisoner swap only after a verdict in his trial. Asked last week by The Associated Press news agency about Gershkovich, Russian President Vladimir Putin said the US was "taking energetic steps" to

secure the journalist's release.

He told international news agencies in a rare news conference that any such releases "aren't decided via mass media" but through a "discreet, calm and professional approach". "And they certainly should be decided only on the basis of reciprocity," he added, alluding to a potential prisoner swap. Gershkovich faces up to 20 years in prison if convicted. The Uralvagonzavod factory, about 100km (60 miles) north of Yekaterinburg, has been sanctioned by Western countries. Based in the city of Nizhny Tagil in the Sverdlovsk region, it plays a crucial role in supplying tanks for Moscow's war in Ukraine, according to the Russian Ministry of Defence. The factory, which is run by a state conglomerate controlled by one of Putin's allies, has publicly spoken of producing T-90M battle tanks and modernising T-72B3M tanks. The number of tanks which Russia has lost in battle in Ukraine is a military secret in Russia, which says it has ramped up tank production. The London-based International Institute for Strategic Studies think tank said in February that Russia had lost more than 3,000 tanks - the equivalent of its entire pre-war active inventory - but had enough lower-quality armoured vehicles in storage for years of replacements. — Aljazeera

## Firefighters battle massive fire at Iraq oil refinery

IRBIL (AP): A team of 32 firefighters in northern Iraq was battling to put out a massive fire, a day after it broke out at an oil refinery, local officials said. The fire broke out at a large refinery in Irbil, in the semi-autonomous Kurdish region of northern Iraq.

Shakhawan Saeed, a spokesperson for the Irbil Civil Defense Department, said 14 firefighters were injured -- four with burns and the other due to smoke inhalation -- while battling the blaze, which also destroyed four fire engines. Saeed said the cause of the fire was not yet clear but that the facility appeared to be lacking in safety measures, including alarms and fire extinguishers. The owner of the refinery could not immediately be reached for comment. A regional government official, who spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to talk to the media, told the Associated Press that the fire appeared to have been caused by an electrical fault.

Irbil's Gov. Omed Khoshnaw said the financial damages caused by the refinery fire were estimated at \$8 million. The Khazir refinery, owned by local private businessmen, is one of the largest in Irbil, producing gasoline, kerosene, and white oil. It had been a major supplier for the city of Mosul. Iraq's Kurdish region produces hundreds of thousands of barrels of oil each day. Previously, much of the production was exported by way of Turkey, but the exports have been halted for more than a year as a result of a ruling in an international arbitration case. The central government considers it illegal for Irbil to export oil without going through the Iraqi national oil company and won the arbitration case against such trade. In Iraq, summer fires are often fueled by scorching temperatures, unreliable electricity, and lax safety standards in many facilities. In May, a fire erupted in a bazaar in Erbil, burning at least 200 shops and four storage units and injuring at least 100 people. On Sunday, a massive fire engulfed commercial storage units in central Baghdad, covering a 3,000 square meter area made of highly flammable materials, and killed four foreign Arab workers.

## Family lives atop rubble of demolished home in Gaza

GAZA STRIP (Reuters): The al-Kahlout family is living on memories in Gaza after being displaced by Israeli bombardment and then returning to live in a large tent pitched atop the rubble of their home.

"We are staying in this tent because this is our place and home. It's our house, we can't abandon it, it has our dreams and memories," said Umm Nael al-Kahlout, whose son was killed earlier in the Hamas-Israeli war. "We had good memories in this house, I'm trying to heal our pain and find a place to stay. We can't stay away from our home, even if there are fierce (Israeli) strikes, we'd leave for a day or two then we'd be back in our place."

Many Palestinian families share their plight as Israeli air strikes and heavy shelling has killed tens of thousands of people and reduced much of the Gaza Strip to ruins since Hamas carried out a cross-border attack on Israel on Oct. 7, killing 1,200 people and taking about 250 hostage. Many homes like that of the al-Kahlouts have been pulverised, displacing families, some of whom have returned in hope that at least part of their dwellings might have survived air strikes and shelling.

The al-Kahlouts' house, part of a vast swathe of concrete rubble in the densely built-up northern Gaza town of Beit Lahia, consisted of five floors, which all collapsed. But the family remain attached to their home, clinging to the destruction. "Despite all of this struggle that we are going through and the tragedies we have witnessed, we have roamed around, and we couldn't live anywhere else but here," said Ismail al-Kahlout, Umm Nael's husband. "Five families eat, sleep, and stay in this tent you see here."



ROME: A 5-Star Movement lawmaker Leonardo Donno, center top, protected by parliament employees from other lawmakers during brawl in the lower chamber of deputies at the Italian parliament.

# Rights groups urge Thailand not to extradite Vietnamese activist

BANGKOK (AP): Human rights groups urged Thailand not to extradite a Vietnamese activist detained in Bangkok, saying he could be at risk if handed back to Vietnam.

Y Quynh Bdap, who had United Nations refugee status in Thailand, was picked up by local police, the day after he had met with Canadian Embassy officials as he pursued asylum there, according to the Peace Rights Foundation, a Thai organization that had been in contact with him. The co-founder of the Montagnard Stand for Justice group was convicted in absentia in Vietnam in January on allegations that he was involved in organizing anti-government riots in Vietnam's central highland province of Dak Lak last June.

Vietnamese authorities had been making inquiries in Thailand about him, with Thailand's assistance, which sent him into hiding six months ago, Bdap said before his arrest in a video statement. In the June 7 video, provided to The Associated Press by Kannavee Suebsang, a Thai opposition lawmaker who is active in human rights issues, Bdap said he had "absolutely nothing to do with that violent incident."

"I am a human rights activist fighting for religious freedom and advocating for people's rights," said the 32-year-old Bdap, who fled to Thailand in 2018. "My activities are peaceful, consisting only of collecting and writing reports on human rights violations in Vietnam."

Thai immigration authorities told the AP they would look into the case, but then never provided any information or comment. Bdap is now being held in a Bangkok prison awaiting an extradition hearing, which could take about a week, according to Human Rights Watch. UNHCR, the UN agency for refugees, said that it couldn't comment on individual cases, but that it "actively engages"

with Thailand's government to ensure fundamental international obligations are honored, including not forcibly returning refugees to a country where they are likely to be subject to persecution.

"States have the primary responsibility to provide protection and safety to persons on their territory, including refugees and asylum-seekers and people whose lives could be at risk if they were returned," spokesperson Liana Bianchi said. Calls to the Vietnamese Embassy in Thailand went unanswered. Vietnam has long been criticized by rights groups and others for its treatment of the country's Montagnard minority, a term loosely used to refer to many predominantly Christian ethnic groups that live in the central highlands and neighboring Cambodia. Human Rights Watch has said many have been driven to seek asylum in Cambodia and Thailand as Vietnamese authorities have subjected their communities to intimidation, arbitrary arrests and mistreatment in custody.

"Y Quynh Bdap would be at real risk if returned to Vietnam," said Bryony Lau, deputy Asia director for Human Rights Watch. "Thai authorities should immediately release this prominent religious freedom advocate and refugee. Returning him to Vietnam would be a violation of Thailand's obligations under Thai and international law." The organization has been critical of Thailand for its record on sending home dissidents from Cambodia, Vietnam, Laos and China to uncertain fates, in what they said in a recent report was a quid-pro-quo form of transnational repression, in which those countries sent home dissidents wanted by Thailand. The country has ratified the International Convention for Protection of all Persons from Enforced Disappearance, which took effect, but

it's unclear whether Bdap's case will fall under its purview. "Cooperation between states in locating persecuted opposition groups is a concerning situation for human rights," Kannavee said.

He cited examples of Thai activists turning up dead in Laos and Cambodian opposition groups being rounded up in Thailand. "This is happening all over," Kannavee said. "Transnational repression really does happen and the exchanges of these dissidents happens regularly, whether in secret or in full view of the public."

Bdap was convicted in January on terrorism charges and sentenced in absentia to 10 years in prison for his alleged involvement in the Dak Lak riots, at a time when he was in Thailand. Overall, about 100 people were tried for alleged involvement in the violent riots at two district government offices in which nine people were killed, including four police officers and two government officials. Fifty-three were convicted on charges of "terrorism against the people's government," state-run Vietnam News reported. Days after the verdicts, Vietnamese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Pham Thu Hang rejected criticism that Vietnam had used the trial as an opportunity to crack down on ethnic minorities, saying the government needed to "strictly deal with terrorism according to international law," the Vietnam News reported. "All ethnicities living in a territory of Vietnam are equal," she said. Unlike Uyghur refugees indefinitely detained by Thai authorities, Bdap faces a more credible threat of extradition since he has been criminally convicted in his homeland, Peace Rights Foundation said. In the video entreaty Bdap recorded before being apprehended, he pleaded for the "help of the United Nations, NGOs, and governments of democratic countries." "Please protect me," he said.

# UN Security Council demands end to siege of el-Fasher in Sudan's Darfur

NEW YORK: The United Nations Security Council (UNSC) has approved a resolution demanding that Sudan's paramilitary Rapid Support Forces (RSF) halt the siege of el-Fasher in North Darfur region and end fighting in the area.

The resolution, approved in a vote of 14-0 with Russia abstaining, expressed "grave concern" at the spreading violence and reports that the RSF is carrying out "ethnically motivated violence" in el-Fasher. The conflict in Sudan broke out in April 2023 between the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF), led by Abdel Fattah al-Burhan, and the RSF, which are loyal to General Mohamed Hamdan "Hemedti" Dagalo.

The violence has killed at least 14,000 people and displaced more than 10 million others, according to UN estimates. Resolution demanded that the RSF and government forces ensure the protection of civilians, including allowing those

wishing to leave el-Fasher to do so. Hundreds of thousands of people are trapped in el-Fasher - the last large urban centre in the vast, western Darfur region not under RSF control. The UNSC measure called for de-escalation around el-Fasher and for "the withdrawal of all fighters that threaten the safety and security of civilians". It called on the RSF and military "to seek an immediate cessation of hostilities, leading to a sustainable resolution to the conflict, through dialogue". It also called on all nations to end interference fomenting conflict and instability instead of peace efforts. "Crucial roads out of el-Fasher are blocked, preventing civilians from reaching safer areas, while at the same time limiting the amount of food and other humanitarian aid coming into the city," said Othman Belbeisi, the International Organization for Migration regional director for the Middle East and North

Africa. Louis Charbonneau, UN director at Human Rights Watch, welcomed the resolution. "Today's resolution puts the Sudanese Armed Forces on notice that the world is watching," Charbonneau wrote in a social media post. "It warns of imminent famine, especially in Darfur, & calls for accountability for violations of intl humanitarian & human rights law." Earlier this week, the International Criminal Court's (ICC) chief prosecutor, Karim Khan, appealed for evidence for an investigation by his office into alleged war crimes in Darfur. "I am extremely concerned about allegations of widespread international crimes being committed in el-Fasher and its surrounding areas," Khan said in a video statement. He added that the probe "seems to disclose an organised, systematic and a profound attack on human dignity". In 2009, the ICC

issued arrest warrants for former Sudanese President Omar al-Bashir on charges including genocide allegedly committed in Darfur between 2003-2008. The RSF was born out of the Popular Defence Forces militias, commonly known as Janjaweed, mobilised by al-Bashir against non-Arab tribes in Darfur. The Sudanese military removed al-Bashir from power in 2019 after months of antigovernment protests. A promised transition to full civilian rule in the post-Bashir era did not materialise, and the Sudanese military staged a coup against the civilian government of Prime Minister Abdalla Hamdok in October 2021, leading to his resignation early in 2022. Weeks before violence between the military and RSF erupted last year, Sudan's leaders appeared set to sign a deal to return the country to its democratic transition, but the accord was delayed because of outstanding disagreements. — Aljazeera

# Argentina's Senate passes Milei reforms

BUENOS AIRES: Argentina's upper house has narrowly passed a controversial bill key to libertarian President Javier Milei's economic reform plans as thousands of protesters clashed with police in the streets.

Senators voted 37 to 36 to give provisional approval to the plan, embarking on an all-night marathon sitting, extending into the following day ahead of votes on each article of the package, which includes radical measures on privatisation and tax breaks for investors. The Senate had been divided down the middle over the bill, which was eventually decided by a tie-breaking vote from the head of the chamber, Vice President Victoria Villarruel.

"Today, there are two Argentinas," Villarruel said at the session. "A violent Argentina that sets a car on fire, throws rocks and debates the exercise of democracy, and another Argentina with workers waiting with great pain and sacrifice for the change that they voted for." As the senators voted, thousands of protesters poured into the streets, burning cars and throwing Molotov cocktails as hundreds of federal security forces pushed back with rounds of tear gas and water cannon. Seven people, including five lawmakers, were treated at hospital after being pepper-sprayed, according to the Ministry of Health. Dozens of others received medical attention at the scene.

At least 10 people were arrested and nine police officers were injured, according to a spokesman for the Ministry of Security, quoted by the AFP news agency. The vote delivered a major boost to Milei, a self-declared "anarcho-capitalist", whose efforts to overhaul the government and economy have run into tough resistance in Argentina's opposition-dominated Congress, which he has dubbed a "nest of rats". A political outsider with just two years of experience as a lawmaker, his three-year-old party, Liberty Advances, holds only 15 percent of seats in the lower house and 10 percent in the Senate.

"Tonight is a triumph for the Argentine people and the first step toward the recovery of our greatness," Milei posted on X, calling his bills "the most ambitious legislative reform of the last 40 years". The bill is central to Milei's plans to overhaul an embattled economy. Executive measures imposed so far, which include slashing subsidies and firing thousands of public sector employees, have deepened a recession, increased poverty to 55 percent and sent annual inflation surging 300 percent. Right-wing and left-wing lawmakers clashed over various parts of the 238-article reform bill, which includes the declaration of a one-year state of economic emergency allowing Milei to disband federal agencies and the privatisation of about a dozen public companies.

Other measures deal with reducing access to minimum retirement allowances and weakening labour protections - slammed by left-wing opponents as a licence to fire workers. The provisions also envision tax, customs and foreign exchange incentives to encourage investment in the country racked by economic crisis.

Prior to the bill's preliminary Senate approval, opposition lawmakers took to the floor claiming it would reverse decades of progress. Opposition senator Mariano Recalde said the labour reforms in particular "take us back to the last century when the employee had no labour rights". The bill was passed by the lower house, the Chamber of Deputies, in April. If approved in a full vote by the Senate, the measure will return to the lower house for a final green light. The measure is opposed by a broad swath of society, including social organisations, left-wing political parties, retirees, teachers and labour unions. Protesters fear the bill will leave them further exposed to rising unemployment and consumer prices. "Argentine people's lives are at play," said protester and social leader Luis D'Elia. "This poison has failed several times in Argentina, and we won't allow this to carry on." Miriam Rajovitcher, a 54-year-old teacher, said if the law passed, she would lose many of her labour and pension rights. "I am so much worse off," she said. — Aljazeera

# Poland reintroduces curbs on accessing areas

WARSAW (AP): Poland reintroduced restrictions on movement along parts of the border with Belarus because of increased migration pressure that has involved violence against Polish security officials.

