

Dar, Ali discuss Gaza

ISLAMABAD (APP): Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Mohammad Ishaq Dar on Sunday received a telephone call from Acting Foreign Minister of Iran Ali Bagheri, discussing matters of mutual concern and the dire situation in Gaza. The two sides discussed the situation in Gaza and unabated Israeli atrocities there, a Foreign Office statement said.



@thefrontierpost

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

www.thefrontierpost.com

Vol. XXXIXI

No. 131

Regd. No. 241

ZIQAAD 25 1445 -- MONDAY, JUNE 03 2024

PESHAWAR EDITION

12 PAGES

PRICE. 30



LAHORE: Usually busy Mall Road giving a deserted look as like all other parts of the country Lahore experienced yet another scorching day on Sunday.

Martyrs of former Khasadar Force CM announces recruiting children in police

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Sardar Ali Amin Khan Gandapur, has announced measures to support the children of former Khasadar Force martyrs by recruiting them into the police force.

During a meeting with a multi-member tribal jirga comprising elders of the Khyber district at the Chief Minister's House, he emphasized the provincial government's commitment to fulfilling the promises made to the people of the merged districts, ensuring they receive their full rights.

Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa acknowledged the countless sacrifices made by the tribal people for the nation and reiterated his dedication to delivering on promises that are practical and achievable. He highlighted that funds allocated in the provincial budget for the next financial year exceed the initial commitments for the development of the merged districts.

Echoing the vision of Imran Khan, the Chief Minister expressed a firm resolve to elevate the backward districts to the level of other districts. The merged districts, having

been the most affected by the war against terrorism, will now witness comprehensive development to address their deprivations. Plans are also in place to provide enhanced health and education facilities at the local level.

The upcoming budget will facilitate youth entrepreneurship through interest-free loans, with a specific quota for the youth of the merged districts.

In his address, the Chief Minister assured the Jirga which was headed by Member of National Assembly Iqbal Afridi and former Federal Minister Noorul Haq Qadri, that unprecedented development projects will be initiated under the current Provincial government.

He emphasized the importance of community involvement in monitoring the quality of development work and urged immediate action against any substandard projects.

CM Sardar Ali Amin Gandapur called upon the local populace to assist in eradicating drugs and corruption, which undermine the nation's foundations.

The Chief Minister also discussed the introduction of a new mining policy that guarantees full rights to the areas where mining activities occur. Further,

he outlined a comprehensive strategy aimed at improving law and order in the merged districts, recognizing that peace is integral to the province's development and prosperity.

He stated that the issues faced by the former Khasadar force of the merged districts will be addressed collectively.

Addressing regarding the financial constraints, Chief Minister noted the federal government's incomplete disbursement of funds for the merged districts and solicited the support of the people to secure the province's rightful dues. He vowed to continue advocating for the province's rights on every platform.

The jirga, which comprised of Member of Provincial Assembly Abdul Ghani Afridi, Malik, and local elders of the Khyber district, expressed gratitude to the Chief Minister Sardar Ali Amin Gandapur for proactive stance on the district's issues, especially in sectors such as health, education, infrastructure, clean drinking water, and electricity.

They assured their full support to the provincial government in addressing these issues.

Naqvi visits passport center in London

ISLAMABAD (APP): Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi visited London Passport and National Database and Registration Authority (NADRA) Centers and directed urgent and normal passports to be Issued to overseas Pakistanis within seven and 30 Days respectively.

According to the press release received on Sunday, Naqvi visited the passport and NADRA centres in London on Wednesday and took notice of the delays in the issuance of passports to overseas Pakistanis.

The minister ordered that urgent passports should be issued within seven days and normal passports within 30 days, directing that this policy should be implemented at all Pakistani missions worldwide.

Previously, overseas Pakistanis had to wait for four months for a normal passport and one and a half months for an urgent passport. The minister emphasised that any delay in issuing passports would not be tolerated and action would be taken against officials responsible for it.

To ensure timely delivery of passports, the Interior Minister established a monitoring cell, which would be headed by his PSO, ASP Sher Bano Naqvi. Overseas Pakistanis who do not receive their passports within the specified time can file a complaint at the following email address: complaints.passport@interior.gov.pk

The minister also took notice of the staff shortage at the passport and NADRA centres and directed effective staff management to address the issue.

During his visit, Mohsin Naqvi met with the staff of the passport and NADRA centres and directed them to issue passports to overseas Pakistanis within the specified time. He appreciated the performance of NADRA staff and encouraged them to continue providing efficient services to overseas Pakistanis.

Interior minister also met with overseas Pakistanis present at the centres and inquired about their issues.

Pakistan's High Commissioner to the UK, Dr Mohammad Faisal, was also present on the occasion.

PM congrats Saudi Arabia

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Sunday extended his warm felicitation to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia on hosting a successful boxing event at the Kingdom Arena in Riyadh. "Congratulations to brotherly Kingdom of Saudi Arabia on hosting an impressive boxing bout at Kingdom Arena, Riyadh," the prime minister wrote on his official X timeline.

Expressing delight on the victory of Pakistani origin young superstar Sheeraz Hamza, he said "We are proud of you and look forward to welcoming you soon as world champion," he commended.

The Frontier Post

Maldives will ban Israelis

COLOMBO (AP): The Maldives government will ban Israelis from the Indian Ocean archipelago, known for luxury resorts, as public anger in the predominantly Muslim nation rises over the war in Gaza. The president's office said Sunday that the Cabinet decided to change laws to prevent Israeli passport holders from entering the country and to establish a subcommittee to oversee the process.

Biden's Gaza plan 'not a good deal' but Israel accepts it

JERUSALEM (Reuters): An aide to Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu confirmed on Sunday that Israel had accepted a framework deal for winding down the Gaza war now being advanced by US President Joe Biden, though he described it as flawed and in need of much more work.

In an interview with Britain's Sunday Times, Ophir Falk, chief foreign policy adviser to Netanyahu, said Biden's proposal was "a deal we agreed to — it's not a good deal but we dearly want the hostages released, all of them."

"There are a lot of details to be worked out," he said, adding that Israel's conditions, including "the release of the hostages and the destruction of Hamas as a genocidal terrorist organization" have not changed.

Israel battled and bombed Hamas in the Gaza Strip on Sunday as mediators called on both sides to agree to a truce and hostage release deal outlined by Biden.

Biden, whose initial

lockstep support for Israel's offensive has given way to open censure of the operation's high civilian death toll, on Friday aired what he described as a three-phase plan submitted by the Netanyahu government to end the war.

The first phase entails a truce and the return of some hostages held by Hamas, after which the sides would negotiate on an open-ended cessation of hostilities for a second phase in which remaining live captives would go free, Biden said.

That sequencing appears to imply that Hamas would continue to play a role in incremental arrangements mediated by Egypt and Qatar — a potential clash with Israel's determination to resume the campaign to eliminate the Iranian-backed Islamist group.

Biden has hailed several ceasefire proposals over the past several months, each with similar frameworks to the one he outlined on Friday, all of which collapsed. In February he said Israel

had agreed to halt fighting by Ramadan, the Muslim holy month that began on March 10. No such truce materialized. The primary sticking point has been Israel's insistence that it would discuss only temporary pauses to fighting until Hamas is destroyed. Hamas, which shows no sign of stepping aside, says it will free hostages only under a path to a permanent end to the war.

In his speech, Biden said his latest proposal "creates a better 'day after' in Gaza without Hamas in power."

He did not elaborate on how this would be achieved, and acknowledged that "there are a number of details to negotiate to move from phase one to phase two."

Falk reiterated Netanyahu's position that "there will not be a permanent ceasefire until all our objectives are met."

Netanyahu is under pressure to keep his coalition government intact. Two far-right partners have threatened to bolt in protest at any deal they

deem to spare Hamas. A centrist partner, ex-general Benny Gantz, wants the deal considered.

Hamas has provisionally welcomed the Biden initiative.

"Biden's speech included positive ideas, but we want this to materialize within the framework of a comprehensive agreement that meets our demands," senior Hamas official Osama Hamdan told Al Jazeera on Saturday.

Hamas wants a guaranteed end to the Gaza offensive, withdrawal of all invading forces, free movement for Palestinians and reconstruction aid.

Israeli officials have rejected that as an effective return to the situation in place before Oct. 7, when Hamas, committed to Israel's destruction, ruled Gaza.

In the ensuing Israeli assault that has laid waste to much of the impoverished and besieged coastal enclave, more than 36,000 Palestinians have been killed, Gaza medical officials say.

Dr Fowzia meets her sister Aafia in US jail

KARACHI (PPI): Aafia Movement spokesman Muhammad Ayub said on Sunday that finally after removal of obstructions, Dr Fowzia Siddiqui met her sister Dr Aafia Siddiqui in FMC Carswell prison of USA.

The meeting of the sisters was scheduled on 8:30 in morning; however, they met after waiting for two hours. The jail administration had got repaired their faulty telephone and the glass wall was

also cleaned and this time Dr Fowzia got a better view of her sister. The delay showed that the jail officials were preparing Aafia for the meeting.