The ban will be valid for 90 days and affects 60 kilometers (37 miles) of the land border between NATO member Poland and Belarus, an autocratic state aligned with Russia. The border between Poland and Belarus runs for about 400 kilometers (250 miles).

The government of Prime Minister Donald Tusk says that the purpose of the so-called buffer zone is to ensure the safety of outsiders, as well as the border guards, soldiers and police who work in the

area. It also says it seeks to limit the activities of human smugglers who have been facilitating irregular migration at that border. Residents and those working or studying in the area will be able to access the border areas, but others will require permits.

Refugee rights activists are unhappy with the decision because they say it will prevent them from reaching the area to help migrants who cross the border and need medical or other assistance. Since 2021 EU authorities have accused authoritarian Belarusian President Alexander Lukashenko of weaponizing migration by luring people to his country to find an easier entry point into the bloc than the more

dangerous routes across the Mediterranean Sea.

Poland's previous government reacted to the arrival of migrants by building a steel barrier and imposing a state of emergency in 2021 which had since expired. The number of attempted illegal border crossings from Belarus into EU-member Poland has again been growing recently and Polish officials say they are seeing aggressive behavior by some migrants on the Belarus side of the border. They have posted online videos showing migrants throwing rocks, logs and even burning wood at the Polish troops from behind the fence. One Polish soldier was fatally stabbed by a migrant in late May and was laid to rest.



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Rehmat Shah Afridi (Late)

Founder

Bilal Shah Afridi

Chief Executive

Jalil Afridi

Managing Editor

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Peshawar Office: 091-5700095, 0300- 9009001

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

E-mail: fppeshawar@thefrontierpost.com

Lahore Office: 0335-4026284

Email: fplahore@thefrontierpost.com

Islamabad Office: 0321-5066253

Email: mahmoodafridi@thefrontierpost.com

Karachi Office: 021-32213411, 0300-8340907

Email: fpkarachi@thefrontierpost.com

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

## Isolation of Russia not the solution

**I**N the annals of contemporary geopolitics, the ongoing conflict involving Russia has reached a critical juncture. The toll it has taken on innocent lives and the stability of international relations cannot be overstated. Amidst the clamorous calls for further isolation of Russia, it is imperative to acknowledge that such a strategy is neither feasible nor constructive. Russia, by virtue of its vast expanse, abundant natural resources, and formidable alliances with nations like China and India, remains an integral player on the world stage. Instead of fixating on the dismantlement of Russia, global leaders must pivot towards fostering peace-a solution that promises enduring stability and prosperity for all.

To begin with, the sheer size and strategic importance of Russia make its isolation an impractical endeavor. Spanning eleven time zones and possessing a diverse array of climates and terrains, Russia is not merely a country; it is a continent unto itself. This geographic enormity is matched by its wealth of natural resources, from vast reserves of oil and natural gas to significant deposits of minerals and timber. These resources are not only vital to the Russian economy but also to the global supply chain. Isolating Russia would, therefore, have far-reaching repercussions, disrupting global markets and affecting economies worldwide.

Moreover, Russia's alliances with China and India further complicate the notion of isolation. China, as the world's second-largest economy, shares a robust strategic partnership with Russia, marked by mutual economic and military cooperation. India, too, maintains a complex relationship with Russia, balancing its historical ties with contemporary geopolitical considerations. These alliances underscore a crucial reality: Russia is deeply intertwined with the global community. Any attempt to isolate it would not only strain these critical relationships but also destabilize the broader international order.

The ongoing conflict, with its devastating human toll, demands a shift in focus from isolation to peacebuilding. The war has dragged on for far too long, claiming the lives of countless innocent people and sowing seeds of enmity that could take generations to uproot. It is incumbent upon world leaders to steer the discourse towards reconciliation and diplomacy. The incessant pursuit of punitive measures against Russia is a path fraught with peril, one that risks exacerbating tensions and prolonging the suffering of the people caught in the cross-fire.

Russian President Vladimir Putin, too, must come to terms with the futility of war mongering. The relentless pursuit of territorial ambitions will not reverse the tide of history. The territories that once formed part of the Russian Empire and later the Soviet Union have charted their own courses, emerging as independent nations with their unique identities and aspirations. Clinging to irredentist fantasies will not alter this reality; it will only perpetuate conflict and instability.

The path forward lies in embracing the principles of sovereignty and self-determination. Nations have the right to define their destinies free from external coercion. This tenet forms the bedrock of international law and order. For Russia, recognizing and respecting the sovereignty of its neighbors is not a concession of weakness but a demonstration of strength and wisdom. It is a step towards healing the wounds of the past and building a future grounded in mutual respect and cooperation.

For global leaders, the onus is on fostering an environment conducive to peace. This involves not only diplomatic engagement with Russia but also addressing the underlying issues that fuel conflicts. Economic disparities, political grievances, and security concerns must be addressed through comprehensive and inclusive dialogue. Sanctions and isolation, while they may serve as immediate punitive measures, do not provide a sustainable solution. They often entrench positions and harden attitudes, making reconciliation more elusive.

The international community must also bolster mechanisms for conflict resolution and peacebuilding. Institutions like the United Nations must be empowered to play a more proactive role in mediating disputes and facilitating negotiations. Regional organizations, too, have a vital part to play in fostering dialogue and cooperation among neighboring states. By strengthening these institutions, the world can create a more resilient framework for managing conflicts and preventing future wars.

The isolation of Russia is neither a viable nor a desirable strategy. Given its geographic, economic, and geopolitical significance, Russia cannot be cast into international oblivion. Instead, the focus must shift towards peace and diplomacy. The protracted conflict has already exacted a heavy toll on human lives and international stability. It is time for world leaders to prioritize peace over punishment, dialogue over discord. Only through collective efforts aimed at reconciliation and cooperation can a durable and just peace be achieved.

### Important Notice

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



## How the world is voting in 2024

Alex Gendler

**T**HE first half of the biggest election year in human history has yielded mixed results for global democracy. Some countries shifted toward one-party autocracy as incumbents consolidated their power. Others staged a semblance of elections with predetermined outcomes. And still others demonstrated the unexpected resilience of popular will in the face of external pressure.

### Bangladesh

The January 7 election took place without participation from the main opposition, the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP), which had long demanded the formation of a neutral caretaker government to oversee the process. The BNP's boycott ensured a victory for the ruling Awami League and a fifth term for Sheikh Hasina, making her Bangladesh's longest-serving prime minister.

Despite some unrest leading up to the election, voting proceeded without major violence or irregularities. However, the absence of any major opposition, along with the jailing of many BNP leaders and supporters, led the United States and the United Kingdom to declare the elections "not free and fair" and some media outlets to observe that Bangladesh has effectively become a one-party state.

### Taiwan

Taiwan's January 13 election saw outgoing Vice President Lai Ching-te of the ruling Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) winning the presidential race with 40% of the vote. The opposition vote was split between Hou Yu-ih of the Kuomintang (KMT) and Ko Wen-je of the recently formed Taiwan People's Party (TPP), who had initially discussed forming a joint ticket but failed to come to an agreement.

While narrowly holding on to the presidency, the DPP lost its parliamentary majority, giving the populist TPP and its eight seats a decisive role in the divided legislature.

Lai's victory came despite significant election interference from the Chinese Communist Party, which perceives the DPP as more directly supportive of Taiwanese independence. Although Beijing reacted to the results with strongly worded reiterations of its "One China" principle, as well as increased military activity and diplomatic pressure, both sides have so far refrained from any major efforts to shift the

status quo in cross-strait relations.

### El Salvador

President Nayib Bukele secured a landslide reelection victory with over 84% of the vote, while his Nuevas Ideas Party took 54 of 60 legislative seats. While the results broadly reflected opinion polls, critics have pointed to manipulation in Bukele's favor, from the overturning of a constitutional ban on reelection to a reduction of electoral districts.

The president also received near-unanimous support from more than 300,000 Salvadorans living abroad, thanks to a new law allowing remote electronic votes, with multiple locations set up in the United States. Having presided over a drastic drop in El Salvador's notoriously high murder rate, Bukele maintains overwhelming popularity despite facing criticism over authoritarian measures such as mass incarceration, press censorship and challenges to the constitutional order.

While his victory was welcomed by many foreign leaders for promoting stability, human rights organizations have warned that the country may be becoming a one-party state.

### Pakistan

Pakistan's election was marred by reports of widespread electoral fraud, with allegations that the powerful military establishment was intervening in favor of former Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif of the Pakistan Muslim League-N party.

Despite facing multiple obstacles, including the jailing of former Prime Minister Imran Khan and the banning of its symbols, the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Party showed unexpectedly strong results, with its candidates winning 93 of 226 contested parliamentary seats.

Because they were forced to run as independents, the PTI could not claim any of the 60 proportionally reserved seats, leaving the PLM-N with a narrow majority of 114.

Sharif's party has formed a coalition government with Bilawal Bhutto Zardari's Pakistan People's Party (PPP), formerly its chief rival. However, there are fears that a divided parliament and a government with weak legitimacy could lead to instability and a retrenchment of military power.

### Indonesia

Defense Minister Prabowo Subianto of the Gerindra Party easily won the presidency with the

endorsement of popular outgoing leader Joko Widodo, whose eldest son became Prabowo's running mate.

The former army general received more than 96 million votes, the most ever received by any candidate in an Indonesian election, while the Indonesian Democratic Party of Struggle (PDI-P) retained a narrow parliamentary majority. Prabowo's victory was initially met with legal challenges from opposing parties, but these were soon dismissed. Due to begin his term in October, the president-elect faces a divided government as well as lingering questions regarding his links to human rights abuses while serving under the Suharto regime.

### Iran

Iran's legislative election was the first since the 2022 death of Mahsa Amini in police custody and the ensuing protests against the Islamic regime. Only about one-third of registered candidates were approved to run by the country's Guardian Council, while moderate and reformist leaders, including former presidents, called for boycotting the elections.

The result was a record low turnout, 42% of eligible voters, and a parliament dominated by conservatives. Concurrent elections to the Assembly of Experts were similarly dominated by regime hard-liners, including then-President Ebrahim Raisi, who ran as the only candidate in South Khorasan province. The recent death of Raisi, who was widely expected to succeed Ayatollah Ali Khamenei as supreme leader of Iran, is unlikely to change Iran's political dynamics in the short term, with a new presidential election scheduled for June 28.

### Russia

Russia's presidential elections took place without any significant challenge to President Vladimir Putin, now entering his fifth term. Liberal opposition leader Alexey Navalny, jailed since his return to Russia in 2021, died under suspicious circumstances shortly before the election, while other opposition candidates such as anti-war politician Boris Nadezhdin were barred from running.

This left Putin with only token competition from candidates including Nikolai Kharitonov of the Communist Party, who refrained from criticizing the president and only differed on domestic policy while supporting the war in Ukraine. Putin's victory

with an alleged 88% of the vote was not recognized as legitimate by most Western democracies.

The election was carried out across Russia as well as in Russian-occupied areas of Ukraine, drawing attacks on polling sites and cross-border raids by Ukrainian-allied forces.

Thousands of Russians at home and abroad also took part in an action dubbed Noon against Putin, endorsed by Navalny before he died, calling for supporters to arrive at polling stations simultaneously to cast a protest vote.

### Mexico

Climate scientist and former Mexico City Mayor Claudia Sheinbaum of the left-wing Morena Party secured the presidency with nearly 60% of the vote, defeating conservative rival Xóchitl Gálvez and center-left candidate Jorge Álvarez Máynez. In a historic victory, Sheinbaum will become the first female president and the first Jewish president of the largely Catholic country.

As the chosen successor of outgoing President Andrés Manuel López Obrador, Sheinbaum is expected to continue his social welfare policies, which have successfully reduced poverty and inequality. However, she faces challenges in addressing Mexico's deteriorating security and rising cartel violence, highlighted by the killing of 20 local candidates in the run-up to the election. Sheinbaum's presidency will also be tested in navigating relations with the United States on issues such as tariffs, migration, and drug trafficking.

### India

Although it remains the largest party in India's parliament, Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Bharatiya Janata Party suffered an unexpected setback in losing its absolute majority. With only 240 out of 543 seats, the BJP must rely on the smaller parties in its National Democratic Coalition (NDA) to form a government.

Under Modi's tenure, India has seen economic growth and increased assertiveness on the international stage, along with the suppression of journalists, rising Hindu nationalism and threats to the Muslim minority. Despite fears that another BJP term could mean further democratic backsliding, the 232 seats won by the Indian National Developmental Inclusive Alliance, led by the secular India National Congress, will enable it to maintain a strong opposition.

VOA

## Macron just laid the ultimate far-right trap

David A. Andelman

**I**N 1981, fresh off the heels of a triumphal election as France's president, the Socialist François Mitterrand made a bold, snap decision. He invited four members of the far-left Communist Party, long a thorn in his political side, into his new cabinet. Much of France was stunned. President Ronald Reagan was horrified and promptly sent his vice president, George H.W. Bush, racing to Paris to make sure the new leader of America's NATO ally hadn't lost his mind.

Following a two-hour lunch, Bush emerged into the courtyard where I was among a gaggle of reporters to pronounce his reassurance - talks were "warm and friendly" and he had every confidence in Mitterrand's plans for his nation.

In the ensuing months, the Mitterrand government, following a blueprint established by the communist ministers - who had never held government service but were quite adept at sniping from the sidelines - nationalized a host of key industries and banks. Baron Guy de Rothschild, who rarely met the press, gave me a tour of his bank, pointing to the chairs in his board room where his ancestors gazed down from the walls and declaimed how "communists will be sitting in these chairs."

Eventually, these initiatives, a core of the communist gameplan, came undone. First, the costs of the program ballooned as the Constitutional Court said prices paid for the nationalized companies were too low. Inflation skyrocketed past 8%. Taxes for the vast middle class soared. By 1983, two of the four communist ministers were gone from the government. A year later, they were all out. Finally in 1986, the nationalizations were reversed.

Mitterrand went on to notch up 14 years as president, the longest in the history of the French republic, with little further trouble from the radical left. Years later, Mitterrand confided to me what he had told Bush that day in 1981: "Hold your friends close and your enemies closer." Essentially: Give them enough leash, and eventually they'll hang themselves.

That was then, this is now. From the start of Emmanuel Macron's first presidential campaign, the far right - particularly the party of Marine Le Pen, heir to the political empire launched by her father Jean-Marie Le Pen - has been the thorn in his side. On Sunday, that thorn could no longer be ignored. In countries across the European Union, the right was resurgent in this year's European Parliamentary elections. While the right failed to attain absolute control over the European Parliament, their gains, especially in France and Germany, were impressive and leave them in a position for a substantially louder voice for the next five years.

In its wake, Macron called a surprise snap election after Le Pen's National Rally snagged a third of the vote. And if

there was any question why the world should care about this astonishing decision, these returns and all they suggest about voter attitudes will certainly loom over the G-7 summit happening in Italy this week, where President Joe Biden will be on his second visit to Europe in a week, following D-Day commemorations in Normandy. And then, there's the Olympics, with opening ceremonies less than three weeks after the French elections. With it, the risk of voters putting the right in power - and placing in jeopardy every Macron cabinet member who planned the festivities.

Why then, would Macron take this gamble? Apart from holding a handful of seats in the National Assembly, few from the French far right have ever governed, certainly not on the national stage. Instead, they hold any number of plans that from Macron's perspective are mere fantasies with risks of ruining the nation and its economy. Macron is likely counting on the byzantine mathematics of French politics that has three times denied Le Pen the presidency, and her father five times.

If no candidate wins 50% of the vote in a first round that is likely to have a dozen or more contenders, the top two must stand for a second round. (The same holds for every parliamentary seat, which is why there will also be two votes this time - the first round on June 30, the second on July 7.) At no time did any Le Pen manage to win more than a third of the vote in the first round. Then in the second round with just two candidates, only in the 2022 election did Marine Le Pen barely break 40% against Macron.

Of course, Macron will not be on the ballot this time. His term runs to 2027. But even if the right manages to win control of Parliament next month, allowing Le Pen's amanuensis, 28-year-old Jordan Bardella, to take over as prime minister - Le Pen saving herself for one (last) grab for the brass ring (the presidency) in 2027 - it will be a chance to showcase the utter failings of the extreme right. Their platform is staggering: slash immigration, ban Islamic head coverings in public, dial back renewable energy investment, lower inflation by rebating the VAT tax to consumers, expel foreigners who've been unemployed for more than a year, lower the retirement age back to 60, inaugurate a 20 billion euro national health plan, slash the VAT on energy to 5.5% from 20%, build six new nuclear generators and increase the security and justice budget by 1.5 billion euros a year.

All this with little sense of how to pay for it. Oh. And no restrictions any more on hunting, in Le Pen's words, "one of France's most ancestral traditions." Macron's political judgment has always been potent. But will he be able to effectively destroy the far right as a viable force before France gets to the next presidential election? It'll be a rocky road getting there.

CNN

## Why Biden's new border plan is a terrible idea

Karen Musalo

**F**OLLOWING months of rumors, on Tuesday the Biden administration unveiled an executive order designed to shut down the border to people seeking asylum, as well as a rule to implement it. The rule took effect at 12:01 a.m. ET on Wednesday, marking the administration's most drastic ploy to restrict asylum yet.

With limited exceptions, the rule closes the border to people seeking asylum when crossings exceed a daily average of 2,500 for seven consecutive days, and only reopens when there has been a sustained decrease in arrivals. For more than three years, crossings have exceeded that threshold every single week, meaning restrictions will loom over the foreseeable future.

During these shutdowns, people fleeing persecution are ineligible for asylum and have only a slim chance at accessing two limited forms

of protection - withholding of removal and Convention Against Torture relief - if they can meet a far higher standard than that required for asylum. But to even have the chance to obtain these forms of relief, asylum seekers will be required to proactively express their fear at arrival and prove the strength of their claims - most likely without the assistance of an attorney or the opportunity to gather evidence.

Withholding and Convention Against Torture protections only prevent the person from being returned to their home country. Unlike asylum, they do not lead to likely lawful permanent resident status and then citizenship, and they do not allow an individual to bring their spouse or children who may have been left behind in the home country - consigning families to separation. Anyone who seeks protection and is denied may be subject to a five-year bar to reentry and face a potential

criminal prosecution upon attempted return.

Putting aside the punitive nature of the new rule, if it has the desired effect of temporarily reducing crossings, it is not hard to imagine the chaos a swinging door of asylum will cause at the border. An asylum shutdown will force people to congregate in northern Mexico, where many will fall prey to violence. Thousands of individuals who attempt to enter when the border is officially closed will be subject to processing and removal by immigration authorities, and it's not at all clear that the agency has the means to return them all to their home countries, or whether the US will negotiate with Mexico to accept those being expelled.

Biden's executive order met swift condemnation from rights groups, the UN Refugee Agency and progressive lawmakers who agreed: It is not just a harsh

rightward shift on immigration. It contravenes both US law and international norms, which prohibit the return of refugees to countries where they face persecution or torture. The move is the latest in a series of restrictive policies ripped from the pages of Donald Trump and Stephen Miller's immigration playbook. The administration's new rule relies on the same legal authority underpinning the Muslim Ban, and is reminiscent of Trump's asylum ban that was challenged and struck down by the courts. Civil rights groups, including the ACLU, have pledged to challenge this policy too.

President Biden has touted his executive order as necessary to "restore order" and "gain control" of the border, despite crossings plummeting in recent months. His Department of Homeland Security claims that such restrictions will "deter irregular migration" at a time of

political backlash against a narrative of chaos at the border. On Tuesday Biden stated that his new rule will merely close the door to those who "choose" not to avail themselves of other "legal pathways." He seems to forget that our refugee laws, unanimously passed by Congress more than 40 years ago, expressly state that anyone arriving at our border - even if they are not at a port of entry - has the right to seek asylum. So asylum seekers are availing themselves of legal pathways.

Biden came into office with a promise to restore "the soul of our nation" and our country's "historic role" as a leader in refugee protection. Unfortunately, he has abandoned this principled commitment based on the false belief that his political survival largely depends on being tough on immigration.

Smart policies and the allocation of adequate resources would allow the US to accept and fairly

process asylum seekers in a timely fashion. This would not only be good policy, but good politics. Most voters - and the overwhelming majority of the president's base - support a fair and legal asylum system and reject exclusionary, Trump-style policies.

A particular irony in the timing here is that Biden announced the executive order within days of the 85th anniversary of the iconic voyage of the St. Louis, a ship that sailed from Germany with Jewish refugees fleeing Nazi Germany. They were turned away by both Cuba and the United States; the ship returned to Europe, where about a third of the passengers perished. The St. Louis is often invoked as a seminal event that led to the creation of our current global refugee protection system. There couldn't be a better time to raise its memory as an example of what can happen when refugees are turned away.



# Impact of EU elections on global politics and Japan’s foreign policy

Stephen R. Nagy

**THE recent European Union parliamentary elections have once again highlighted the dynamic and often turbulent nature of European politics. Leftist green parties were sidelined, far-right parties increased their representation and the center held, but just barely. Inflation associated with the lingering effects of the COVID-19 pandemic and the Russian invasion of Ukraine, concerns over illegal and unregulated migration and anemic economies pushed voters to reject what they call globalist parties and their political agendas. These results not only provide a snapshot of the current political landscape in Europe but also offer insights into broader global trends, including voter inclinations for the upcoming US presidential election.**

Both elections have implications for Japan. Tokyo prioritizes a relationship with the EU that is characterized by deep cooperation, a commitment to shared diplomacy vis-a-vis Japan's pressing challenges such as with China, Russia and North Korea, and support for an international order based on the rule of law. More importantly, Japan seeks a reliable US partner that is deeply anchored in the region and can contribute to Japan's security and autonomy. This partnership includes unwavering security commitments to Japan, the defense of South Korea, peace and stability across the Taiwan Strait and coordinated efforts in diplomacy, defense and deterrence. These measures are crucial in response to what political analysts Andrea Kendall-Taylor and Richard Fontaine describe as the "axis of upheaval" - an alliance between Russia, China, Iran and North Korea (including Hamas) aimed at reshaping international institutions to support illiberal, authoritarian regimes.

The rise of right-of-center and far-right parties in the European Parliament that focus on family policies, migration control and shy away from progressive cultural issues reflect the pre-existing consensus that exists in Japan in these areas. Of concern to Tokyo are the right-leaning parties that either reject the defense of Ukraine against Russia's illegal invasion or advocate for a quick end of the conflict through a negotiated settlement that leaves one third of Ukrainian territory in the hands of Vladimir Putin's Russia. This sends the signal to revisionist powers such as China that with the right mix of force, patience and resolve, they could unify with Taiwan by force or annex all the features

found in the South China Sea. Tokyo's big concern is that a conflict over Taiwan or in the South China Sea would endanger Japan's economic security. Such a conflict would disrupt the nation's ability to maintain open sea lines of communication, stable supply chains and trading partnerships.

The current political dynamics in the United States mirror those in the EU. American voters are unsettled by persistent inflation and feel that President Joe Biden's management of the economy and foreign policy has not benefited ordinary Americans. Unlike the Donald Trump administration, which did not engage in any wars or conflicts (that started during his presidency),

das may have reached a saturation point for many voters in both the EU and the US. Disaffected voters who voted against green parties in the EU and for political parties that reject migration, progressive cultural issues and an overly "Brusselized" EU have sent a clear signal to European politicians. They prioritize bread-and-butter issues in the short-term over environmental and social justice agendas.

Similar dynamics have emerged in the US, with many Trump supporters urging the president to prioritize border control, implement a strong and secure migration policy and focus on exploiting abundant US resources over environmental

***This sends the signal to revisionist powers such as China that with the right mix of force, patience and resolve, they could unify with Taiwan by force or annex all the features found in the South China Sea. Tokyo's big concern is that a conflict over Taiwan or in the South China Sea would endanger Japan's economic security. Such a conflict would disrupt the nation's ability to maintain open sea lines of communication, stable supply chains and trading partnerships.***

the Biden administration is now involved in conflicts in the Middle East and Ukraine. The results of the EU parliamentary elections can be seen as a bellwether for broader political trends that may also influence the upcoming US presidential election in November. Several key parallels and implications can be drawn:

First, polarization and political fragmentation are features of contemporary politics in Western societies. Just as Europe is experiencing political polarization, the US is likely to see a similar trend. The rise of hyperprogressive and far-right movements in Europe mirrors the growing influence of progressive Democrats and the continued strength of populist Republicans in the US led by a now-convicted felon, Donald Trump.

His conviction has further polarized voters, with MAGA supporters now hyperenergized to demonstrate their support for the former president. Many of his supporters claim the trial politically driven, likening it to what happens in "Banana Republics." Second, environmental and social justice agen-

regulation, while ending social justice agendas. With so many in the EU rejecting environmental and social justice initiatives, which are seen as distinguishing features of European life from their US counterpart, you wouldn't need a Ph.D. to realize that if this trend were pronounced enough to tilt EU policies to the right, the US trend might also shift significantly further in that direction.

And third, nationalism and populism are core components of the politics of the post-COVID-19 period. The resurgence of center- and far-right and nationalist parties in Europe reflects a broader global trend of rising nationalism and populism. In the US, this could translate into strong support for Trump and candidates who advocate for stricter immigration policies, protectionist trade measures and a focus on national sovereignty. These trends have implications for Japan's foreign policies as well.

First, Japan will need to work even harder to strengthen multilateral and minilateral cooperation with the EU, individual member

states and the US. The weakening of internationalists, green and progressive parties in Europe, which often advocate for stronger multilateral cooperation, means Japan will need to forge new lines of cooperation with center- and far-right parties to ensure Tokyo's foreign policy priorities are not sidelined. The country may find new opportunities to collaborate with the EU on global issues such as climate change, sustainable development and human rights if these issues align with the politics of the new right. Such collaboration will be essential to counterbalance the influence of China and Russia in the region. The same will be true with the US if Trump returns to the White House and pursues the policies laid out in the Heritage Foundation Project 2025 Comprehensive Policy Guide, "Mandate for Leadership: The Conservative Promise," which includes comprehensive policy proposals drawn from conservative leaders and scholars across various disciplines.

Second, Tokyo needs to adeptly navigate burgeoning nationalism in the EU and the US. The resurgence of nationalist parties and "America-firsters" poses a challenge for Japan as nationalist agendas often prioritize domestic interests and may lead to more protectionist and inward-looking policies. Japan, which relies heavily on global trade and international cooperation, may need to recalibrate its approach to ensure that its economic and strategic interests are safeguarded amid an increasingly nationalistic Europe and US. Third, Japan will need to prioritize US, EU-wide and member-state-based economic partnerships. The decline of traditional centrist parties and the rise of more diverse political forces in Europe could lead to shifts in economic policy. Japan must be prepared to adapt to new trade and economic realities that may emerge from a more fragmented EU and protectionist US. Strengthening economic partnerships through bilateral and multilateral agreements will be crucial to maintaining stable trade relations.

Fourth, security cooperation will need to navigate the plurality of EU and American views about Russia. The polarized political environment in Europe may affect the EU's collective security policies. The US's commitment to Ukraine's defense will also come under question. This presents a challenge to Tokyo, which has been deepening its security cooperation with Brussels and Washington.

The Japan Times

# Let 3 million Russians come to Europe

Vladislav Inozemtsev, Dmitry Gudkov & Dmitry Nekrasov

**ON Tuesday, we presented in Paris what our colleagues recently wrote about in The Moscow Times: an independent Russian think tank that would offer concrete solutions to counter President Vladimir Putin and his aggression against the free world - solutions that take both Russian politics and the worldview of the Russian elite into account.**

The Center for Analysis and Strategies in Europe (CASE) begins its work by publishing and discussing a report on the current state of the Russian diaspora in Europe and the possible strategy of the Western authorities toward Russian wartime emigres, or *relokanti*, as they call themselves.

Rather than retread the contents of our report, we will focus on some points that, by the middle of the third year of the war in Ukraine, seem obvious to us. First of all, it should be noted that this war did not split Russian society or provoke a powerful anti-regime movement. In fact, it has seriously boosted anti-Western sentiment inside Russia. Western authorities' policies, which have sought to support anti-war and anti-Putin Russians, appear understandable and noble, but are hardly capable of achieving serious changes in Russian politics - neither now, nor even in the medium term.

Meanwhile, the war has prompted not just the emigration of thousands who strongly disagree with the regime, but also the departure of at least 1 million Russians whom the war simply prevented from living a normal life. These people who did not intend to emigrate at the time of their departure (which is why they still consider themselves *relokanti*, emphasizing the temporary nature of their departure and their self-identification as part of Russian society), do not always settle down in their new countries of residence. Bloomberg recently reported that up to half of those who left have returned to Russia, which is one of the reasons for Russia's economic recovery in 2023.

This, according to surveys we commissioned, applies much more to the CIS, Turkey and Southeast Asia than to Europe - but we believe that the West has failed to form an adequate strategy to deal with Russian "re-location." The war is dragging on, and the conflict between the Kremlin and the Western

world has every chance of lasting for decades. It is time for Western politicians to stop treating Russian *relokanti* as "ideologically close" bearers of liberal values, but to perceive them as an important human resource capable of contributing to the economic development of European countries on the one hand, and depriving Vladimir Putin of significant opportunities on the other.