Dr Fowzia Siddiqui talking on telephone from Texas has said that these meetings and the meetings of Aafia with local lawyers and reducing her sufferings. She said during this meeting they talked a lot about their deceased mother. Aafia Siddiqui said if there is a

global award for the best mother it would certainly go to their mother.

Their mother Ismat Siddiqui before her demise would always be saddened that the rulers didn't recognize the talent and educational achievements of Aafia. However, Aafia sent her good wishes for all her supporters and said she always prays for them. She said that due to the prayers of the nation she is still alive but in prison.

She asked them to take efforts for her early release.

However, Dr Fowzia said that the right side of the face of Aafia was not in good condition. She said seeing her sister in this condition she wept a lot. Then, both sisters remained silent for a long time.

Dr Aafia said that Ramize haf snatched her scarf, besides not giving her the money sent to her by the family for last two months.

EU refuses to lift ban on PIA

KARACHI (INP): The European Union (EU) refused to lift the ban on Pakistani air carriers including PIA.

The European Union (EU) in its recent meeting found no grounds for amending the current list of air carriers banned from operating within the Union, including Pakistani airlines.

This decision comes after a comprehensive review by the EU Air Safety Committee, which involved an on-site evaluation of the Pakistan Civil Aviation Authority (PCAA) and sample assessments of Pakistani air carriers Fly Jinnah and Airblue Ltd.

The on-site assessment, conducted between November 27 and 30, 2023, focused on the PCAA's role and responsibility in safety oversight.

Although the PCAA demonstrated adherence to international safety standards and was staffed by technically skilled professionals.

However, the on-site assessment team identified several shortcomings, including insufficient scrutiny in closing findings based on proposed corrective actions rather than actual evidence, deviations from established procedures, and a severe understaffing in the Flight

Standards Directorate.

Despite these issues, no major safety concerns were identified in the airworthiness or personnel licensing and training organizations, which were found to be appropriately staffed.

Fly Jinnah, one of the air carriers assessed, was noted for needing improvement in record keeping and management of findings.

The PCAA presented a Corrective Action Plan (CAP) on May 6, 2024, and elaborated on the steps taken to address the identified issues during a hearing before the EU Air Safety Committee on May 14, 2024.

Notably, the PCAA

increased the number of qualified inspectors from one to nineteen in the Flight Standards Directorate, established a Quality Control section in each department, and created a central Quality Assurance department.

Fly Jinnah detailed its current operations and the measures taken to address quality management system flaws, including the use of software tools for various operational functions and outsourcing key activities to Air Arabia.

The EU Air Safety Committee in its report stated that continuous monitoring of the safety situation in Pakistan is essential.

Sri Lanka monsoon floods kill 14, schools shut

COLOMBO (AFP): Flash floods, mudslides and falling trees have killed at least 14 people in Sri Lanka as the island nation is battered by monsoon storms, the country's disaster center said Sunday.

Some drowned, including three members of the same family swept away near the capital Colombo on Sunday.

Others were buried alive in mudslides, including an 11-year-old girl and a 20-year-old man, the Disaster Management Center (DMC) said.

Nine other people were crushed and killed when trees fell on them in seven districts since the monsoon intensified on May 21, the DMC said.

While Sri Lanka depends on the seasonal monsoon rain for irrigation as well as hydroelectricity, experts have warned that it faces more frequent floods as the world heats due to climate

change.

The DMC said 20 out of the country's 25 districts were affected by heavy rain and issued warnings to people living on the banks of main rivers to move to higher ground.

Flights arriving at Colombo's main international airport were diverted to a smaller airport, and

some key highways were flooded at several exits.

The government also ordered all schools to remain shut on Monday after the weekend holiday, as more rain was forecast.

"There could be more heavy rains accompanied by strong winds and thunder," the DMC said.

Last week, wildlife

authorities found seven carcasses of young elephants who drowned in the biggest single loss of the animals in five years.

The onset of the southwest monsoon triggered flooding in the elephant habitat in Dimbulagala, around 250 kilometers (155 miles) northeast of Colombo.



COLOGNE, GERMANY: Palestinian activists are taking part in the rally against Israel in front of Dom Cathedral in Cologne, Germany.





LAHORE: Women selecting old books from a roadside stall at Mall Road. —APP Photo

Action to be taken against wrong parked vehicles: IGP

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Islamabad Police has launched a campaign against those involved in parking their vehicles wrongly and creating inconvenience for pedestrians and smooth flow of traffic by occupying footpath areas.

Inspector General of Police (IGP) Islamabad Syed Ali Nasir Rizvi directed the Police to launch campaign against wrong parking vehicles in especially at busy markets and gave special instructions to SSP Traffic Muhammad Sarfraz Virk to monitor it, a public relations officer said on Sunday.

All Zonal DSPs were directed to ensure implementation of traffic laws and take action against those involved in creating problems for traffic discipline in the city. The action was taken against showroom and shopping malls' administrators in G-11 Markaz, F-10, F-11, G-8, G-9, I-8 Markaz, Blue area, Jinnah Super Market, F-6 Super Market, Aabpara and Bhara Kahu markets. Vehicles were removed from footpath areas and they were warned to follow rules otherwise strict action would be initiated against them.

During the ongoing Year, the Islamabad Police also issued more than 42,000 fine tickets to those involved in wrong parking while several vehicles were impounded at police stations for not vacating footpath areas. The SSP Traffic said that, to ensure convenience for road users is among the top priority of Islamabad Police by maintaining traffic discipline and every possible effort would be made for the purpose.

Additionally, special squads have been constituted for the purpose of removing illegal parking and vacating footpaths while indiscriminate action would be taken against violators, he added.

PHA begins in-house cultivation of sustainable grass

LAHORE (APP): The Parks and Horticulture Authority (PHA) launched an in-house cultivation project for dark green sustainable Korean grass as part of its cost-cutting strategy to reduce dependency on governmental funds.

Director General Muhammad Tahir Wattoo told media on Sunday that, as an experiment, the PHA has planted grass seeds on a one-acre plot near Shahdara, where the department was developing a new family park.

Korean grass is ideally suited for locations with partial shade from trees or nearby buildings. Wattoo said it needs less looking after and does not need as much water or mowing as other kinds of grass.

He observed that the small grass blades with their shallow roots serve as absorbers of carbon dioxide, dust, and dirt, thereby enhancing air quality. Previously, the PHA, responsible for maintaining Lahore's green cover, had to procure grass from the open market, incurring substantial expenses.

However, Wattoo, keen on achieving self-sufficiency, ordered the internal cultivation not only of grass but also of pots and other related horticultural materials.

All set to launch drive against plastic use

LAHORE (APP): Senior Provincial Minister Marriyum Aurangzeb has said that the Punjab government is taking important steps in the perspective of "No to Plastic Campaign".

In a statement, she said that on the special directions of Chief Minister Punjab Maryam Nawaz Sharif, a campaign has been launched to protect the masses from deadly diseases being caused by plastic usage. She said that from 5th June, preparations have been made to ensure strict implementation of the mechanism to ban the manufacture, production, distribution and sale of illegal plastic bags.

"Plastic usage causes cancer and other deadly diseases and sole usage of plastic is increasing environmental pollution and causing serious health issues. A crackdown will be launched

against factories which are manufacturing illegal plastic products," she added.

"Earlier, numerous notices have been sent in this regard. From June 5, hotels, restaurants and other eateries will be strictly prohibited from serving food in plastic bags. A complete crackdown will be launched against the owners found involved in violating this prohibition.

Legal action will be taken against eatery owners and heavy fines will also be imposed," she added. Senior Provincial Minister Marriyum Aurangzeb said that according to the law, the use of polythene bags of less than 75 microns and single-use plastic utensils have been completely banned.

An awareness campaign on the topic of "Plastic is death" will be launched for the general public on non-

usage of plastic. Public service messages will go viral through social media. Written messages will be pasted in shopping malls, offices, bus stands, parks, transports vehicles, Daewoo, metro buses and public places with regard to plastic ban.

Marriyum Aurangzeb said that instead of plastic bags usage, the production, sale and use of cotton bags or alternative sources will be promoted. "Plastic causes death and we all have to work in unison to avoid its toxic and hazardous effects. The media is earnestly requested to contribute its valuable part for promoting awareness campaign that "plastic is death". People should remember while buying plastic bags that they are landing themselves and others into big trouble," she maintained.

Opp Leader in PA hints at PTI protest

LAHORE (PPI) Opposition Leader in the Punjab Assembly (PA) and PTI-SIC leader Malik Ahmad Khan Bhachar said on Sunday that a fresh crackdown on the PTI ticket holders and workers had been launched in the province.

Addressing a press conference in Lahore with members of the Punjab Assembly Sheikh Intiaz Mehmood, Farrukh Javed Moon and Abu Zar Salman sitting alongside him, he said that cases were again being registered against the PTI ticket holders. "Wherever our 10 workers gather, they are whisked away by the police," he lamented.

"And whenever we approach a deputy commissioner for permission for a rally, he starts making excuses," he said, adding,

"The circumstances have now forced the PTI to go for a resistance movement."

Dispelling the impression that the facilities provided to PTI founder Imran Khan at the Adiala Jail were as per his stature as a former prime minister, Bhachar said that only three days ago, he had been provided an air-cooler. "Does the government think that by resorting to such tactics it can make Imran capitulate? No certainly not," he said.

The opposition leader said it was so unfortunate that while on one hand, notices had been issued to the PTI leaders in connection with a tweet, on the other no action was taken against the PML-N leaders Nawaz Sharif, Khawaja Asif and Sardar Ayyaz Sadiq for defaming the state institutions on the floor of the National

Assembly.

Calling the present government a "Tiktok", the PTI-SIC leader said it was so powerless that it could not get the petrol price fixed on its own. "The same Tiktok government is here in Punjab," Bhachar said, adding that the PTI was now going to hold demonstrations. "Our first protest will be outside the Punjab IGP's office," he announced.

The opposition leader urged all RPOs and DPOs not to obey the orders of the IGP since he was breaching the privacy of the PTI workers' homes.

He lamented that now the government planned to hire retired judges to decide the appeals filed by PTI candidates. "This is because serving judges have refused to obey them."

Over Rs16bn disbursed among beneficiaries

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP) has disbursed over Rs.16 billion among over 15,00,000 beneficiaries from across the country so far under the Benazir Kafaalat quarterly payments (April-June).

"Till May 30, over Rs. 16 billion has been disbursed among over 15,00,000 beneficiaries which make 46 per cent of the total beneficiaries", said an official source.

The disbursement of the quarterly tranche (April-June) of Benazir Kafaalat cash assistance to the beneficiaries is continued across the country in two phases to disburse Rs. 10,500 per household among over nine million registered beneficiary families.

In the first phase, the payments are being issued among the beneficiaries in all districts of Islamabad, Balochistan, Azad Jammu and Kashmir and Gilgit Baltistan.

The payments are also being disbursed in Peshawar, Mardan and all districts of Malakand and Hazara Division in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province, all districts of Karachi

Division and District Hyderabad in Sindh province and Gujranwala, Sahiwal, Rawalpindi and all districts of Sargodha Division and District Vehari in Punjab.

Payments to the beneficiaries in the remaining districts are being issued in the second phase.

The beneficiaries can receive their payment through the nearest centers after receiving the message from 8171.

The beneficiaries, in case of any complaint, can approach the nearest BISP Tehsil offices or call the toll-free helpline number 080026477 of the Benazir Income Support Program.

The special control room has been activated in the BISP headquarters to address the complaints of the beneficiaries promptly.

However, the beneficiaries can also contact the officials on WhatsApp numbers including 03018472841 (Hyderabad District), 03018472838 (Karachi Division), 03175370095 (South Punjab), 03202399616 (Central Punjab), 03028238564 (North Punjab), 03492883482 (Balochistan),

03155212820 (Khyber Pakhtunkhwa), 03155213094 (Azad Jammu and Kashmir and Gilgit Baltistan).

The messages from the Benazir Income Support Program are sent only from 8171, and messages from any other number should not be trusted. The officials of BISP have been directed to ensure the smooth disbursement of Kafaalat payments to the women without any deductions.

The staff has been deputed to monitor the process of payment disbursement and take immediate action against the agents responsible for deductions from the beneficiary's payments.

The BISP is currently supporting 9.3 million deserving families and acting as a lifeline for those facing economic hardship.

The Unconditional Cash Transfers (UCT) program, also known as the 'Benazir Kafaalat Programme', is the core initiative of BISP and was launched in 2008. Since its inception, the UCT/Kafaalat initiative has grown to the extent that it is now the largest single cash transfer program in Pakistan's history.

CM orders early completion of Lahore development plan

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif on Sunday chaired a meeting to review progress on the Lahore development plan, which includes the provision of drainage system, construction of access roads and streets, installation of streetlights and restoration of parks.

The CM said a durable end-to-end waste disposal system will be developed in each zone of Lahore. She directed authorities concerned to set up a dedicated 'Project Management Unit' to ensure effective implementation of the development plan. The Chief Minister also approved a proposal to use separate colours for the identification of each zone.

Earlier, Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif was briefed that the construction, repair and development of 6 zones of Lahore including Ravi, Shalimar, Samanabad, Data Ganj Bakhsh, Nishtar

Town, Gulberg and Railway area will be undertaken in Phase-I. At a cost of Rs 74 billion 15 crore, Phase-I is expected to be completed within 10 months, and will benefit more than 93 lac people living in these 6 zones.

The Chief Minister was also apprised that the construction, repair and development of other zones including Allama Iqbal, Wagah and Aziz Bhatti, under Phase-II, will start after the completion of

Phase 1. Senator Pervaiz Rashid, Senior Provincial Minister Marriyum Aurangzeb, Minister for Local Government & Community Development Zeeshan Rafique and Special Assistant Zeeshan Malik attended the meeting. Chief Secretary Zahid Akhtar Zaman, Principal Secretary to CM Sajid Zafar Daal, Secretary Local Government and other senior officers were also present.

Punjab announces crackdown on begging mafia

LAHORE (PPI): The Punjab Home Department has announced a crackdown on the begging mafia throughout the province in a decisive action against this social scourge, it emerged Sunday.

The Home Department has initiated measures to address the situation effectively. One such measure is the preparation of barracks within Punjab's jails to house beggars.

According to a department spokesperson, these barracks are specifically designed for members of the begging mafia, with each facility capable of accommodating between 100 and 200 individuals.

Recognising the urgency of the matter, the spox said, efforts were being made to expand the number of barracks, particularly in major cities where the presence of the begging mafia is more pronounced.

The provincial government is deliberating on a piece of legislation to tackle the root causes of this social evil.

The proposed legislation seeks to enhance penalties for gang leaders of the begging mafia, particularly those involved in heinous crimes such as child abduction and coercion.

Under this law, severe punishments will be imposed on individuals who exploit vulnerable segments of society, including children and women, to perpetuate the cycle of professional begging.

Hidden cameras found in Lahore girls' hostel washrooms

LAHORE (INP): Lahore police have registered a case against seven individuals, including the owner of a girls' hostel in Johar Town, after hidden cameras were discovered in the hostel's washrooms.

The cameras were reportedly used to make indecent videos of the female residents, says in media reports.

The scandal came to light when the uncle of a hostel resident filed a complaint at Johar Police Station. According to the complaint, the hostel administration had secretly installed cameras to record videos of the girls while they bathed.

Police investigation teams recorded statements from the resident, who confirmed the presence of the cameras in the washrooms. Over 40 females from various cities were residing in the hostel at the time.

The accused include Saghir from Vehari, Tavar Shahzad from Sheikhupura, Mohammad Zubair from Jhang, Irfan from Pakpattan, and Ali Hassan from Rahim Yar Khan.

Following the discovery, all the named individuals fled the scene. The police, upon registering the case, promptly evacuated the hostel.

PU awards PhD

LAHORE (APP): Punjab University has awarded a PhD degree to Hafiz Muhammad Afzaal S/o Muhammad Sardar in the subject of Special Education after approval of his thesis titled 'Developing Urdu Reading Skills Among Students with Hearing Impairment by Using Information and Communication Technology'.

Punjab launches anti-Polio campaign

ISLAMABAD (APP): Head of the anti-polio program in Punjab, Khizr Afzal said on Sunday that preparations for the anti-polio campaign have been completed, with the campaign set to commence on Monday.

According to a private news channel, the anti-polio campaign will be organised in six districts including Lahore, Rawalpindi, Faisalabad, Multan, Mianwali, and Okara. Khizr Afzal said that the campaign

aims to vaccinate 6.4 million children across the province. The campaign will last seven days in Lahore, Rawalpindi, and Faisalabad.

He said that in the other districts the campaign will run for five days. He further stated that over 40,000 polio workers will participate in the campaign, with more than 14,000 polio workers active in Lahore alone. He said that the extensive participation underscores the

commitment to eradicating polio from the region. He highlighted the urgency of the campaign by noting that the polio virus has been detected in environmental samples in Punjab.

The summer season poses a significant risk as it creates favourable conditions for the spread of the virus, he said adding that increased traffic during the summer and Eid holidays further heightens the risk of transmission.

Sindh govt to promote use of electrical vehicles

KARACHI (APP): Sindh Minister for Industries and Commerce Jam Ikramullah Dharejo and Secretary Industries and Commerce Muhammad Yasin Shar Baloch said that the Sindh government would promote the use of electrical vehicles for reducing environmental pollution.

During his visit to Yousuf Dewan Companies here Sunday, he held a meeting with Chairman of the group, Dewan Muhammad Yousuf Farooqui, Group CEO Automotive Dr. Usman Hayat and others.

The meeting focused on the revival of the national economy, its impact on the automotive industry and the launch of electrical vehicles in Pakistan.

The provincial minister discussed various aspects of industrial development with Dewan Muhammad Yousuf Farooqui, including infrastructure, workforce and market competitiveness. They explored ways to stimulate economic growth, create employment opportunities and enhance the industry's contribution to the national economy.

Jam Ikramullah Dharejo emphasized the government's commitment to supporting industrial growth and development, highlighting initiatives to improve the business environment, facilitate investment and promote innovation.