For two and a half years, the West has been trying to block the inflow of money and high-tech goods to Russia with sanctions but has done nothing to stimulate the outflow of both

***It is time for Western politicians to stop treating Russian relokanti as "ideologically close" bearers of liberal values, but to perceive them as an important human resource capable of contributing to the economic development of European countries on the one hand, and depriving Vladimir Putin of significant opportunities on the other.***

financial resources and human capital. The latter, we believe, can be achieved without losses for Europe. The experience of both post-Soviet countries and, for example, Cyprus (which in recent years has sharply liberalized the rules of stay and citizenship for Russians willing to do business on the island) shows that *relokanti* bring a lot of money and a wave of entrepreneurship to new countries. Not to mention the fact that *relokanti* are often more "European" than EU residents themselves, as they know the true value of freedom and the rule of law, and can also adequately assess the demagoguery of leftists and Putinversteher.

It seems to us, therefore, that the West should view the treatment of Russian diasporas in the context of economic rather than political struggle against Putin's dictatorship. Today, even Russian officials admit that the country's labor shortages have become a major problem - and our surveys underscore the fact that Russian *relokanti* in Europe are almost a decade younger than the average Russian, three times more educated and far more entrepreneurial. If the European authorities adopted a coherent strategy that would radically simplify Russians' emigration to the EU on the condition of their permanent residence in the country of declared stay and would be ready to accept any amount of capi-

tal exported from Russia - granting *relokanti* the right to work and all other economic rights except for the right to social benefits and privileges - then Europe could accept up to 3 million Russians with a capital of at least 400-500 billion euros, ready to fit into the modern global world, in just three to five years.

Europeans are already starting to realize this. Starting June 1, Germany introduced a new type of residence permit for labor migrants from in-demand professions that does not even require an invitation from the hiring organization. In the case of Russia, the expansion and publicity

of such a policy would ensure not only the growth of the European economy, but also the shrinking of Putin's "economic miracle." Yes, this kind of policy would not quickly and surely put Russia on the Western path of development - rather, it would entrench the method of "individual solutions to systemic contradictions" to which Russians have long been committed.

Still, we believe that the formation of a community of European Russians in Europe is a crucial contribution to the free future of Russia. Many of them will return there if Putin's system proves to be less long-lived than the Soviet one, bringing with them new social practices that cannot be taught in political education courses or schools of democracy. The experience of Czechoslovakia, which tens of thousands of people left after 1968 and found themselves in the post-communist Czech Republic, speaks volumes.

Putinism can be defeated - but to do so, we need to convince a significant number of Russians that the Western world does not treat them as enemies. The easiest way to do this is to open the way for as many of our compatriots as possible to incorporate themselves into this world - which would be the most powerful anti-Kremlin, but not anti-Russian, sanction.

The Moscow Times

# Within Labour’s manifesto lies blueprint of a different Britain. I hope it builds it

Zoe Williams

**‘We can stop the chaos, turn the page, and start to rebuild our country,’ declares Labour's manifesto. With faith in politics at an all-time low, why should that slogan be any more credible than "stop the boats"? How much better can the Labour party make Britain, when its combined tax and spending promises amount to only 0.2% of GDP? And yet I could not help myself thinking: I actually want this. I would love to rebuild the country. I would love it if food banks came to feel like a dark Tory nightmare. I would love not to lurch from one catastrophe to the next. Slogans feel different when you want them.**

Labour's manifesto looks like a catalogue from which you can buy multiple Keirs - 36 poses across a range of moods, running the gamut from "businesslike" to "serious". He appeared on the Manchester podium, sleeves rolled up in echo of his core message: that he will roll his sleeves up. He is still engaged in a bit of left-baiting, repeating that this is a "changed Labour party". When a protester interrupted, he said, "We gave up being a party of protest five years ago. We want to be a party of power."

Starmer also took proud ownership of his famous sense of caution - referring voters to Clacton, where Nigel Farage is standing, if they wanted "pantomime" - and managed expectations so fiercely that the expectations should take him to tribunal: "These challenges don't disappear overnight," he said. "We don't have a magic wand," he continued, some would say unnecessarily, given that he'd already explained there was no rabbit in his hat.

And yet, he didn't get his missions handed to him by a political discourse that only cares about rightwing pensioners. He didn't talk about "hardworking families", he talked about working people, he talked about young people, he talked about the climate and green energy, he talked about the staff of the NHS as its lifeblood. He said, explicitly, that "economic growth is not something the few hand down to the many". There were green shoots of a new fundamental principle, in which the wealth of a nation is in its people, and they don't have to be endlessly sliced and diced by whether they're a net contributor or net recipient.

Even while the tax and spending

commitments are underwhelming, even though the bid to be "the party of business" was so formulaic, many of the policies included - free breakfast clubs in schools, the minimum wage linked to inflation, sick pay reforms, rail nationalisation - painted a different allegiance. And, after that salty question in Wednesday's Sky debate as to whether or not he's a robot, it was interesting to see a flash of unrobotic, you might say human, feeling: he looked genuinely angry about kids ending up in A&E because they couldn't get to see a dentist. Keir Starmer's politics are, well, the kindest word is probably "mercurial". But his hatred of stuff that doesn't work does seem to be authentic.

It's often said that what isn't in the manifesto is as important as what is: people were quick to notice that the NHS would now "always be publicly owned and publicly funded", the previous tenet, "the NHS is not for sale", having been excised. If there's still £20bn to cut from public spending, it's hard to see where from, when everything's going to get better. The Labour loyalist and author John O'Farrell was helpfully on X,

with one eye on the 1966 manifesto, during the speech: that Labour government legalised abortion, homosexuality, no-fault divorce, and ended theatre censorship, without mentioning any of it at election time. So here's hoping for the spirit of 66, lads.

The sudden interest in the "normal person" at election time - suddenly everyone wants to vox-pop them, every debate wants to hear their questions, listening mode gets turned up to 11 - might have made you feel sceptical at the appearance of Daniel, Nathaniel and Holly before Keir's speech. They are victims, respectively, of the housing and cost of living crisis, a crumbling NHS unable to diagnose cancer in time to cure it, and of being young in a Conservative era that holds you in contempt.

But later, reminiscing with my 16-year-old about the 2010 election, when I took him and his sister to vote in a double buggy, it hit me like a fist how much pain and sorrow the last 14 years have brought to people. I really want the good stuff to be true, and the missing stuff to materialise later. Manifestos are different when you want them.

The Guardian

# Lai leading island into a dead end

Chang Chak-yan

**THE inaugural speech of the new Taiwan island administrative head Lai Ching-te on May 20 revealed his true colors. Instead of acknowledging the 1992 Consensus that there is only one China, Lai laid emphasis on "democracy" and exposed his agenda of "Taiwan independence", which he expects to take forward with the support of so-called democratic countries led by the United States. All this shows Lai is foolish enough to think of confronting the Chinese mainland.**

However, Lai's attitude is not incidental, given his track record of issuing provocative statements. There are three main reasons behind his provocative remarks and moves. First, he is over-confident of achieving success because he won the island's leadership election, which in turn makes him believe he cannot fail on the political front. That his self-aggrandizing belief could bring more danger than hope is something he refuses to acknowledge. Even when it comes to cross-Straits relations, he exhibits the same attitude of unrealistic overconfidence.

Second, his "Taiwan independence" agenda has its origin in the policies of the Democratic Progressive Party, a party that provides shelter for separatist forces. Surrounded as he is by his separatist supporters, he cannot hide his true colors of being a bigoted separatist. It appears his political relationship with separatists is entrenched and strong. Even though Lai is now the head of the island's administration, his identity as a separatist was evident throughout the election process, which suggests he is leading the island into a dead end.

And third, Lai, by refusing to acknowledge the 1992 Consensus, is trying to destroy the painstakingly built cross-Straits communication structure by the Straits Exchange Foundation and the Association for Relations across Taiwan Straits. If Lai continues to tread on the dangerous path he has chosen, the cross-Straits communication mechanism will collapse, making it impossible for the island to maintain constructive communication with the mainland and thus lose

valuable trade.

According to political scientist Harold Nieburg, the collapse of all cross-Straits communication channels could lead to political upheaval, and even conflict. If that were to happen, separatists and political extremists on the island might target those people who oppose their divisive politics, which would be disastrous. Lai's attempts to sever all communications with the mainland indicate that he would solicit foreign help to counter the mainland.

Unfortunately, he seems to believe a confrontation between the US and its allies on the one side and China on the other would be a long-drawn affair, like the Cold War between the US-led West and the Soviet Union, which would give him enough time to achieve "Taiwan independence". He is wrong. He also believes the US needs the island to confront China as much as the island needs US protection.

Lai's political agenda is one of gross miscalculation. Beijing has many ways to counter US interfer-

ence in the Taiwan question. For example, the People's Liberation Army's drills and blockade of the Taiwan Strait and the waters around the island show the mainland is capable of reunifying Taiwan with the motherland, if need be, through the use of force. Such a blockade could isolate Taiwan and deter foreign investors from investing in Taiwan, which will weaken the island's economy. More importantly, Taiwan voters will not be passive onlookers while Lai dismantles one cross-Straits communication channel after another. They will teach him a lesson in the next election. Also, as the PLA drill showed, the US and its allies cannot breach the blockade, no matter how well they try.

Indeed, the PLA is capable of thwarting any move by the separatists on the island to realize "Taiwan independence". The US seems not able to afford intervening in the PLA drills, Lai and his separatist followers may lose confidence in the US. Should Taiwan residents distance themselves from Lai and his party, the prospects for peaceful reunification will greatly increase.

# G7 approach to Ukraine crisis is dangerous

Chen Weihua

**THE Russia-Ukraine conflict is high on the agenda of the ongoing G7 Summit in Italy. However, no one should expect the summit to help resolve the conflict and restore lasting peace in Eurasia. The reason is quite clear. The G7 leaders, who are meeting from Thursday to Saturday, are busy raising funds, and making efforts to use the proceeds from Russia's frozen assets, to finance Ukraine and escalate as well as prolong the conflict. But their aim of weakening, if not vanquishing, Russia is seen as unattainable even by many Western military and foreign policy experts.**

Their latest effort to escalate the conflict is the "permission" Washington and several European capitals have given Ukraine to use the long-range missiles they have supplied to strike targets within Russia. They had prevented Ukraine from doing so over the past two years for fear of triggering a stronger response from Russia and spreading the conflict to Europe.

While no one is sure about G7's strategy to defeat Russia, what is certain is there will be more deaths and destruction in both Ukraine and Russia and the risk of the conflict spreading will increase. This could lead to a nuclear war and even a third world war if G7 leaders continue to refuse to seek an immediate ceasefire.

When I asked a panel at the European Policy Center this week why the conflict which many expected to last only a few months has continued so long, one expert said the European

Union should help Ukraine defeat Russia because if Europe lets Russian President Vladimir Putin win, Russia won't stop at Ukraine.

That is sheer speculation and brainwashing by Western politicians. If you read the letter Putin wrote to the United States and NATO in January 2022, you will realize that he raised genuine and legitimate security concerns over NATO's continued eastward expansion. Yet the US and NATO, in their reply, deliberately ignored such concerns. Back in December 2022, even French President Emmanuel Macron had said that an "essential point" in any peace talks on the Russia-Ukraine conflict should be how to provide security "guarantee to Russia" given Moscow's concerns over NATO's expansion.

Given the current political mood, I doubt whether any G7 leaders will have the courage to mention Russia's security concerns at the summit. Instead, they will continue to dodge the question or pretend it is a non-issue.

The timing of this year's G7 is ominous. Except for Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni whose Brothers of Italy party won a major victory in last week's European Parliament election, Macron's Renaissance Party and German Chancellor Olaf Scholz's three coalition parties - the Social Democrats, the Greens and the Free Democrats - all suffered major defeats, forcing Macron to call snap polls

on June 30.

In the US, President Joe Biden and his predecessor Donald Trump are neck and neck in the presidential race less than five months before the presidential election despite Trump being found guilty on 34 charges by a New York court. In the United Kingdom, Prime Minister Rishi Sunak is trailing behind his rival and Labour Party leader Keir Starmer in opinion polls just three weeks before the national elections. In Japan, voter support for Prime Minister Fumio Kishida has fallen to 21 percent, the lowest since he took office in 2021, while in Canada, only 17 percent of those surveyed said they think Prime Minister Justin Trudeau should continue as Liberal Party leader in the next election.

All this indicates that the G7 leaders have gathered in Italy on weak platforms and are distracted by their domestic problems. The G7 also has a huge credibility crisis given its blatant double standard and hypocrisy on the Israel-Palestine conflict. It will be much harder for G7 leaders, therefore, to hijack the "international community" and lecture the world about their "rules-based order".

The G7, a Cold War legacy, believes that inviting countries such as Brazil and India to the summit will increase its relevance. The G7 can become relevant only by listening to the rest of the world, which wants an immediate and permanent cease-fire in both the Russia-Ukraine and Middle East conflicts, and addressing their issues through dialogue and diplomacy.

The China Daily





'Media and Democracy: An Essential Partnership'

## CEJ-IBA arranges seminar

## F.P. Report

KARACHI: Pakistan can't survive without strong democracy, strong democracy can't survive without free media and free media can't survive without independent judiciary, stated renowned journalist Hamid Mir during a panel discussion in a seminar titled 'Media and Democracy: An Essential Partnership'. Mr. Mir - who has covered conflicts in Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria, Lebanon, and Kashmir, among others - is known for his fearless reporting and analysis as well as his commitment to press freedom.

The seminar was held at the Centre for Excellence in Journalism, Institute of Business Administration (CEJ-IBA) in collaboration with the School of Economics and Social Sciences (SESS), IBA and in partnership with Free Press Unlimited. The event brought together distinguished journalists to discuss the critical role that

media plays in sustaining and enhancing democratic values.

In his keynote speech, Dr. S Akbar Zaidi, Executive Director, IBA Karachi, laid emphasis on the importance of free media, calling it 'a fundamental component of democracy', and adding that "Democracy requires a free and transparent media where journalists and reporters can speak the truth to those who hold power and public office".

"All elected and unelected representatives of the people need to be held accountable for their actions; hence a free media is a prerequisite and essential component of democracy," said Dr. Zaidi.

Lamenting the 'stifled and muzzled' state of media in Pakistan, where journalists are not free to report what they see, facts, interpretations and opinions, Dr. Zaidi stated, "While we continue the ritual of elections, the formal subsump-

tion of democracy is a long way away. Unless the media is free, there can be no democracy in Pakistan. This is non-negotiable."