He also viewed the Dewan KIA Shehzore LCV truck, a locally manufactured vehicle by Dewan Muhammad Farooque Motors Limited at their state-of-the-art manufacturing plant in Dewan City, District Thatta, demonstrating the capabilities of Pakistan's automotive industry.

He appreciated the industry's resilience and potential for growth. The meeting also discussed the launch of electrical vehicles, including the Honeri VE fully electric car in Pakistan, a significant step towards a sustainable and environmentally friendly transportation sector.

The minister expressed government's support for this initiative, highlighting its potential to reduce carbon emissions and promote eco-friendly transportation.

Punjab minister announces initiatives

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Minister for Minorities Ramesh Singh Arora has announced a series of significant steps taken by the Human Rights & Minority Affairs department under the supervision of Chief Minister Punjab, Maryam Nawaz Sharif, aimed at improving the welfare of religious minorities, particularly minority students.

The minister shared the developments while speaking at an event held at Forman Christian College & University (FCCU), organized by the Center for Law and Justice (CLJ) here on Sunday.

He highlighted several key achievements, including the introduction of a 2 per cent minority admission quotas in public sector universities across Punjab. Additionally, 18,914 vacancies have

been identified and recruited under the 5 per cent minority job quota. In a move to foster inclusivity, a notification has been issued to replace the term "Esai" with "Masih" in all public correspondence.

He said the Punjab government has also adopted a no-hate material policy in all textbooks published by the Punjab Curriculum Textbook Board. Under the Punjab Skill Development Program, 5,000 minority students have received free training to enhance their skills and employability.

The event celebrated the graduation of 30 female students from the Khushhali (Prosperity) Fellowship Program. This pioneering program, led by Mary James Gill and Asif Aqeel in collaboration with the British Council, the University of Lancaster, and FCCU,

aims to empower young girls from sanitation workers' families in Lahore's underserved slums by helping them overcome educational barriers and improve their occupational mobility.

Prominent attendees at the ceremony included French Ambassador in Pakistan Clara Strandhøj, Head of the British High Commission's Lahore Office, FCCU Rector Dr. Jonathan Addleton, Secretary of Women Development Sumaira Sammad, Hafiz Allah Niazi, Usama Khawar, and Special Secretary of Higher Education Lubna Mansoor.

The minister praised the collaborative efforts and underscored the government's commitment to ensuring equal opportunities and support for minority communities in Punjab.

Minister for agri-based interest-free-loans

KARACHI (APP): Sindh Agriculture Minister Muhammad Bux Mahar has said that the Research Wing of the Agriculture Department would devise a mechanism to provide interest-free loans to the students of Sindh Agricultural University, Tandojam. He said that he would also talk to the Chief Minister regarding the grant so that the youth of Sindh could start their own agricultural business.

He stated this while presiding over a high-level meeting of the Agricultural Research Wing of the Department of Agriculture at the Sindh Secretariat, a communicate said on Sunday.

The provincial minister said that the Research Wing should introduce new varieties of wheat, rice and sugarcane crops and give the varieties to the farmers of the province for free.

Mahar said that climate change had become a major problem, the biggest impact of which is on agriculture, which needed more budget to work on capacity building and provide more training to agriculture officers.

He directed DG Research Noor Muhammad Baloch to improve the production and quality of mangoes, dates and cotton.

The DG Researc, while briefing the meeting, said that the Research Wing had introduced 13 varieties of wheat by 2023 and

14 varieties of cotton by 2020, the yield of which was 85 to 80 maunds per acre, while 11 varieties of rice, sugarcane 11 varieties and 7 varieties of vegetables had been introduced.

He further informed that the Agricultural Research Wing had trained more than 300 women in the Institute of Food and Science Technology to produce agricultural products so that women could earn by doing small business at home.

Besides others the meeting was attended by Vice Chancellor Agriculture University Tando Jam Dr. Fateh Muhammad Marri, Akbar Ali Zardari and other research officers.



PESHAWAR: Minister for Health Syed Qasim Ali Shah giving away degree to students during convocation of Jinnah Medical College Peshawar.

Govt committed to public welfare: Liaquat

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Malik Liaquat Ali Khan, Special Assistant for the Population Welfare Department, has reaffirmed the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government's commitment to addressing the fundamental issues of the people, in line with the vision of party leader Imran Khan. He emphasized the use of all available resources for public welfare and assured that the trust of the people would not be betrayed.

Speaking to various delegations at his residence on Public Day on Sunday, Malik Liaquat Ali Khan highlighted the provincial government's people-

friendly initiatives. He reiterated that the goal of development has been set, and improvements will soon be seen across all sectors, meeting the expectations of the citizens. He stated that this is a crucial step towards realizing the Manifesto of the State of Medina envisioned by Quaid Imran Khan, under the supervision of Chief Minister Ali Amin Gandapur.

Malik Liaquat Ali Khan assured that the development projects approved in Dir district would be completed without any delay, ensuring that no restrictions are placed on the rights of the people. He pledged to utilize all resources to safe-

guard citizens' rights, improve the living conditions of government employees, and continually focus on addressing the issues faced by the impoverished. He emphasized that politics should be viewed as a service, aiming to provide possible relief to the people.

Tehreek-e-Insaaf stands for development, prosperity, and public service without discrimination," he remarked.

During Public Day, delegations from various regions presented their issues to the Special Assistant, who assured them that his doors are always open to listen to public grievances.

Muneeb wins Bronze medal in IKMC

F.P. Report



PESHAWAR: Students of Bloomfield Hall School, Peshawar excel in International Kangaroo Mathematics Contest (IKMC), earning prestigious awards.

In this regard Muneeb ul Haq, Son of Amin ul Haq secured a bronze medal in the said contest.

Muneeb is a student of grade 9 of Bloomfield Hall School, Peshawar. He thanks his teachers, school administration for providing brilliant academic atmosphere which helped him in getting the distinction.

Ghulam Ali meets with traders

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: A meeting held by former Governor Haji Ghulam Ali thoroughly discussed issues relating to business community and challenges being faced by businessmen. A high-level delegation led by the patron-in-chief of the Sarhad Business Alliance, former Governor Haji Ghulam Ali, and Sharafat Ali Mubarak Haji Ishaq, including former provincial minister Malik Mehr Elahi, Haji Waheed, Nisar Khan, Haji Ishaq, Sirajuddin, Minhajuddin, and other group members, met with Ghulam Bilal Javed and his group members. They discussed the challenges facing Peshawar's business community and sought support for their group and colleagues in the upcoming elections of the Sarhad Chamber of Commerce and Industry. The All Pakistan Car Dealers Association Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, the All Pakistan Gem and Jewelers Association Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, and the Peshawar Traders Chamber pledged their full support. Ghulam Bilal Javed also hosted a dignified tea reception.

Advisor Tourism visits Peshawar Museum Living nations learn from history by preserving it: Zahid

Peshawar Museum preserve 90% Gandhara civilization

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Zahid Chanzeb, Adviser to the Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa on Tourism, Culture and Archeology, along with the officials of Tourism and Archeology Department made a detailed visit to Peshawar Museum located adjacent to Governor House and Civil Secretariat Peshawar and witnessed its various parts.

He expressed his satisfaction that the museum has preserved rare artifacts and statues including the Gandhara civilization belonging to this region, many of which traced back to the 2nd and 3rd centuries AD.

Advisor Tourism and Archeology said that living nations always preserve their history and learn from it in the same way, and such nations, by dint of their continuous efforts, get out of the swamp of backwardness and reach the pinnacle of development with great speed, he added.

On this occasion,



Director Archeology Dr. Abdul Samad showed him the dance floor of the Victoria Dancing Club that was later converted into the museum, which was built in 1907 with full splendor in the memory of Queen Victoria in a short period of one year.

Later, an Englishman, Bob Wrightson, leased it and turned it into a dancing studio and entertainment club. However, it was converted into a museum in 1974.

Dr. Samad told the Tourism Advisor that the museum is open for tourists seven days a week and is also a major source of income due to the rush of tourists. The uniqueness of this museum in the entire

subcontinent is that 90% of the relics of the Gandhara civilization in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and the entire life story right from the birth to the death of Buddha, who holds the status of a prophet in Buddhism, is preserved here. He said a total of 14 thousand artifacts of global importance are showcased in the museum, including Buddhist artefacts, early manuscripts of the Holy Quran, Mughal paintings and coins, relics of Kushan, Huns and other invaders and ancient tribal weapons, jewelry, Men's and women's dresses and handicrafts are noteworthy among them. He revealed that the artefacts of the museum were presented in

various international exhibitions including Switzerland and received valuable awards due to great world recognition.

The Advisor Tourism appreciated that through information technology, barcodes have been placed along with the artifacts and sculptures kept in the museum cabinets and any domestic or foreign tourist can get their full details in their own language through their mobile application.

Zahid Chanzeb, however, directed that the show-cases of antiques and sculptures kept in various galleries and cabinets should also be made attractive by using modern technology so that the interest of tourists is maintained. Similarly, attention should also be paid to the promotion of these antiquities at the global level through virtual tourism.

The Advisor Tourism described the building of the museum as the best example of Mughal architecture and directed to ensure its maintenance.

PMDC conducts test for scholarships

PESHAWAR (APP): Peshawar Model Degree Colleges on Sunday conducted the first test of the Goodwill and CUSIT Talent Scholarship, for which more than 2,500 matric students from both private and public schools throughout Khyber Pakhtunkhwa applied.

The test took place at PMDC Boys and Girls Dalazak Road Peshawar, PMDC Boys and Girls Hayatabad and PMDC Boys and Girls Mardan, showcasing the immense talent and potential among the youth of the region.

The Goodwill and CUSIT Talent Scholarship Test aims to recognize and reward the academic achievements and abilities



of deserving students. The second test is scheduled for Sunday June 9.

Prominent political family of Battagram join PML-N

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: A prominent political family from District Battagram, led by Advocate Muhammad Fayaz Khan and Nawabzada Wali Muhammad Khan, along with thousands of their supporters, joined the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) in the presence of Provincial President Engineer Amir Muqam.

On this occasion, District President Mahajireen Khan, General Secretary Nasir Ali Khan, Tahir Khan, and other officials from Battagram were also present.

Provincial President Engineer Amir Muqam

thanked them and stated that the misunderstanding that arose during the

2024 elections have been resolved, and they are now committed to work-

ing for the party with renewed enthusiasm and determination.



KP govt urged to fund Hindko Academy

PESHAWAR (APP): Gandhara Hindko Board, a literary and cultural organization, on Sunday urged the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government to provide funds to Gandhara Hindko Academy and set up a Saraiki Academy as well

in the province to promote Saraiki language and culture.

Muhammad Ziauddin, General Secretary of the board, made the appeal after a meeting of the board members, said a press release.

Ziauddin, himself a research scholar and author of several books, said as per official statistics, Hindko was the second main language of KP and the sixth widely spoken regional language of the country.

MM-1 – A leap forward to regain past glory

PESHAWAR (APP): The successful launch of a new satellite PakSat MM-1 by Pakistan Space and Upper Atmosphere Research Commission (SUPARCO) is hoped to prove a stepping stone towards digitalizing Pakistan and pave way for future space explorations.

The satellite launched with support of China under the National Space Program 2047 would revolutionize communication infrastructure in Pakistan for regaining the past glory of launching its first rocket in space in 1960's.

On July 07, 1962, Pakistan launched the first rocket known as "Rehbar-I" in space – a two staged solid fuel rocket after that made the country first in Islamic world, third in South Asia and 10th in the entire world to launch a vessel into outer space.

However, the country could not keep up with the exemplary initiative taken in 1960s apparently due to lack of political will or paucity of resources – lagging behind in this race. But, now once again it has embarked on this journey to push country forward into modern digital world.

"For now, Pakistan achieved

the goal of sending its satellite to space in collaboration with other countries. But, days are not far off when it will send its own independent mission to space" said Dr. Khurram Khurshid, Head Electrical Engineering Department, Institute of Space Technology (IST). "Engineers and SUPARCO team are making concerted efforts to materialize this dream."

Emphasizing to educate new generation in space technology traits, its applications and usage for our development, he said, the country needs more engineers, technicians and experts in this field."

Dr Khurram informed that newly launched satellite MM-1 will provide communication services like broadband internet, TV broadcasting, media and telecommunication. "It is set to be positioned in a geostationary orbit 36,000 kilometers above Earth and will play an important role in promoting economic activities besides e-commerce and e-governance."

The satellite PakSat MM1 – conceived to meet growing needs of country in broad spectrum of communication and connectivity – was launched



from Xichang Satellite Launch Center (XSLC), China. This project is a hallmark of technological cooperation between People's Republic of China and Pakistan.

Based on advanced communication technologies, the satellite will digitally transform Pakistan by contributing in establishing a sophisticated communication network to meet growing demand of telecom sector, high speed internet and seamless connectivity.

According to SUPARCO, "this high-power multi-mission satellite will provide communication services in C, Ku, Ka Bands and SBAS services in L

Band and various communication services like broadband internet, TV broadcasting, Mobile bank –hauling and VSAT connectivity."

"The primary objective of launching PAKSAT MM-1 satellite is to strengthen Pakistan's communication infrastructure and broaden the horizons for connectivity, serving the un-served Tele-education, E-health/Tele-medicine, E-governance and E-commerce by transforming Pakistan into a digital powerhouse," remarked Project Manager MM-1, SUPARCO, Dr. Usman Iftikhar.

"As communication infrastructure plays a pivotal role in

any country's progress, therefore, we hope this satellite to improve connectivity to country's remote areas. This is a communication satellite successfully sent to Geostationary Orbit," he added.

This advanced satellite, developed by Pakistani scientists and engineers through relentless effort, marks a major step forward in the nation's aspirations to enhance connectivity across all regions.

After a recent successful lunar mission, the introduction of Paksat MM1 reflects nation's growing expertise in space technology.

"This satellite will help pro-

vide high-speed internet services and ensure connectivity even in the far-flung areas of Balochistan and Gilgit-Baltistan," stated Director SUPARCO, Atiqur Rehman.

"With its deployment, we hope to address the issues of digital divide in different regions, improve TV broadcasting, cellular phone and broadband service across Pakistan. Its service would start in August," Atiqur Rehman informed.

Earlier, Pakistan's historic lunar mission iCube-Qamar (iCUBE-Q) was launched on May 03 on board China's Chang'E6 from Hainan with this satellite mission marking Pakistan's first lunar exploration effort and a significant milestone for country's space endeavors.

The satellite iCube-Q was designed and developed by Electrical Engineering Department of the Institute of Space Technology (IST) in collaboration with China's Shanghai University SJTU and Pakistan's national space agency SUPARCO.

Weighing about 7kg, this satellite successfully captured and transmitted its inaugural images from lunar orbit, provid-

ing a unique perspective of moon's surface.

According to SUPARCO, three types of satellites are essential for any country – firstly for communication, secondly for remote sensing and reconnaissance and thirdly for navigation.

These satellites are incredibly beneficial for humanity in communication, navigation, weather forecasting, earth observations, scientific research, disaster management, remote sensing and telemedicine besides advancing scientific knowledge and benefitting humanity in different arena of life and well-being of people.

As the country has revived its space program, no matter even if with the support of scientists from other countries, our policy makers must know that there is no dearth of talent in Pakistan if our emerging scientists are provided proper opportunities to excel – they will prove to be outstanding and compatible to known world scientists. What we need is the targeted approach, result oriented policies and conducive environment for our geniuses to flourish.



In brief

Career counselling
F.P. Report

LOWER DIR: The district administration in collaboration with its youth affairs department on Sunday arranged a "Career Counselling and Development Initiative at Govt High School Balambat. The Additional Assistant Commissioner Timergara Tariq Khan and Principal Abdul Salim Khan were invited as Guest Speakers in the Session. They highlighted the importance of career development and practiced the strength, weaknesses, opportunity and threat (SWOT) analysis. The purpose of the activities were analyzing the strength, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats of the Students and how to violates and overcome the anxiety and depression in students Career. The Speakers shared their personal success Stories and encouraged the Students to go ahead and focus on their career rather focusing useless depression. He also discussed that the suicide is not the solution of a problem but be confident and take your own decisions. The Question-Answers session was also carried out. The participants showed their interest in the session. They take-away of the session was self well-being and focusing on the Career Goals rather than useless activities. At the end of Session Certificates were distributed among the students and Shields were presented to the Guests and Prominent.

Police conducts
crackdown

RAHIM YAR KHAN (APP): Rahim Yar Khan police on Sunday launched a full-fledged crackdown against criminals. According to police sources, during the police crackdown across the district, 869 accused, including 434 advertised criminals were arrested, a large quantity of drugs and illegal weapons were recovered, and cases were registered. According to the details, led by DPO Imran Ahmed Malik, the circle police officers, SHOs, and their teams conducted a crackdown against the criminal elements throughout the district to ensure the safety of public life and property. During the last month of May, 869 suspects, including 434 criminals and 23 fugitives from court, have been arrested in police operations across the district. Country Liquor, 467 Cups of Liquor, 1050 Bottles of Valiati Liquor, 4 kg of 910 grams of Charis, 64 kg of 500 grams of Bhang, and similar operations against illegal arms, including 1 Kalashnikov, 4 guns, 38 pistols, 30 bores, and 8 pistols, 12 bores, 3 9mm pistols, 1 repeater, and 175 rounds and cartridges were recovered, arresting the accused and registering separate cases against them.

Ban on plastic
products

FAISALABAD (APP): The Environment Protection Agency has announced that there will be a complete ban on the use of plastic products from June 5. According to the district administration spokesperson here on Sunday, plastic bags with thickness less than 75 microns and size less than 12x16 inches and ear buds with plastic sticks will be banned. The plastic sticks with balloons, plastic flags, and plastic candy sticks, plastic ice cream sticks will also be banned. The polystyrene disposable cups, glasses, plates, food boxes, plastic wrapping on sweets boxes and plastic cards are also included in the prohibited list.