Adil Jawad, a seasoned journalist with over 20 years of experience in the field, highlighted the rampant impunity in cases of journalist murders, pointing out that it is 'the absolute norm in Pakistan'. However, he added, "As journalist murders and impunity continue apace, willing actors that are committed to fighting impunity are not planning to sit by idle."

Discussing a new coalition in the works which aims to unite civil society against such impunity in the country, Mr. Jawad said, "We are laying important pieces of a puzzle at the moment. If we are able as civil society to engage with the authorities, we have a chance to finally decrease impunity rates in the murders of journalists."

Ms. Lynne O'Donnell -

one of the panelists, who spent many years as a foreign correspondent - talked about the unlimited availability of information online. She stated, "There has never been so much information available - we are drowning in a rising sea of words, photos, videos, blogs, vlogs, podcasts, social media, misinformation, disinformation, artificial intelligence, and propaganda."

In her opinion, while 'journalism, apparently, is thriving, the space for good journalism is shrinking'.

Ms. O'Donnell pointed out, "Our integrity as journalists, and the veracity of our work are persistently and consistently undermined." She further said that "Our challenge is to redefine our purpose for a brave new world that needs journalism - meaningful, informative, trustworthy journalism that holds power to account without fear or favor - more than ever."

Amber Rahim Shamsi,

who has 20 years of experience in journalism, moderated the discussion. She highlighted the global impact of populism, the takeover of news distribution by social media platforms, and new technologies on journalism. She termed the seminar 'an opportunity to understand the future of journalism in these tumultuous times in both the global and Pakistani contexts and chart a solution'.

The discussion was followed by a question-and-answer session.

## About CEJ-IBA

The Centre for Excellence in Journalism at the Institute of Business Administration (CEJ-IBA) stands as the nation's most prestigious journalism training facility that has been instrumental in elevating the standards of journalism in Pakistan.

## About SESS

The School of Economics and Social Sciences (SESS) at IBA is

an amalgamation of two academic departments and two research centers. The Economics department's faculty is highly specialized in the fields of Development Economics, Applied Economics, Macroeconomics, Trade, Industrial Organization, and Labor Economics. The Department of Social Sciences and Liberal Arts prepares students in a wide range of academic disciplines including Philosophy, History, Literature, Political Science, Urban Studies, Media Studies, Anthropology, and Journalism.

## About Free Press Unlimited

Free Press Unlimited is an international press freedom organization that collaborates with over 300 local media partners in more than 50 countries. With them, the organization works on the mission to make independent news and information available to everyone.



## KP-Iran Investment Dialogue organized by KPBoIT



## F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Board of investment & Trade, (KP-BOIT) welcomed His Excellency Dr. Reza Amiri Moghadam Ambassador of Islamic Republic of Iran to Pakistan for a special visit and interactive session with KP-BOIT, Government officials and Business Associations during KP-IRAN Investment Dialogue by KPBOIT.

Board Members of KP-BOIT, Mr. Shahid Shinwari and Dr. Mohsin Khan presented bouquet and traditional pagri of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Souvenir on behalf of KP-BOIT.

Representatives from TDAP, KPEZDMC, SIDB, Industries Departments and Business Associations of different sectors including SCCI, APCEA, Honey associations, Furniture Associations, Gems & Jewelry Association, APMIA, Livestock Associations and Tourism Company were also present. Discussions were held on potential business opportunities as well as to explore rich culture and historic aspects that bind our two nations together. Director Business facilitation gave a detailed presentation about Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, vision, mission and role of KP-BOIT.

Mr. Shahid Shinwari invited His Excellency and Iran Business Community to attend KP-BOIT's

International Investment & Trade Expo, Islamabad to be held in September, 2024.

During the meeting, His Excellency was engaged in a constructive dialogue session with key stakeholders from various business associations within the region and government officials.

Discussion revolved around fostering stronger economic ties, exploring investment opportunities and enhancing bilateral relations, trade and enhancing barter trade between Iran and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Current Diplomatic relations between Iran and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Business opportunities in Iran & Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Cultural and historic aspects, Opportunities for collaboration in various sectors, were also discussed.

An interactive session provided a platform for meaningful exchange of ideas, insights, issues and challenges in trade, banking channels, potential collaboration aimed at promoting economic growth and prosperity in the region. Representative of both countries expressed mutual interest in further strengthening partnerships and exploring new avenues of cooperation.

Secretary Industries / CEO KP-BOIT Zulfiqar Ali Shah expressed his views about historic, culture and trade relationships with Iran and in his remarks, he stated that issues faced by

both sides may be shared with Government of KP so that necessary measurable actions in national and regional level may be initiated.

Business Chambers and Associations from different sectors expressed their views and suggested that exchange visits of business delegations and expo, seminar or webinars may be arranged to showcase investment opportunities of both sides to achieve significant progress in fostering bilateral relations and trade.

Secretary Industries/CEO KPBOIT on behalf of KP Board of Investment & Trade (KP-BOIT) expressed gratitude to His Excellency and his team for the visit and valuable discussion held during the dialogue.

He also said that this business forum / Dialogue will not only strengthen business ties but also foster a deeper understanding of culture and historic connections that exists between Iran and Pakistan.

KP-BOIT looks forward to continued Partnership with Islamic Republic of Iran to drive economic development and create new opportunities for businesses in the region.

Towards the end, KP-BOIT extended sincere condolences and prayers for the departed souls of Iranian President, Foreign Minister and other team members who embraced martyrdom during the helicopter crash last month.

## PEC Achieves Washington Accord Signatory Status

## F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: We are proud to announce that the Pakistan Engineering Council (PEC) has successfully extended its Full Signatory status of Washington Accord for another six years. This significant milestone was achieved during the International Engineering Alliance (IEA) Meeting of the Washington Accord (IEAM 2024), held on June 12-13, 2024, in New Delhi, India attended by all other WA Signatories. Although the PEC was unable to attend the meeting in person due to non-issuance of visa by the Indian Authorities, the council participated remotely.

The periodic review of PEC, conducted by the Washington Accord Review consisting of representatives from Turkey, China, and Hong Kong, included evaluations, observing PEC's accreditation procedures and compliance with quality standards/ criteria at NUST Islamabad, NED University of Engineering and Technology Karachi, and the Capital University of Science & Technology (CUST) Islamabad as private entity. This review took place in October 2023, with a follow-up visit in January 2024 to observe the decision meeting of the PEC Engineering Accreditation Board (EAB).

The unanimous decision to extend PEC's signatory status for six years is based on the overall satisfactory report of compliance with WA guidelines. This iconic achievement is testament to the exemplary leadership of Chairman PEC, Engr. Muhammad Najeeb Haroon, and Convener EAB, Engr. Dr. Niaz Ahmad Akhtar, entire Management and the Governing Body. Special recognition goes to the PEC WA Review Committee, led by Engr. Dr. Fazal Ahmad Khalid, and the EAB members for their guiding principles.

## Industry to grow at 4.4% during upcoming fiscal year

ISLAMABAD (APP): The country's industrial sector is expected to recover in fiscal year 2024-25 with a targeted growth of 4.4 percent on the back of expected Large Scale Manufacturing (LSM) growth of 3.5 percent. "Industrial sector is expected to get boost from improved inputs and energy supplies on the back of anticipated fall in global oil and commodity prices, further easing of import restrictions, higher

public sector expenditure, stability in exchange rate and a decline in interest rates," says Annual Plan for 2024-25.

According to the plan, owing to these factors, prices of construction material are expected to decrease which will support the construction industry to achieve growth target of 5.5 percent in FY 2024-25.

Meanwhile, the services sector is also expected to grow at 4.1 percent, it says and envisaged

growth of 3.1 percent in commodity producing sectors will complement the targeted growth in services sector.

Uptick of economic activity in industry especially manufacturing sectors will largely translate into better growth in wholesale and retail trade and transport, storage and communications.

According to the Annual Plan, total investment-to-GDP ratio is expected to increase from 13.1 percent in FY 2023-

24 to 14.2 percent in FY 2024-25 due to expected economic turnaround, improved business environment and political stability.

Fixed investment is expected to grow by 27.6 percent on nominal basis, whereas as a percentage of GDP, it is expected to increase from 11.4 percent in FY 2023-24 to 12.5 percent in FY 2024-25. National savings are targeted at 13.3 percent of GDP in FY 2024-25, according to the plan.

## FPCCI says budget not business friendly

## F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Atif Ikram Sheikh President FPCCI has said in a post budget press conference that the budget proposals are not business friendly which will discourage most sectors including exports. Regarding ease of doing business, nothing was seen in the budget, similarly, the revenue target seems unrealistic.

We demand that the current budget proposals be changed into a business-friendly budget to boost the weak economy.

These views were expressed by Senior Vice President Mian Saqib

Fayaz Mago, Vice Presidents FPCCI Zaki Ejaz, Dr. Tariq Jadoun, Asif Sakhi, Chairman Capital Office Karim Aziz Malik, Convener Diplomatic Affairs Ahmed Waheed, Chairman Coordination Malik Sohail Hussain.

Advisers President FPCCI Dr. Afshan Malik, Zahid Maqbool, Pervez Sheikh, Zubair Ahmed Malik, Tariq Sadiq, Mian Shaukat Masood, Samina Fazil, Ahmed Chinoy, Rizwana Asif and others.

Federation President Atif Ikram said that the measures are good for the IT sector.

Not levying tax on

solar panels was among the proposals of FPCCI which has been made a part of the budget, similarly the new ADR system will help in resolving tax disputes.

Instead of bringing the exporters to the normal tax regime, one percent should be increased to one and a half percent, but they should be kept in the final tax regime, otherwise another way of corruption will be opened.

Atif Ikram further said that the abolition of zero-rated exemption will increase the inflation and the cost of production will also increase.

Sales tax refunds and

income tax refunds are a big problem, no concrete steps have been taken in this regard in the budget.

Like other sectors, no clear measures have been seen in the context of Green Pakistan Initiative to raise the agriculture sector in the budget.

The current budget proposals are real estate-killing. The real estate sector can be promoted by bringing reforms in the construction sector. Imposing a withholding tax on the entire supply chain will discourage document economy initiatives. We demand that it not be included in the new Finance Act.

## US equity funds saw largest weekly outflow in 18 months

NEW YORK (Reuters): U.S. equity funds observed heavy outflows in the seven days through June 12 as some investors booked profits and exercised caution ahead of the Federal Reserve's policy decision.

Investors ditched U.S. equity funds worth a net \$21.93 billion during the week in their largest weekly net disposal since mid-December 2022, data from LSEG showed.

Despite the Fed leaving interest rates unchanged and tempering expectations for rate cuts this year, the S&P 500 (.SPX), opens new tab and the Nasdaq Composite (.IXIC),

opens new tab both reached record closing highs for the third consecutive session, buoyed by data suggesting inflation is cooling.

Large-cap equity funds saw the most significant outflow, with \$14.94 billion leaving these funds, marking the largest weekly outflow since December 21, 2022. Outflows also hit multi-cap, mid-cap, and small-cap funds, which saw \$2.37 billion, \$1.43 billion, and \$816 million in net withdrawals, respectively. Conversely, investors sought safety in U.S. bond funds and money market funds, adding \$1.72 billion and \$20 billion, respectively.

U.S. sectoral equity funds, however, enjoyed their second consecutive week of inflows, amassing about \$1.85 billion, buoyed by \$1.8 billion in net purchases in the technology sector.

Additionally, U.S. bond funds attracted a net \$4.82 billion, marking their second consecutive week of inflows. U.S. general domestic taxable fixed income funds received a robust \$2.44 billion, the highest in five weeks, while short/intermediate investment-grade and loan participation funds garnered \$841 million and \$546 million in inflows, respectively.

## Pakistan offers vast opportunities for foreign investment across multiple sectors: ICCI

ISLAMABAD (APP): President Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI), Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari, said that Pakistan's growing economy offered potential opportunities for attractive returns and long-term growth across various sectors to the Spanish corporate sector.

He said this while speaking to a delegation of a Spanish Company, GM DEFENSA, dealing in training activities, consulting services and exploring possibilities of business opportunities comprising Francisco Galvan Pardo, Eloy Ariza Domingo, Shahbaz Muhammad Khatoon and

Atif Muhammad Khatoon, said a news release.

Ahsan Zafar said, "Spain is the world's leading power in the olive oil and table olive sector, food processing and sharing of its expertise in solar and wind power sectors can be a great breakthrough for Pakistan."

"Pakistan is an excellent tourism destination, its textile industry and information technology sectors are equally important for Spain."

ICCI will be happy to connect the Spanish companies with Pakistan's premier defense production institution, Defense Export Promotion

Organization (DEPO) for joint ventures, he added.

Ahsan Zafar said, "Spanish investors can explore partnerships in pharmaceutical, sports sectors by saying that Pakistan also wants to have access to Latin American market via Spain to explore the business possibilities for the advantage of all the stakeholders."

GM DEFENSA Francisco Galvan Pardo said that an MoU between the Madrid Chamber of Commerce and ICCI will go a long way in enhancing the close collaboration between the business communities of the two countries and that their

firm will play its role for the needful.

Shahbaz Muhammad Khatoon said that they have found Pakistan completely a peaceful, safe and secure country which is best destination for investment by saying that Spain is a potential market for Pakistani Rice and fertilizer and that the main objective of their visit is to offer this opportunity to Pakistani business community.

Former President ICCI Akram Farid apprised the delegation about the investment friendly atmosphere in Pakistan including the tax exemption for ten years for investment in Economic

Zones adding that Pakistan is the producer of the best quality rice in the world as well as the Pink Salt, Steel, Marble and Flowers and Spanish corporate sector can derive benefit by importing the products.

Secretary General United Business Group Zafar Bakhtawari said that Pakistan has a lot of good-will for Spain because both are connected through a shared history. He said that Pakistan is spending huge foreign exchange on the import of palm oil and that by producing olive oil with the help of Spain will usher a revolution in its agriculture sector.



ICCI Vice President Azhar-ul-Islam Zafar, Khalid Chaudhry, Ch. Mohammad Ali, Rizwan

Chheena, Mohammad Ejaz, Jamshaid Akhtar Malik Nadeem Akhtar

and Nasir Mahmood, Javaid Malik of Star marketing were also present on the occasion.





## In brief

## Athletics camp to start from June 23

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Pakistan Athletics Federation (PAF), in collaboration with Punjab Athletics Association, will organize a Summer Athletics Camp from June 23-July 28 in Lahore. According to PAF President Brigadier (R) Wajahat Hussain, athletes from across the country are expected to participate in the camp. Athletes and students interested in participating in the camp can register their names by June 20. During the camp, participants will be taught modern athletics techniques, rules, and regulations, and will also undergo practical training sessions. The PAF has been hosting summer athletics camps every year to promote grassroots-level athletics and identify new talent. Hussain said, "PAF is committed to promoting athletics in Pakistan and organizes training camps, coaching courses, and seminars to achieve this goal."

## McGregor pulls out of UFC return

LONDON (AFP): Conor McGregor's comeback fight has been cancelled due to injury just two weeks before he was due to face Michael Chandler in Las Vegas. The Irish mixed martial arts star, 35, has been out of action since breaking his leg in a July 2021 defeat to Dustin Poirier but was scheduled to top the bill at UFC 303 on June 29. However, his bout has now been pulled due to an unspecified problem. "Conor McGregor is out of 303 versus Michael Chandler with an injury," UFC chief executive Dana White announced in a video posted on X. Light heavyweight champion Alex Pereira will defend his belt against Jiri Prochazka in the new main event. McGregor is one of the biggest stars in the history of the hugely successful Ultimate Fighting Championship (UFC) mixed martial arts circuit, formerly holding the featherweight and lightweight titles. He made headlines in November when he sent a series of social media posts during unrest in Ireland, criticising the government's immigration policy.

## Sinner to play singles at Paris Olympics

ROME (AFP): Newly-crowned world number one Jannik Sinner will play singles as well as doubles alongside Lorenzo Musetti at the Paris Olympics, the Italian tennis federation said Friday. The 22-year-old Sinner will compete at an Olympics for the first time on the clay courts of Roland Garros where he made the semi-finals of the French Open last week. Sinner has claimed three titles in 2024, his maiden Grand Slam at the Australian Open, Rotterdam and Miami. Sinner, 30th-ranked Musetti, Matteo Arnaldi, the world number 34, and 41st-ranked Luciano Darderi will play singles in Paris. In doubles, the Sinner-Musetti pairing will be joined by French Open runners-up Andrea Pavassori and Simone Bolelli. The Italian women's team features French Open finalist and seventh-ranked Jasmine Paolini, 43rd-ranked Elisabetta Cocciaretto and world number 68 Lucia Bronzetti. Paolini and Sara Errani will play doubles after the duo made the women's final at Roland Garros last week.

## USA into T20 World Cup Super Eights, Pakistan out, after rain strikes again

LAUDERHILL (AFP): The USA advanced to the Super Eights stage of the T20 World Cup on Friday when their match against Ireland was abandoned, an outcome which meant former champions Pakistan were eliminated.

Ground staff spent hours working to dry the wet outfield at Lauderhill but shortly after the umpires had inspected conditions a huge downpour ended any hope with the field quickly under water once again.

The USA reach the last eight in their debut appearance in the T20 World Cup largely thanks to their shock win over 2009 champions Pakistan.

A USA defeat to Ireland would have handed Pakistan the chance to leapfrog into the top two when they face Ireland at the same venue on Sunday.

Instead, the early exit is a bitter disappointment for Pakistan, who were beaten finalists in the tournament two years ago.

This is the earliest Pakistan have exited T20 World Cup, having played just three games with a defeat to India and their sole victory coming against

Canada.

Pakistan were knocked out in the group stage in 2014 and 2016, but on every other occasion made it to the last four of the tournament.

Fans who had waited patiently inside the Central Broward Stadium were instructed to stay in the facility and in shelter due to thunder and lightning which accompanied the torrential rain.

The two teams will receive a point each meaning the USA will progress to the Super Eights along with Group A winners India who are due to play Canada on Saturday in what is now a dead rubber.

South Florida has suffered heavy rain and flooding and the game on Tuesday at Lauderhill between Sri Lanka and Nepal was also abandoned.

There were heavy showers earlier on Friday morning which added to the workload which all proved to be in vain.

But while it was not the way they wanted to qualify, the USA team celebrated in their locker-room what is a historic achievement for the associate nation.

"As a cricketer, you don't want to leave home and not play cricket, you want to play but at the end of the day there was nothing that we could control," said USA vice-captain Aaron Jones, who was again stand-in skipper in the absence of the injured Monank Patel.

"Definitely we celebrated. Everybody is happy right now, obviously qualifying for the Super Eights is a big deal," added Jones, who has been the stand-out batter for the USA team.

Jones was vocal before the tournament in insisting the USA were not just happy to be involved but believed they could win games and he said that attitude would continue against the tougher opponents that await.

"I think that on any given day, once we play proper cricket that we can beat any team in the world," said the New York born Jones, who grew up in Barbados and will return to the Caribbean for the next round of games.

The spot in the last eight also means that the USA have qualified automatically for the 2026 World Cup.



LAUDERHILL : Match umpires inspect the pitch after rainfall prior to the ICC Men's T20 Cricket World Cup West Indies & USA 2024 match between USA and Ireland.

## Afghanistan edge past PNG to reach T20 World Cup Super 8s

TAROUBA (Agencies): Fazalhaq Farooqi took three wickets, while Gulbadin Naib scored an unbeaten 49 to guide Afghanistan to victory over Papua New Guinea (PNG) in the 29th match of the ICC Men's T20 World Cup 2024 here on Thursday.

The seven-wicket victory propelled Afghanistan to the Super 8 stage of the ongoing mega event.

Chasing a meagre 96-run target, Afghanistan failed to get the desired start as they lost both opening batters in 2.5 overs with 22 runs on the board.

Gulbadin Naib knitted a 33-run partnership with Azmatullah Omarzai (13) to stabilize Afghanistan's innings but Norman Vanua dismissed the latter to break the momentum.

Mohammad Nabi joined Naib and together they raised an unbeaten 46-run partnership to take their side across the line.

Nabi played an anchor role while Naib switched gears to deny any chance of PNG's comeback as he finished the game with a six.

Naib played an unbeaten knock of 49 runs from 36 balls with the help of six boundaries, including two sixes. Nabi scored 16 off 23.

For PNG, Vanua, Alei Nao and Semo Kamea picked one wicket each.

Sent into bat first, PNG were bundled out for a meagre 95 in 19.5 overs. Farooqi once again shone with the new ball as picked back-to-back wickets in the third over. PNG failed to recover from the early blow and kept losing wickets at an alarming rate, slipping to 50-7 in 12.1 overs.

Kiplin Doriga and Alei Nao showed some resistance as they raised 38 runs for the eighth wicket before Noor Ahmed dismissed the former. Doriga top-scored with a scratchy 27-run knock from 32 balls, featuring two boundaries.

Farooqi returned to dismiss Nao (13), while last-man Semo Kamea got run-out on the penultimate ball as PNG booked for 95. For Afghanistan, Farooqi claimed figures of 3-16, while Naveen-ul-Haq picked two wickets for four runs.

## Pakistan beat India to reach Asian Squash C'ship semis

DALIAN (Monitoring Desk): Pakistan crushed India Friday 2-1 and qualified for the semi-finals of the tournament in Dalian, China.

Pakistan's Asim Khan secured the lead with an impressive 3-0 finish against Rahul Baiha of India.

But India were brought back by Velavan Senthilkumar in the game with a 3-0 win against Nasir Iqbal. Pakistan's coach Fahim Gul con-

firmed after the match that Iqbal was suffering from a fever due to which he could not perform up to the mark.

With the match level at 1-1, Pakistan's Noor Zaman stepped up for his side and delivered a flawless performance to beat Suraj Kumar Chand 3-0 and help his side move on to the next round.

Pakistan will face Hong Kong, who defeated Iran, in the semi-final tomorrow.

Pakistan coach Gul was

elated after the win against India and hoped that the team would do well in the upcoming matches as well.

Earlier, Pakistan remained unbeaten in Pool C of the event where they were alongside South Korea, Chinese Taipei and China.

Pakistan beat Taipei 3-0 and Korea 2-1 on the opening day to make a good start to the tournament. Meanwhile, they beat China yesterday 3-0 to top their pool.

## Haidar Sultan grabs gold medal in Brics Games

ISLAMABAD (APP): Haidar Sultan of Pakistan has bagged the first gold medal in the Weightlifting event of the Brics Games at the Kazan city of Russia.

Sultan, who outclassed the Russian weightlifters in a tough fight and won the first gold medal for Pakistan in the Games, said a press release.

He contested in the 61kg weight category and lifted a total weight of 261kg i.e. 115kg in Snatch and 146kg in the Clean & Jerk.

It was his outstanding

performance at any national or international competition. Sultan was far behind his Russian competitors in the Snatch event, but his third and final lift of 146 kg in the clean & jerk event turned conclusive, for his maiden victory at the international BRICS Games.

Sultan was accompanied by the seasoned and professional coach Shuja Ud Din Malik, who himself had been the Commonwealth Games 2006 Gold Medalist and Record holder.

The motivation by Imdaullah Memon, the chef-de-mission, and the technical expertise of the coach Shuja ud Din Malik, maintained the fighting spirit of the Sultan, who was very happy about his victory.

Sultan thanked Pakistan Sports Board PSB for the financial and administrative support for the tour. Sultan hails from Gujranwala district of Punjab and represents the Pakistan Army at the National level.

## Pakistan's tennis future bright: ITA President

ISLAMABAD (APP): President Islamabad Tennis Association (ITA), Majid Bashir has expressed optimism that Pakistan will excel in international tennis competitions saying young talent needs to be nurtured, to produce future champions.

In an interview on Friday, he highlighted the abundance of young talent in the country, emphasizing the need to nurture and encourage them to produce future champions who can bring international

acclaim to Pakistan.

To achieve this goal, he said ITA has planned a talent hunt program to identify and develop new players at school and college levels. The program will include tennis tournaments at various levels and an endowment fund will be established to support young players.

The ITA will also invite international tennis teams to play in Pakistan, providing local players with opportunities to compete against global talent, he said.

Bashir also praised the Pakistan Tennis Federation (PTF) for its efforts in promoting tennis in the country, led by its president, Aisam ul Haq.

He assured that the ITA will supplement the PTF's efforts by taking concrete steps to popularize the game and provide a conducive environment for players to thrive.

The ITA aims to increase tennis training sessions, enabling young players to hone their skills and showcase their talents.

## Yates retains Tour de Suisse lead with second place

LONDON (Agencies): British rider Adam Yates has kept his lead in the Tour de Suisse with a second-place finish behind Portugal's Joao Almeida in a shortened stage six.

The stage was originally planned to run 151.1km from Locarno, but snow-pack made Nufenen Pass impassable and also ruled out an alternate route over the Furka Pass, resulting in a 42.5km race.

Yates saw his 35-second lead cut to 27 seconds by UAE Team Emirates teammate Almeida, with fellow Britons Tom Pidcock and Oscar Onley sitting seventh and eighth in the general classification standings.

It resulted in a 7km climb to finish where Yates attacked with 3km to go, but Almeida caught his team-mate a kilometre out to clinch the stage, with Mattias Skjelmose third.

"I think we were both really strong," Almeida said.

"He [Yates] attacked quite far from the finish and I was just on the wheel of Skjelmose, so it was perfect for me. In the end, I could catch him without bringing the other riders back.

"Of course I want to win all the time, but I would also respect my team-mates as well so I'm happy for him also." Saturday's penultimate stage is a tough



118.1km circuit, which includes three big climbs.

Both Yates and Almeida will soon turn their attention to the Tour de France, where they are likely to be support riders for UAE team-mate Tadej Pogacar when it begins on 29 June.

Stage six result

1. Joao Almeida (Por/UAE Team Emirates) 55 mins 13secs

2. Adam Yates (GB/UAE Team Emirates) +4 secs

3. Mattias Skjelmose (Den/Lidl-Trek) +9 secs

4. Egan Bernal (Col/Ineos Grenadiers) +15 secs

5. Lenny Martinez (Fra/Groupama-FDJ) +35 secs

6. Tom Pidcock (GB/Ineos Grenadiers) +40 secs

7. Enric Mas (Spa/Movistar) +47 secs

8. Matthew Riccitello (US/Israel-Premier Tech) +47 secs

9. Pelayo Sanchez (Spa/Movistar) +54 secs

10. Felix Gall (Aut/Decathlon-AG2R La Mondiale) +54 secs

General classification

1. Adam Yates (GB/UAE Team Emirates) 16hrs 39mins 46secs

2. Joao Almeida (Por/UAE Team Emirates) +27secs

3. Egan Bernal (Col/Ineos Grenadiers) +1min 28secs

4. Mattias Skjelmose (Den/Lidl-Trek) +2min 24secs

5. Enric Mas (Spa/Movistar) +2min 38secs

6. Matthew Riccitello (US/Israel-Premier Tech) +2mins 42secs

7. Tom Pidcock (GB/Ineos Grenadiers) +3mins 28secs

8. Oscar Onley (GB/Team dsm-firmenich PostNL) +3mins 37secs

9. Felix Gall (Aut/Decathlon-AG2R La Mondiale) +4 mins 1sec

10. Pelayo Sanchez (Spa/Movistar) +4mins 28secs.

## Federer on rivalries, retirements and the Euros

LONDON (BBC): The image of a tearful Roger Federer, sitting alongside his great rival Rafael Nadal as he contemplated the final moments of his professional career, went viral in 2022.

It was the end of a career that spanned 24 years, in which the Swiss great claimed 20 Grand Slam singles titles, including an all-time men's record of eight Wimbledon trophies.

He was the first of the 'Big Four' players - Federer, Nadal, Novak Djokovic and Andy Murray - to retire, marking the slow closure of one of the great eras of the game.

In an exclusive interview with BBC Breakfast before the release of a Prime Video documentary about the final 12 days of his career, Federer spoke about retirement, his great rivalries and why he is excited about Euro 2024.

"After the rivalry, we get on super well"

Federer, Nadal, Djokovic and Murray had an era-defining rivalry. Federer's final professional match was a doubles outing with Nadal for Team Europe at the Laver Cup. Federer's style was often described as effortless, but he has spoken

recently about how that was not the case.

"I think it's a great compliment to hear that because effortlessness is a myth, as we now know.

"Everyone is very different. For some, it's their only way of playing by showing that grit. For me, I needed the balance. I could not go through a career with Rafa's intensity. He's running around the locker room getting intense. I was looking at him thinking: 'Jeez, I'd be tired before getting on court.'"

"We both can't do it the other way and that's why there's so much mutual respect between athletes and players. Me, Rafa, Novak or Andy, we do it all our own way and all roads lead to success.

"It's tricky sometimes and there's definitely moments when you don't like a certain opponent, but then you like him so much. It's important to remember this as a player - it is just tennis and at the end, we can be normal.

"You see us being super friendly with each other after the rivalry and we get on super well. It's nice to be kind to one another."

Federer recently said he and his fans did not give

Djokovic the "respect he deserved", external when he first emerged as a contender to the great 'Fedal' rivalry.

"Take that as motivation when the crowd is against you. I had that not very often but when I was younger, they would cheer for [Andre] Agassi - they didn't want the new guy to win."

"That can fuel you in a way. You can take it from anywhere and Novak has been a master of that."