Leishmania getting
out of control in
Takht Nusrati

Shafiuddin Shafiq

KARAK: After the hilly areas of Takht Nusrati Tehsil, the plains are also in the grip of Leishmania, with hundreds of children, men, and women affected and no treatment available. Every tenth person is a victim of leishmania or will be a victim in the near future. Just as cancer spreads rapidly, leishmania continues to strengthen its grip.

A year and a half ago, the prevalence was high only in mountainous areas or regions with abundant water, such as Hamidan Banda and Bogara. However, now the victims of leishmaniasis include men, women, children, and the elderly, and the number of victims is increasing day by day.

Previously confined to certain areas, the disease has now spread to the plains. Earlier, only about 5% of the population was affected, but now it has reached 10% because the disease spreads more easily in the summer season. Consequently, every tenth

person is now being infected, leading to a significant increase in the number of Leishmania patients.

The people are becoming increasingly affected.

The residents of Takht Nusrati are now demanding that competent departments, including the Department of Health and the Department of Local Government, provide proper treatment for Leishmania in public hospitals.

They are also calling for the affected areas to be sprayed with mosquito repellent to prevent further spread of the disease. In another issue, the deduction from employees' salaries has intensified, prompting protests.

In this era of inflation, deducting from poor employees' salaries is tantamount to pushing them towards suicide. The employees have threatened to lock the hospital if the illegal deductions are not returned.

Meanwhile, the issue of salary deductions intensified, prompting employees

to protest.

The affected employees of Type C Hospital Takht Nusrati announced that if the illegal deductions are not returned, they will lock the hospital. They boycotted all departments, including the OPD, to protest the illegal salary deductions.

Farooq Khattak, Deputy DHO Dr. Niaz Ali, Acting MS Dr. Naseem, along with Municipal Administrators Malik Muhammad Ayaz, Qamar Zaman, Guldar Ali, Abdul Moein, Tariq Bazid Khel, and Rasheed Ullah presented the case of the protesting employees before the DHO. On this occasion, DHO Farooq Khattak formed a 5-member committee of municipal administrators to address the grievances of the employees and assured them that their legitimate demands would be resolved immediately.

Meanwhile, the committee members assured the aggrieved employees and directed them to end their protest and resume their duties.



MULTAN: Woman is plucking vegetables in the field.

DC reviews price control
implementation

FAISALABAD (APP): A review meeting of the CM governance initiative was held under the chairmanship of Deputy Commissioner Abdullah Nayyar Sheikh, here on Sunday.

He took briefing on implementation of the price control mechanism and ordered for legal action against shopkeepers selling roti, fruits, vegetables, edi-

ble items and bread at expensive rates.

He directed that price lists should be displayed at conspicuous places at shops, while price control magistrates with poor performance would be held accountable.

He also urged assistant commissioners to enforce implementation of price control mechanism in tehsils, and complaints

identified by special branch should be redressed immediately. He also ordered for inspection of development schemes, hospitals, health centres and implementation of the marriage act.

Meanwhile, the price control magistrates imposed Rs 30,000 fine on vendors and retailers for selling edible items at higher rates in different markets and bazaars.

PSF meeting held

F.P. Report

BANNU: Former prominent leaders of the People's Students Federation in Peshawar, including Malik Dilnawaz Khan, Yayha Shah Khalil and Engineer Dawood Jan organized a reception in honor of PSF's longstanding associate Barrister Dr. Usman Ali.

The event was attended by central executive committee members of the party including Barrister Masood Kausar, Azam Afridi provincial cabinet members Syed Ayub Shah, Syed Taher Abbas, Comrade Anwar Zaib, Khawaja Yawar Nasir, Javid Khattak Syed Zafran Shah, Waheed Afzal Gorla, Ashraf Saraf, and several founding members.

On this occasion the focus of the discussion was on the current political scenario, and attention was drawn to the party's situation in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

The participants reiterated their commitment to present the party's widest interests, reorganize the party with new cadres, and pledge unconditional services to the central and provincial leadership of the party in empowering the youth.

It was recommended to strengthen the party's roots in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and urged President Asif Ali Zardari and Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari to initiate organizational reforms in the province, emphasizing the need to

revive party workers and public confidence in the wake of the disappointing results of recent elections, asserting that the aspirations of all classes of society are still associated with the Pakistan People's Party.

The partners expressed their desire to send a message to the party leadership to consider their positive suggestions and take necessary steps to deal with current challenges.

A comprehensive campaign should be launched to revitalize the party's foundation and attract new supporters, democratic elections should be held at all levels (ward, town, city, district, and provincial) to ensure the certainty of new leadership and representation.



FAISALABAD: Owners proudly display their pets during the competition "26th International camel and Goat contests of beautification, weigh and milk, contest is jointly arranged by the Faculty of Animal Husbandry (FAH), UAF and International Goat and Bull Association at UAF Stadium.

Syed
Mukhtar
Bacha
remembered
F.P. Report

BUNER: A condolence reference was held in the memory of progressive leader late Syed Mukhtar Bacha at a local hotel in Swari on Sunday.

Large number of National Party (NP) leaders, party workers and fans of Mukhtar Bacha from across the province participated.

Bacha's close associates Comrade Sher Aman Bacha, Sahar Buner, Mukhtar Bacha's brother Ekhtiar Bacha, eldest son Daniyal Bacha, Inam Khan Peshawari, Essa Khan Peshawari, Atlas Sherani DI Khan, Riaz Jan Advocate, Mahbub Alam Advocate, Shams ul Hadi Advocate, Iqbal Khan of Panjtar, Comrade Ali Muhammad Khan, Yusuf Anwar, Taj Mohammad Khattak and Atlas Khattak spoke.

The speakers shed detailed light on the life and struggle of Syed Mukhtar Bacha.

They added Bacha was from the time of the student was fund to science and social sciences. They added Bacha was from the very beginning actively participated in class politics right from the university to the central general secretary of the Communist Party.

They mentioned in detail that Bacha was actively involved in politics the day and night work to bring together all the secular progressive and minded political personalities, groups, unions and parties to improve the living conditions of the deprived classes and to achieve their rights.

The speakers pledged to continue Bacha mission and commitment was expressed to organize references in memory of late Bacha and to provide a platform to like-minded comrades. At the end the participants prayed to Almighty Allah for the best reward of the late Mukhtar Bacha's soul, the references concluded.

PML-N to
bring vibrant
LG system:
Minister

SIALKOT (INP): Provincial Minister for Local Government Zeeshan Rafique has said that the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) wants to bring a strong and vibrant local government system in the province.

He expressed these views during an open court in his constituency PP-51 camp office Daska City.

"As soon as the government was formed in Punjab, Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif established a committee consisting of provincial ministers, assembly members and senior officers to remodel the local government system, which has completed 80 percent of its work," he added.

The minister said that the local government department was collecting basic information in digital format for solid waste management at the rural union council level and tehsil level in all the districts of the province and after the final approval from the Chief Minister, sanitation in rural areas would be outsourced under which manual, mechanical sweeping, waste collection, drain cleaning and waste disposal would be ensured.

Amid students protests
Malakand varsity to
remain closed for 3 days

F.P. Report

LOWER DIR: The students' protest call prompted the University of Malakand (UoM) to remain closed for the next three days as it on Sunday informed all the concerned students and academics that due to unavoidable circumstances and in the best interest of students and public, the varsity, its women campus Batkhela and its constituent school and college would remain closed for a period of three days.

A notification issued by the UoM registrar said that papers falling on the days would be rescheduled after reopening of the university.

The students' society had planned to stage a protest sit-in outside the office of the vice chancellor for an indefinite period from Monday (today) against the varsity administration for its misbehavior with its students.

The decision was taken during a joint meeting of the students' organizations and chaired by the Pukhtoon Students' Federation held outside the varsity here the

other day.

The meeting had announced that workers of all students' organizations would protest against the varsity administration for compelling students to leave the hostels.

They said that due to this harsh behaviour, a student of the journalism and mass communication department Musa Khan hailing from the Upper Dir district was killed in a road accident while two of his friends were seriously injured.

The meeting demanded of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Governor Faisal Karim Kundi to order a probe into the matter and dismiss the provost, chief proctor and hostel warden.

Meanwhile the UoM Director administration Dr. Altaf Hussain Akhunkhel, Provost Dr. Janus Khan and Director Students' Society Jamil Anwar told local journalists that the varsity had nothing to do with the death of Musa Khan. Speaking at a news conference at Chakdara, they clarified that the student was killed in a road accident at Pull

Chowky on Swat motorway when he was going to Batkhela along with two other students on May 29. They said the FIR of the incident showed the student was killed by a speedy motor car coming on the wrong side outside the varsity.

They said the varsity provided two buses to students who wanted to attend the funeral prayer of the student. They said the VC also visited the victim's family on the very next day and condoled over the sudden death of the student. They said that some vest interested elements were misleading the public on social media.

Also on Sunday the chief proctor Dr. Aziz told that the students had not been misbehaved. Commenting on media reports, Dr. Aziz said the students were not restricted from the hostels and the varsity had nothing to do with the death of Musa Khan. He said the deceased had taken an active part in students' election on that very day and he was quite normal.