"I hope Andy, Rafa and Novak can keep playing forever"

Britain's Murray, a three-time Grand Slam champion and former world number one, has said he does not plan on "playing much beyond the summer". He and Federer met 25 times on the professional circuit, with Federer holding a 14-11 record.

"I really don't think there are any words of advice that I can give him. Retirement is so deeply personal. When you take that decision, everybody is in a completely different circumstance. 'We've gone through similar things but I'm too far away to give advice. If he called me up, I'd be happy to answer some questions.

## 34th National Games winners honored with cash incentives

PESHAWAR (APP): On the special directives of the Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Ali Amin Gandapur, the Directorate General Sports Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, with the collaboration of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Olympic Association, honoured the medal winners in 34th National Games held last year in Quetta and distributed Rs. 6.3 million among them.

A ceremony in this regard was held at Sports Arena here Friday in which Additional Director General Miss Rashida Ghaznavi was the chief guest who distributed cash incentives of Rs. 300,000 to gold medal winners, Rs. 200,000 to silver medalists and Rs. 100,000 to

bronze medalists.

It is worth mentioning here that Khyber Pakhtunkhwa athletes, both male and female, got 49 medals including four gold medals, one each in badminton and judo and two-gold medals in sailing.

Director Sports Azizullah, Secretary KP Badminton Association Amjad Khan, Assistant Director of Sports Amjad Iqbal, Coaches and other personalities were present on the occasion.

In the National Games 2023 which was held in Quetta, the capital of Balochistan, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa won four gold medals in badminton, judo and sailing, while judo, karate, 6 silvers in

wrestling, sailing, while browser won medals in badminton, bodybuilding, cycling, boxing, judo, karate, shooting, squash, taekwondo, tennis, weightlifting, wrestling, archery and Wushu.

Murad Khan in badminton, Sabir Shah in judo, and Amina Ajmal in sailing won gold medals, Malaika Noor in judo, Samad Afridi in wrestling, Najeebullah Khan, RD Khan, Tariqur Rehman, Kashif Saeed, Taimur Iqbal, Hijab Ajmal in sailing, Rapail Javed won silver while in Badminton Iqra Ishaq, Noor, Tanu Zaman, Sapna, Khalid Khan in Body Building, Umar Farooq, Khizr Hayat, Faisal Khan Hasnain and Yusuf in

Cycling, Muhammad Ijaz in Boxing, Kulsom, Komal Henna in Judo, Iqra, and Sabir Shah, Abrar Khan, Murad Khan in Karate, Ehtsham, Umar Afridi, Shoding, Hara Aqeel, Zahra Abdullah, Umm Kulsom, Nimra Aqeel, Taekwondo Irfan, Tariq Khan, Amina, Hadiya Naeem, Saeeda Hajra Shah in squash, Kainat, Tennis, Barkat Ullah, Saqib Hayat, Hamid Israr and Inam Gul. Weightlifting Nafeesa, Wrestling Roozi Khan, Marjan Khan Shahab Din, Neemat Gul, Archery Israr, Wajahat Ali, Abdul Hahab and Wushomin Javed, Umar, Sana, Jawaria and Maria won browser medals in competitions.





## In brief

### One killed, 5 injured

ISLAMABAD (APP): One person was killed, while five others, including women and children, were seriously injured after being hit by Baba Farid Express on Friday. According to a private news channel, the accident occurred due to the absence of gates on the 67EB track. According to railway police, Mohammad Nawaz, a resident of 16 KB, was returning from Borewala with his family when his car got stuck on the railway track while crossing the railway line at 67 EB and was hit by the Baba Farid Express. As a result of the accident, the car driver, Mohammad Nawaz, died on the spot, while family members Zainab, Tahira, Saira, and 7-year-old Noor were seriously injured. The rescue team reached the spot and removed the dead body and the injured women and children from the vehicle and shifted to THQ Hospital Arifwala. The railway police started the investigation.

### Three cattle thieves held

RAWALPINDI (APP): The district police arrested three cattle thieves, members of a gang, said a police spokesman on Friday. He informed that Mandra police netted three accused namely Faisal, Bashir and Khursheed, allegedly involved in theft of cattle and vehicles. The police also recovered cattle worth Rs 3.5 million, a stolen carry van and other items from their possession. The spokesman said that efforts were being made to net other members of the gang. Superintendent of Police, Potohar appreciated the performance of the police team and directed to accelerate ongoing operation against outlaws.

### Power suspension plan

ISLAMABAD (APP): Islamabad Electric Supply Company (IESCO) on Friday issued 2-day power suspension programme for Saturday and Sunday for various areas of its region due to necessary maintenance and routine development work. According to IESCO Spokesman, the power supply of different feeders and grid stations would remain suspended for the period on Saturday from 07:00 AM to 10:00 PM, Rawalpindi Cantt Circle, PWD-II Feeder, From 07:00 AM to 03:00 PM, Islamabad Circle, NCP Feeder, On Sunday, from 06:00 AM to 08:00 AM, GSO Circle, Pindi Point, Barian, Public Health, Gharial, PAF, Upper Topa, Lora, Patriata, Company Bagh, Cecil Roster, Lora.2, MCM, TDCP, Kohala, Sunny Bank, Kaldana, PC, Dhirkot, Chamankot, Ringla, Dana Express, Dhala, Suhawa Minhasa, Nimbal, Beirut (Kazimi), Dhirkot II, Desto, PAECE, Shahedra feeders.

### Contaminated milk destroyed

ISLAMABAD (APP): Islamabad Food Authority (IFA) on Friday launched a major crackdown against the contaminated milk sellers in the federal capital and destroyed 13,000 litres of contaminated milk being sold to the public. Speaking to APP, Deputy Director of Operations (DDO) of IFA, Dr. Tahira Saddique, said that the teams inspected various vehicles and shops to ensure compliance with health standards. During the raid, officials tested 25,000 litres of milk. Out of them, 13,000 litres were found to be contaminated and substandard, which were destroyed.



ISLAMABAD: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Governor Faisal Karim Kundi meets Chairman WAPDA Lt Gen (R) Sajjad Ghani in Islamabad.

## Heatwave, possible monsoon floods

# Romina directs steps to protect people

ISLAMABAD (APP): Coordinator to the Prime Minister on Climate Change, Romina Khurshid Alam on Friday urged all the federal and provincial departments to take all-out measures to protect lives, livelihoods of the people from ongoing heatwave spell and possible monsoon floods.

She also directed all the provinces including Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) and Gilgit Baltistan (GB) to ensure the maintenance of sufficient stocks of disaster relief items pre-monsoon onset to ensure in time preparedness against above-normal rainfall.

The PM's Coordinator was chairing the meeting of the 2nd Task Force on Global Warming and Heatwaves here whereas representatives of the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA), Ministry of Science and Technology, Global Change Impact Studies Centre (GCISC), Ministry of Climate Change, Ministry of National Health, Services, Regulations and Coordination, Pakistan Meteorological

Department, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting and officials from the provincial governments joined through video link.

She urged all Federal and Provincial departments concerned to enhance their preparedness with regard to threat of flooding due to upcoming monsoon spell, stock maintenance and heat wave effects.

PM's Coordinator emphasized on timely execution by all stakeholders on NDMA's National Action Plan regarding flood threats in Southern Punjab, Sindh and Balochistan provinces. She also stressed upon inclusion of Lady Health Workers, Midwives in the medical relief camps to be established by concerned Federating Units during the emergency situations.

Chairing a high-level meeting, the PM's aide highlighted that the country's vulnerability to climate change-caused disasters would continue to deepen as the disasters, particularly heatwaves and floods are becoming more intense and frequent as the world continues to heat up

because of untamed heat-trapping carbon emissions.

"The adverse socio-economic impacts of the disasters are unlikely to be overcome as long as the well-coordinated disaster risk mitigation or prevention measures are not taken jointly by all federal and provincial departments," Romina Khurshid Alam warned.

She assured of her Ministry's unwavering support at all levels so as the country's disaster vulnerability is lessened through effective collaboration among the federal and provincial departments, mainly the national and provincial disaster management authorities, health, education, agriculture, water and energy departments.

She said that like many other parts of the world, Pakistan is also experiencing the adverse repercussions of global warming, leading to more frequent and intense heatwaves as witnessed this year in May and during previous years. Changes in weather patterns contribute to unpredictable and extreme temperature variations.

## Jimmy's work attract art lovers: Rana Mashhood

RAWALPINDI (APP): Chairman of the Prime Minister's Youth Programme (PMYP) Rana Mashhood Ahmed Khan on Friday said that Jimmy Engineer's work has always attracted art lovers from Pakistan and abroad, highlighting the country's soft image.

He said this while visiting the Painting Exhibition of world-renowned artist and social worker Jimmy Engineer at the Pakistan National Council of the Arts (PNCA). "Jimmy is a great artist and his paintings have gained acknowledgment worldwide", he said and added that Jimmy's efforts to kindle the name of Pakistan at the international level were commendable.

Jimmy's painting exhibitions have been organized in several countries including Italy, France, Denmark, Switzerland, Russia, China, Germany, and the United States while his paintings were available in more than seventy countries. A show of Jimmy's "100 prints" prepared by Dr Rahat Naveed and Amna Pataudi was exhibited at the National Art Gallery on June 5 to delight the audience. Jimmy painted 90 images including "Javed Nama" while he completed his architectural series in 13 years.

## ANF seizes 1784 kg drugs; arrests eight accused

RAWALPINDI (APP): Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) while conducting nine operations across the country managed to recover over 1784 kg drugs and arrested eight accused, said an ANF Headquarters spokesman here on Friday.

He informed that in two operations conducted at Peshawar Airport, 4.6 kg ice and 99 grams hashish were recovered from two passengers going to Qatar.

1501 kg opium and 93 kg ice were recovered from the Chagai and Chaman areas of Balochistan in two operations. 87.6 kg opium and 80.4 kg hashish were recovered from a vehicle intercepted near M-1 Islamabad while an accused was arrested during the operation. 9.5 kg hashish and 1.5 kg weed were recovered from the Malir area. In operations conducted near two different universities in Peshawar, 6 kg hashish was recovered and 4 accused were sent behind bars.

# Kundi, Chairman Wapda discuss Tank Zam project

PESHAWAR (APP): Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Faisal Karim Kundi on Friday met with Chairman Wapda, Lieutenant General Retired, Sajjad Ghani in Islamabad and discussed Tank Zam and Daraban Zam projects.

Member Provincial Assembly, Ahmad Kundi was also present in the

meeting, said a press release issued here.

The governor also expressed gratitude to Wapda Chairman for allocating Rs. 19 billion for Chasma Lift Canal.

He said that a vast area of D I Khan would be irrigated by the Chasma Lift Canal project and it would serve as a milestone to bring agriculture revolu-

tion in the area. He said that province would achieve self-sufficiency by the project that would also cater to the needs of people living in the country.

Speaking on the occasion, Chairman Wapda assured cooperation to KP Governor relating to Chasma Lift Canal and said that it is among the priorities of government.

# NHMP cracks down on overloading, overcharging

ISLAMABAD (APP): In a bid to ensure the safety and security of passengers during the busy Eid-ul-Azha holidays, the National Highways and Motorways Police (NHMP) has announced strict legal action against public service vehicles (PSVs) involved in overloading and overcharging. Inspector General of NHMP, Salman Chaudhary, emphasized that heavy fines will be imposed under the National Highways Safety Ordinance 2000 (NHSO-2000) for any violations.

Talking to APP IG Salman Chaudhary said that safety of passengers is top priority during this festive period. "On the occasion of Eid-ul-Azha, our utmost priority is the safety and security of passengers. We are implementing spe-

cial measures to ensure a safer journey for commuters," said Chaudhary.

To achieve this, NHMP Regional Commanders have been instructed to utilize all available resources for the timely assistance and guidance of commuters on motorways and highways. This includes the deployment of additional patrolling vehicles and officers to enhance patrolling efficiency.

Chaudhary urged commuters to report any instances of reckless driving by PSVs to the NHMP through the toll-free helpline (130) or via social media.

He assured that immediate legal action would be taken against the owners and drivers of offending vehicles. "Reckless driving should be reported immediately. NHMP will take

swift action to ensure compliance and safety," he stated.

In addition to addressing overloading, the IG emphasized the importance of adhering to traffic rules. "Drivers should avoid overloading, overcharging, and reckless driving. Unfit vehicles should not be operated on the National Highways. Commuters are advised to use seat belts, observe lane discipline, and drive safely."

These measures are part of NHMP's ongoing efforts to maintain safety and order on Pakistan's roadways, particularly during high-traffic periods such as Eid-ul-Azha.

The NHMP's commitment to enforcing these regulations aims to reduce traffic accidents and ensure a smooth travel experience for all passengers.

# Punjab govt allocates Rs5bn for tourism

RAWALPINDI (APP): Punjab government has allocated Rs 5bn for tourism development, particularly for Murree for FY 2024-25. The Murree's development projects include the provision of missing facilities at various tourist sites water supply schemes, construction of parking plaza.

According to the Annual Development Plan presented in the provincial budget, Rs 60 million are allocated for the Provision of Missing Facilities for Tourism at TDCP Patriata Chairlift,

which remains one of the most attractive tourism spots in the Murree. Moreover, 16 kanals land of Murree Improvement Trust had been identified for the construction of a parking plaza.

Earlier, during her several meetings and surprise visits to Murree, Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif had directed several initiatives which included the construction of public washrooms, demolishing illegal general vehicle stations, new water supply schemes, consideration of

modern tram service and cable car systems for the improvement of beauty as well as the development.

Another mega project, feasibility for which will be initiated in FY 2024-25 is the construction of a glass bridge in Murree. It is worth mentioning that the government has given special importance to tourism in the province. An amount of Rs 250 million has been fixed in budget 2024-25 for Designing, Promoting and Implementing different Eco-Friendly Tourists Facilities in Punjab.

# RWMC cancels holidays of 3832 sanitary workers

RAWALPINDI (APP): Rawalpindi Waste Management Company (RWMC) has cancelled holidays of some 3,832 sanitary workers and officials to ensure cleanliness during the Eid Ul Azha holidays.

The RWMC has finalized a comprehensive plan for Eid-ul-Azha to remove sacrificial animal waste on the instructions of Chief Minister of Punjab, Maryam Nawaz Sharif.

Chief Executive Officer RWMC Rana Sajid Safdar on Friday said that 485 vehicles, including dumpers, tractors, trolleys, pick-ups and excavators

would be part of the special drive to remove the animal waste from every nook and corner of the district.

He said that 18 permanent collection points and 43 mobile transfer stations would be set up in the city and tehsils for the proper disposing of waste. At the same time, 250,000 biodegradable bags and 10,000 pamphlets were also being distributed among the residents of the district.

He added that all essential staff and workers would be present at collective slaughter points with hand carts for proper disposing of Offals and other waste of

animal during Eid days.

Safdar further added that eight camps would be set up for the registration of complaints and distribution of biodegradable bags while the company would remove over 9,000 tons of expected waste during Eid days.

A large quantity of lime (carbon substance) would be used throughout the city, while containers will be washed with fennel and rose water to remove the stench. The CEO informed that around 1,000 banners had been displayed at main points of the city to create awareness among the masses about the cleanliness drive.

# High prices of animals push people towards 'Ijtamai Qurbani'

RAWALPINDI (APP): Due to the high prices of the sacrificial animals, most people are giving preference to the collective Qurbani ritual instead of sacrificing animals individually on Eid ul Azha.

The record increase in prices of sacrificial animals is being witnessed across the country and the trend of 'Ijtamai Qurbani' is becoming popular. The residents of various localities have arranged for combined sacrifices with the cooperation of various religious and social organizations including local madrassas and mosques. A large number of people have also arranged for combined qurbani with their relatives and friends.

"It is better to take part in the collective Qurbani arranged by a nearby madrassa or mosque during

these hard times of inflation, and we will do so because we will have to spend only Rs 30,000 to Rs 40,000 for a share, and it is affordable," said a resident Majeed.

The prevailing economic crunch leading to limited incomes and livelihood amid steady increases in animal prices in recent years has led to the trend of collective sacrifices, another citizen Nadeem said.

The prices of the sacrificial animals have further increased this year as compared to last year owing to an increase in transportation charges and other associated expenses.

The prices of bulls in the market have increased from Rs70,000 to Rs150,000 per animal as compared to last year while the price of A category bull has increased from

Rs200,000 to Rs300,000 and onwards and the price of B category bull has increased from Rs100,000 to Rs150,000 and prices of C category has surged from Rs50,000 to Rs100,000. The prices of goats and sheep have also increased by up to 50 percent.

The price of A category goat/sheep has increased from Rs40,000 to Rs60,000. Prices of the B category have increased from Rs30,000 to Rs40,000 and C category to Rs25,000 and above. The price of a goat and sheep in the cattle market was witnessed from Rs 65,000 to Rs 140,000 while the prices of the bull were recorded from Rs 300,000 to Rs 450,000.

Meanwhile, as Eid day was drawing near the sale of sacrificial animals was gaining momentum.



ISLAMABAD: Customers carefully load a bull into a pick up van after purchasing it from the bustling livestock market near Zia Masjid. —APP Photo







# Mazdoor Card, Kisan Card a revolutionary step of Sindh govt

F.P. Report

KARACHI: Sindh Senior Minister Sharjeel Inam Memon has stated that the Mazdoor Card and Kisan Card are a revolutionary step by the Sindh government, which will provide facilities to laborers and farmers. When President Asif Ali Zardari was elected for his first term, he launched the Benazir Income Support Program for poor women across Pakistan. Public governments work for the benefit of poor people, and the Sindh government's budget is a testament to this commitment.

Speaking to the media outside the Sindh Assembly, Sindh Senior Minister Sharjeel Inam Memon stated that the budget presented by the Sindh government has prioritized crucial initiatives, including the

largest flood-affected housing project in Pakistan's history. A significant amount of funds has been allocated in the budget, with the government of Sindh aiming to build 2.1 million houses for the people. Additionally, the budget includes provisions for every important sector to alleviate the suffering of the people.

Senior Minister Sharjeel Inam Memon stated that on the instructions of Pakistan Peoples Party Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari, the budget has allocated funds for installing solar panels in the homes of the poor. Additionally, the minimum salary has been set at 37,000 rupees, taking into account the prevailing economic conditions of the country. The budget also includes special projects for roads, water, and transportation infrastructure.

Senior Minister Sharjeel Inam Memon stated that the Pakistan Peoples Party always comes to power with the support of the people. The party secured a historic mandate in the 2024 elections. Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari, President Asif Ali Zardari, Ms. Faryal Talpur, and Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah aim to provide maximum relief to the people.

He stated that the Pakistan Peoples Party has achieved a remarkable record in the healthcare sector. The government of Sindh is providing the best healthcare facilities in the entire country. Furthermore, the federal government is planning to launch a pink bus service, which is a commendable step inspired by the initiatives of the Sindh government.

## PHC orders health's dept to submit reply

Humayun Khan

PESHAWAR: A divisional bench of Peshawar High Court (PHC) comprising of Justice SM Attique Shah and Justice Waqar Ahmad seeking response from competent authorities for conditions imposed by the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa health department for the supply of mosquito repellents used against malaria and dengue fever, on Friday.

The counsel Ali Gohar Durani advocate argued that the tender conditions are unfair and imposed to favor specific private company. The health department had included a condition in the tender that only companies approved by the World Health Organization (WHO) would be eligible to participate, PHC told.

The counsel claimed that this condition is unnecessary and aims to benefit a specific company that has been supplying the medicines for the past five years, causing a loss of millions of rupees to the national exchequer. The petitioner argued that the condition is unfair because it excludes other capable companies from participating in the tender. The same company has been supplying medicines for the past five years, and the inclusion of this condition is a clear example of favoritism, the lawyer argued.

The lawyer requested PHC to declare the tender condition null and void and allow their company to participate in the tender. The petitioner also offered to test their products according to international standards, including those set by the WHO. PHC two-members bench, comprising Justice SM Attique Shah and Justice Waqar Ahmad issued notices to the relevant authorities, seeking a response as well as allowed the federal government to be respondent in the case.

## Kundi thanks PM

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Governor Faisal Karim Kundi on Friday extended his gratitude to Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif for allocating Rs 19 billion the Federal Budget for completion of the Chashma Lift Canal project that would help boost the wheat crop yield in the province.

## Sindh presents Rs3,056b budget for FY2024-25

F.P. Report

KARACHI: Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah on Friday presented the budget of the province for fiscal year 2024-25. Speaker Awaiz Qadir Shah presided over the session in which the CM unveiled the budget with a total outlay of Rs3,056 trillion. As the chief minister started his speech, the opposition shouted slogans and wanted the chief minister to deliver the budget speech in Urdu. However, the CM seemed unfazed by the disturbance and powered through his speech in English.

The budget, the CM said, is focused largely on providing relief to the flood-stricken masses and social protection. The education sector has been given Rs519 billion whereas health sector will get Rs334 billion. A significant attention, the CM stressed, has been paid to increase the amount for these sectors. As for grants, Rs35 billion have been allocated for major universities of the province.

Rs334 billion have been reserved for the foreign project assistance. Moreover, Rs329 billion have been reserved for the local government whereas the interior department of the province would get Rs194 billion. The provincial government has announced up to 30 per cent increase in salaries of government employees with no new tax in the budget 2024-25. The minimum salary has been fixed at Rs37,000.

The provincial government has increased pensions by 15 per cent. Minimum wages will be



proposed to increase equal to those of federation and Punjab. Rs959 billion have been earmarked for public sector development projects. Rs12 billion reserved for Karachi mega schemes. The chief minister said the most important demand of the flood victims was the construction of houses on which the government started the process in 2023.

He said through the private sector, financing of 7,700 houses has been completed. But, he said the total number of houses to be built would be 2.1 million. It has been proposed to fix the transfer fees of cars for Rs5,000. The professional tax would be enhanced from Rs500 to Rs2,000. A few other sectors include: For works and services, Rs86 billion have been reserved. Rs56 billion earmarked to bring improvement in the transport sector.

Meanwhile, for irrigation Rs94 billion and Rs77 billion for irrigation and energy sectors. Also, for agriculture and housing schemes, Rs58 billion and Rs25 have been reserved. Earlier, the Sindh Cabinet gave approval for proposals contained in the Finance Bill 2024-25 to be presented in the Sindh Assembly.

Giving a briefing on the upcoming budget, Energy Minister Syed Nasir Hussain Shah said the PPP government wanted to give relief to the salaried class and poor people in the budget.

He said President Asif Ali Zardari and PPP chairman Bilawal Bhutto wanted that the increase in the salaries should be proportional to inflation. "Providing water facilities and low-cost electricity to the people of Sindh are the top priorities in the budget and Bilawal Bhutto wishes that no new tax be imposed on the people," he said.

Karachi mega schemes worth Rs12 billion will be included in the budget. A new portfolio in the provincial development programme will be introduced instead of new schemes. The target of provincial revenue collection will be enhanced. Rate of different taxes will be changed. The provincial government has decided to purchase fewer vehicles in the next financial year. Austerity measures will be adopted in purchasing furniture and other items. Video conferencing will be promoted for the meetings to reduce expenses on official visits abroad.

Last year, the Sindh government had passed Rs2.25 trillion budget for 2023-24, proposing a massive hike in salaries in line with the federal budget and a significantly higher development expense of Rs700 billion, which accounts for 31 per cent of the outlay. The Sindh government has proposed up to 30 per cent increase in salaries of its employees in the budget for next fiscal year 2024-25.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Interior, Mohsin Naqvi exchanging views with JUI-F Chief Maulana Fazlur Rehman.



HYDERABAD: Passengers approaching train at Railway Station to leave for their hometowns to celebrate Eidul Azha.

## Parliamentary body okays judges' names for elevation to Apex court

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: The Parliamentary Committee on the Appointment of Judges Friday approved the names of judges proposed by the Judicial Commission of Pakistan (JCP) for elevation to the Supreme Court.

The development came after a meeting of the parliamentary committee was held in Islamabad on Friday to take a decision on the appointment of apex court judges. The committee approved all the names proposed by the JCP which included Lahore High Court Chief Justice Malik Shahzad Ahmad Khan, Sindh High Court Chief Justice Aqeel Ahmad Abbasi and LHC's Justice Shahid Bilal.

Last week, the JCP sent the names of three high court judges to be considered for elevation to the SC for final approval by the Parliamentary committee. The names, recommended for appointment to vacant SC seats, were proposed during a meeting of the Judicial Commission held under chairmanship of Chief Justice Qazi Faiz Isa, said the sources. CJP Isa had, last month, convened the JCP meeting for deliberations over the appointment of three judges in the SC.

The JCP was constituted under the 18th Constitutional Amendment mandated to appoint judges in the superior judiciary. It was tasked to consider names of nine judges, including LHC chief justice and SHC chief justice, for filling the three vacant posts in the apex court.

Chaired by the CJP, the meeting was to be attended JCP members —Justice Syed Mansoor Ali Shah, Justice Munib Akhtar, Justice Yahaya Afridi, Justice Amin-ud-Din Khan, Justice (ret'd) Manzoor Ahmed Malik, Federal Minister for Law Azam Nazir Tarar, Attorney General Mansoor Usman Awan and Pakistan Bar Council representative advocate Akhtar Hussain.

As per the Constitution, the actual strength of judges of the Supreme Court is 17 while at present the apex court only has 14 judges including the CJP. The three posts are to be filled after the retirement of former chief justice Umar Ata Bandial and resignations of Justice Ijazul Ahsan and Justice Syed Mazahar Ali Akbar Naqvi.

## High Court grants bail to missing poet

F.P. Report

MUZAFFARABAD: Kashmiri poet Ahmed Farhad was released from prison hours after the Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) High Court granted him bail weeks after his arrest. The poet left for Islamabad after his release.

The AJK High Court approved Farhad's bail petition against a surety bond worth Rs200,000, earlier in the day. Earlier this week, the Islamabad High Court (IHC) declared Farhad as a "missing person" until he returned to his home and termed his arrest "illegal". The court's order read that the poet had been missing since May 15 and couldn't reach home, while a FIR regarding his disappearance was registered with the Lohabher Police Station in Islamabad under Section 427 and 365 PPC.

## Welfare of media men top priority: Tarar

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Information, Broadcasting, National Heritage and Culture Attaullah Tarar said on Friday that the government was taking all possible steps for welfare of the media community.

Addressing a ceremony regarding launch of the health insurance scheme for the journalists, the minister said the government had been playing its due role for the welfare of journalists community and he had personally requested the prime minister to take more initiatives in that regard.

The minister requested the All Pakistan Newspapers Society (APNS) to give due rights of the media workers and journalists. He had spoken to the owners of media organizations in that regard, and it was his desire cheques pertaining to outstanding dues should be distributed among the journalists directly instead of through the Implementation Tribunal for Newspaper Employees (ITNE) platform. He said after assuming charge as information minister, he ensured clearance of the outstanding dues of media

organizations on priority.

He said former information minister Marriyum Aurangzeb had taken the initiative of health insurance scheme, and he was carrying forward it. "Some 5,000 journalists will be provided with the medical cover in the first phase and 10,000 more in the second phase," he added. Rs 1 billion, the minister said, had been allocated for the project in the budget.

He said he had requested the Principal Information Officer to add those who died of unnatural causes, in the insurance package so that financial assistance should be provided to their families as well. Tarar said he had worked on the issue of providing federal grants to the media organizations and signed a summary in that regard.

He said since assuming charge of office, he had ensured an open door policy in the ministry and its attached organizations. "We have to work together to take forward the development of the country," he added. The minister lauded the journalists community for creating awareness among the masses about economic and social issues.

He assured that the government would continue to

protect the rights of journalists. He said with the increase of media platforms, misinformation and fake news had become a serious issue, damaging the integrity and reputation of people, and underlined the need for establishing a forum that could address such matters.

"The government will take an initiative in this regard in consultation with all the stakeholders," he said categorically. The minister requested the press clubs and media bodies to establish a committee in that regard to work out a comprehensive law for countering misinformation and disinformation.

He said he would have 'meet the press' programmes to continue interaction with the journalist community. "We have to join hands to work for the welfare of the journalists. We will continue to play the role to ensure redressal of the issues of journalists," he maintained. Tarar extended gratitude to the journalists community for inviting him for the event regarding launch of the journalists health insurance scheme. He assured that there would be no issue for issuance of the funds for the welfare of journalist community.

## LHC CJ: Establishment's meddling in judicial affairs to end soon

F.P. Report

RAWALPINDI: Outgoing Lahore High Court Chief Justice Malik Shehzad Ahmed Khan has said that interference of the Establishment in judicial affairs will end soon.

Speaking at a ceremony in Rawalpindi, Justice Shehzad Khan said thousands of cases were still pending with courts. "One generation sues and the third generation goes and hears the verdict," he said. "We get letters and threats," said the CJ. He said

he was happy to see judiciary making decisions without fear and any pressure.

"We have to make decisions according to the Constitution and law. Many institutions are involved in interference in the judiciary," he added. Justice Shahzad said one should not be afraid of rendering any kind of sacrifice. "A judge had announced he would make sacrifice," he said. "To get rid of the establishment, we have to take bold decisions exhibit courage. Soon the

interference of the Establishment from the judiciary will end," the CJ said and added, "We have to work with such people fearlessly staring into their eyes. We should not be afraid of anyone."

He said for the first time in judicial history, judges had complained they were intimidated. "This issue is a bad luck for the country. The judges have narrated all the incidents that happened with them," said Justice Shahzad.

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