LOWER DIR: Students posing for photographers with their certificates at the end of career counselling session at Govt High School Balambat.

Sports competitions held
during 56th mango exhibition

MIRPURKHAS (APP): On the second day of the annual three-day mango exhibition, the Sindh Horticulture Research Institute Mirpurkhas organized the traditional game of Malakhra.

Chairman District Council Mir Anwar Ali Talpur was the chief guest at the ceremony while Commissioner Mirpurkhas Faisal Ahmad Uqaili, Additional Commissioner-I Dr. Ali Nawaz Bhoot, Additional Deputy Commissioner-II Sono Khan Chandio, Deputy Commissioner Mirpurkhas

Dr. Rasheed Masood Khan, Chairman Mango Festival Management Committee Rais Arif Khan Bhurguri, high officials and people from different walks to life attended the event.

According to the handout issued by the Information Department here on Sunday, there was a competition between the Malh in which Imtiaz Marri won the first position in the first pair, Ghulam Hussain Pathan won the first position in the second pair, and Mashooque Marri won the first position in the third pair.

The prize of 15 thousand rupees was given to Imtiaz Marri, who got the position in the first pair, 10 thousand rupees to Ghulam Hussain Pathan, the second pair, and 8 thousand rupees to Mashooque Ali, the third pair.

On this occasion, District Council Chairman Mir Anwar Talpur said that Malakhra is the traditional game of Sindh, and such programs should be organized so that the traditions of Sindh can be highlighted and the coming generations can gain awareness about the traditions of Sindh.

Law Minister inspects Kohat Grid Station
Sahibzada Afridi

KOHAT: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Minister for Finance and Law Aftab Alam Afridi Advocate alongwith the Members of Provincial Assembly Daud Shah Afridi Advocate and Shafi Jan and Chairman Tehsil Gumbat Sajid Iqbal visited the Kohat Grid Station where they reviewed the ongoing maintenance work after Thursday fire. The authorities concerned of WAPDA told the minister that work is going on day and night to restore electricity and in most parts of the district, electricity has been restored while in the remaining parts will also be fully restored within next 5 hours. He further was told that mostly new cable has been laid down. It is to be mentioned here that soon after the Thursday fire, former Interior Minister and PTI senior leader Shehryar Afridi MNA and members of the Provincial Assembly are continuously monitoring the electricity restoration works and apprised themselves of the situation moment by moment. The law minister directed the authorities concerned to immediately restore the electricity of the cleared feeders while remaining work should be accelerated. He said, the weather is extremely hot and the need for electricity is much higher, so public should be given relief anyway. Aftab Alam also thanked the MNA, his colleague members and party leaders of Kohat whose efforts helped in the speedy restoration of electricity.



SARGODHA: A person sitting on luggage loaded on tricycle loader rickshaw on the way at Chungi No.9.



With shake-up at defense ministry, ‘Putin’s chef’ gets his wish from beyond the grave

BERLIN (CNN): Removing a long-time defense minister from his post is nothing out of the ordinary. Arresting five of his senior staff, however, is clearly more than just a search for fresh blood — especially in Vladimir Putin’s Russia.

After the shock ouster, two weeks ago, of Sergei Shoigu as the minister for defense, a wave of arrests has gutted the defense ministry’s top brass under the guise of an anti-corruption campaign.

The timing is as intriguing as the arrests and reshuffle. After almost three years of failure on the battlefields in Ukraine, Russia has just gained the upper hand. It has, in recent weeks, launched a largely successful offensive in the north, toward Kharkiv, coupled with victories in the Donbas region in the east, too.

Ukraine’s crippling manpower shortage and dwindling ammunition supplies — exacerbated by months of stalling in the US Congress to approve a military support package — have also helped reverse Russia’s

fortunes.

So the question then is, why shake up the ministry in charge of winning the war now?

Analysts who spoke to CNN described the defense ministry as one of the most corrupt in the country. Russian state media has been disclosing military contracts worth eye-watering sums of money and publicly shaming the ministry’s senior officials and their lavish lifestyles. But as one analyst told CNN, what we are witnessing is a “very complex polycentric game,” one that is related to timing and Putin’s existential search for victory against the West.

Prigozhin message from the grave

Hanging over this shake-up is the ghost of Yevgeny Prigozhin, boss of the Wagner mercenary group, who was also formerly known as “Putin’s Chef.”

Before his death, he had expressed hatred for Shoigu and Russia’s top general.

Valery Gerasimov, through profanity-laden tirades, accusing them and the

ministry of corruption and incompetence.

Prigozhin led a mutiny on Moscow that was supposed to end with the overthrow of Shoigu and Gerasimov. Instead, he put the president in an awkward position and challenged his authority.

Putin responded by describing Prigozhin as a traitor and stripped him of his assets, all before he died in a suspicious plane crash, alongside his most senior advisers.

Since then, Putin has kept the inefficiencies of the ministry’s weapons procurement, as well as its bungled invasion of Ukraine and corruption allegations, out of the public eye, keen to show he would not make any knee-jerk reactions following the mutiny. Doing so might question his authority and strength to the Russian people.

Putin was likely awaiting his reelection by the Russian people in March before making moving in on the defense ministry. The changes came shortly after Victory Day celebrations on May 9, which Putin and Shoigu attended, side by side, in a

seemingly amicable appearance.

Despite his removal as defense minister, Shoigu will remain in Putin’s orbit after being moved sideways to a new role as secretary of the security council.

Putin’s interests: Ukraine

Tatiyana Stanovaya, Senior Fellow at Carnegie Russia Eurasia Center, told CNN that whether Prigozhin may have been right about the officials’ corruption is not what’s important. In Russia, she said, “right and wrong doesn’t exist in politics — only interests matter.”

Putin’s interest is in keeping his house in order but, more pressingly, achieving victory in Ukraine. The defense ministry is central to how that war ends.

With Putin installing a civilian economist, Andrey Belousov, as the new defense minister, he has signaled he wants the ministry, with its vast budget, to procure weapons more quickly and economically.

Russia’s 2024 budget shows it is seeking to spend 6% of GDP on

defense, the highest in modern Russian history, and will outpace social spending — a sign of the country’s transition to a wartime economy.

The corruption in question — Shamarin and Ivanov

Mikhail Komin, a Russian political scientist and Visiting Fellow at the European Council of Foreign Affairs based in Vienna, told CNN that “Shoigu’s group, among the Russian elites, is one of the most rent-seeking. More, for example, than some of Putin’s inner circle.”

Last Friday, Lieutenant General Vadim Shamarin, chief of the Main Directorate of the Russian Armed Forces, was charged with “receiving a bribe on an especially large scale,” of 36 million rubles (around \$393,000) from a factory that supplies the ministry with communications equipment. In exchange, he is alleged to have awarded the company lucrative government contracts.

Shamarin has pleaded not guilty, according to Russian state media.

Russian state media has also played a role in communicating the Kremlin’s crackdown on the ministry. Following Shamarin’s arrest in May, state-run Ria Novosti reported that his wife had purchased a Mercedes-Benz GLE in 2018 for 20 million rubles (about \$218,000) at a time when his income was no higher than \$34,000. A separate report found her income that year was 872,000 rubles (\$9,740).

The highest profile of the five officials arrested was Timur Ivanov, the deputy defense minister. He was put under house arrest in late April, also on suspicion of taking bribes.

Ivanov had become a focus of the Anti-Corruption Foundation, founded by Alexey Navalny, who was killed in a Russian prison in February.

He and his organization exposed the lavish lifestyle enjoyed by Ivanov’s partner — visiting invite-only jewelers, wearing couture clothing and owning a chalet in the chic ski resort of Courchevel in France.

They questioned how she afforded such a lifestyle when her husband’s salary was officially \$175,000 a year.

Russian state media reported that Ivanov maintains his innocence, citing its own source.

There can’t be overlap, but corruption will still remain

For Stanovaya, the reasons for replacing figures such as Ivanov and Shamarin are simple. “Part of Putin’s logic is that you can’t field someone in this position (as defense minister) where there are significant interests of the previous.”

To help clean up the ministry, Putin has appointed Oleg Savelyev, a former auditor at the Russia Accounts Chamber, as the deputy minister of defense. He will be “aware of the corruption that already exists in the defense sector,” Komin said.

Prigozhin’s final wish

Given the sweeping changes made by the president, rumors have swirled about the position of the Chief of Staff of the Armed Forces, Valery Gerasimov, the other tar-

get of Prigozhin’s rants.

Stanovaya said, “There are so many rumors now that he [Gerasimov] might be dismissed soon,” but the fact he has so far been spared gives Gerasimov “a window to start fighting for his own interests,” she added. “Gerasimov is fighting against his enemies, trying to secure his future,” Stanovaya said.

Komin agreed that Gerasimov may keep his position for now, as Putin has said he does not intend to make any other changes.

Crucially, Komin suggested that Gerasimov’s luck may be that there lacks a position, similar to Shoigu’s where he can publicly be moved aside without completely tarnishing his reputation, “it’s not a big deal to find the new guy. It’s more a big deal to find the place for the previous guy.”

In Putin’s Russia the president remains laser focused on winning in Ukraine, but recent overtures have shown that the supporting cast may change and the president is ready to be ruthless in his search of victory.

This year will likely be the last major D-Day anniversary

CAEN, FRANCE (CNN): At 99 years old, Jack Foy is considered the youngest among his group of friends that fought in World War II.

But their advanced age isn’t going to stop them from making the transatlantic journey to honor their fallen comrades on the 80th anniversary of D-Day.

On June 6, Foy — a survivor of the Battle of the Bulge — and his fellow American veterans will join dignitaries and heads of state from around the world to commemorate the approximately 160,000 Allied troops who, eight decades ago, carried out the largest seaborne invasion in human history.

Foy told CNN that he has been to several memorials in France since 2014. The emotional resonance of each trip grows stronger year after year, he said, because these veterans know each trip could be their last.

“We realize we’re getting to the end of our time,” Foy said. They are not alone. With major commemorations held every five years, organizers and government officials concede that this year’s event could be the last to involve living veterans, whose stories of the horrors of war have become particularly poignant given that Russia’s invasion of Ukraine has brought a large-scale ground war back to Europe for the first time since 1945.

“We are perfectly aware that for these centenarians, this is maybe the last chance to return to the beaches where they landed, where they fought and where their brothers-in-arms fell,” said Gen. Michel Delion, the CEO of the French government agency in charge of the French commemoration efforts, Mission Liberation.

The various countries putting together the event are now planning what is expected to be the most

extensive D-Day commemoration in history — both in terms of size and, crucially for elderly veterans, logistics.

Approximately 150 American veterans are expected to travel to Normandy — about two dozen of whom actually fought on D-Day — said Charles Djou, the secretary of the American Battle Monuments Commission (ABMC), the independent agency responsible for managing US military cemeteries and monuments overseas. The youngest is 96.

Fifteen Canadian veterans, including three or four that fought on D-Day, are traveling with the Canadian delegation, according to John Desrosiers, the director of international operations for Veterans Affairs Canada. Desrosiers said the youngest traveling with the group is 98 and the eldest are 104. The British defense ministry said it expects more than 40 WWII veterans at the various events in Normandy.

Those vets will be joined by about 25 heads of state and government, including US President Joe Biden, British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak and Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau. Russian President Vladimir Putin was not extended an invitation due to the war in Ukraine, while Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy is planning on attending, according to a French presidential source. With so many heads of state in town, the security measures in place are intense. A massive contingent of 12,000 security personnel will be deployed on June 6, the French Interior Ministry said.

Heavy travel restrictions put in place by French authorities will also effectively cut off the Norman coastline and the normally sleepy towns that dot it from the rest of the country.

Yet June 6 typically sees these eld-

erly men criss-cross the region to hit a full day’s itinerary, including national ceremonies held at the American, British and Canadian cemeteries; the big international commemoration put on by France; and then, if they have the energy, more local events.

Most veterans also travel with an entire phalanx of medical personnel. The charity that organized Foy’s trip, the US-based Best Defense Foundation, is bringing three doctors and 10 nurses to accompany the 50 veterans they are flying over from the United States. Each veteran will travel with a personal caregiver — typically a family member or a friend.

Officials say they are going to incredible lengths to treat veterans like royalty — as they are feted by actual royals. King Charles III will be there on June 6 — his first overseas trip since being diagnosed with cancer — alongside Queen Camilla and Prince William, Buckingham Palace said. Representatives from the royal families of Belgium, Monaco, the Netherlands and Norway are also expected to attend.

Delion’s team has been holding rehearsals and timing wheelchair runs for the French-led international ceremony. They are also considering having veterans enter at the same time as heads of states and other dignitaries to reduce their waiting time.

American and Canadian organizers told CNN that they will seat veterans last at their respective national ceremonies to keep them comfortable. The general public at the American event, for example, may need to be seated about an hour in advance due to security precautions.

“We take care of the veterans who served and made the enormous sacrifices that they did in the Second World War,” said Djou.



MEXICO CITY: A man reads a newspaper a while before the start of the general election, in Mexico City, on Sunday June 2, 2024. — AFP

Women lead as Mexicans vote for new president

MEXICO CITY (AFP): Mexicans started voting Sunday in a presidential election dominated by two women — a historic first in a country with a history of gender-based violence and discrimination.

Ruling party candidate Claudia Sheinbaum, a former Mexico City mayor and a scientist by training, had a 17 percentage point lead over her main opposition rival Xochitl Galvez on the eve of the vote.

The only man running, centrist Jorge Alvarez Maynez, was trailing far behind as a particularly violent campaign season marked by a string of candidate murders drew to an end.

It means that, barring a huge surprise, a woman is almost certain to break the highest political glass ceiling in Mexico, where around 10 women or girls are murdered every day.

That prospect motivates other women to succeed and to think “yes, you can,” said Blanca Sosa, a 31-year-old store worker in Mexico City. She expects Sheinbaum to continue the “good things” done by outgoing President Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador, such as pensions for the elderly and an increased minimum wage. Ricardo Sanchez, however, said he planned to vote for Galvez because of her “business vision.” Lopez Obrador’s “policy of putting the poor first is to ruin us all so that we’re poor and then he gives to us,” the 55-year-old businessman said in the northern city of Monterrey.

Sheinbaum, 61, owes much of her popularity to Lopez Obrador, a fellow leftist and mentor who has an approval rating of more than 60 percent but is only allowed to serve one term.

Nearly 100 million people were registered to vote in the world’s most populous Spanish-speaking country, home to 129 million people. Polls opened at 08:00 am (1300 GMT) in the southeastern state of Quintana Roo and some areas near the US border, with other regions in different time zones due to follow later.

PSATF hosts delegation comprising high govt officials from Pakistan

F.P. Report

Johannesburg: The Pakistan Southern Africa Trade Federation in collaboration with the High Commission of Pakistan in South Africa hosted a delegation comprising participants of 120th National Management Course who are on a foreign study tour from Pakistan. In this regard, from the PSATF efforts were made to make this visit of top government officials of Pakistan effective in collaboration with the local business community so that the trade and investment environment in Africa could be improved for Pakistani business community.

During the meeting, members of the delegation discussed Pak-Africa relations, especially visa, work permit and promotion of bilateral trade. The delegation, which is on a study tour to Kenya and South Africa, was led by Dr. Naveed Ahmad Chaudhry, Directing Staff NMC, Government of Pakistan while other members included Mr. Bilal Ahmad Butt (PAS Group), Mr. Syed Khurram Ali (PSP Group), Mr. Syed Khurram Ali (PSP Group), Mrs. Iram Tanvir (INF Group), Mr. Muhammad Ejaz-ul-Haq (PA&NS Group), Mr. Aftab Muhammad Khan (SG Group), Ms. Iram Masroor (IRS Group) and Mr. Aurangzeb Adil (EXE NA Group).

The purpose of the delegation’s visit to South Africa is to create awareness about the problems of the Pakistani community living in Africa and to formulate proposals for their solutions and to suggest measures to promote the country’s exports and investment.

The Pakistan Southern Africa Trade Federation provided all possible support and guidance to the senior Pakistani officials in view of the importance of their visit besides organizing a lavish dinner reception in their honor at the

Hilton Hotel Johannesburg yesterday, which was attended by delegates from Pakistan, officials of the Pakistan High Commission, members of the Pakistani community, officials of trade bodies as well as the local business community. Prominent industrialists Rai Ali Intikhab and Mehtab Khan also took part in the management of this event.

The ceremony started with recitation of Holy Quran by Muhammad Iqbal Qureshi. Leading industrialist Rai Ali Intikhab, representing the Pakistani business community based in South Africa, welcomed the guests and thanked them for their attending the event. Muhammad Rafiq Memon, Founder Chairman, Pakistan Southern Africa Trade Federation addressed the ceremony and presented the aims and objectives of the Federation.

He said that Pakistan Southern Africa Trade Federation since last ten years, has been functioning as the only organized and active trading entity not only in South Africa but also in the whole of Southern Africa and now East Africa, which has so far hosted over 32 trade delegations from Pakistan and other countries, various trade delegations from Pakistan and Africa have been exchanged under the banner of the Federation, business and trade investment seminars, symposiums and conferences to promote bilateral trade, as well as events are organized on Pakistan’s National Days.

He made various proposals for increasing bilateral trade between Pakistan and South Africa, emphasizing the need of visit of at least two or three high-level delegations at the government level to Africa in order to highlight and resolve the problems of the business community regarding trade policies, Memorandum of Understanding (MoUs) and visas.

Mr. Muhammad Rafiq Memon urged the delegation that the Trade

Development Authority of Pakistan, Ministry of Commerce and Foreign Affairs should make bilateral trade agreements with the African Government as African continent in various fields as the continent’s trade volume is about 800 billion US dollars and various sectors where trade is done includes textiles, engineering, sports goods, surgical equipment, food, confectionery, auto engineering parts, cement, sanitary items, cutlery, rice medical equipment, mining, skill development and IT.

He added that at this time Pakistan’s 18 mission and almost nine trade attachés are working in Africa which is inadequate, so he suggested that local traders and people of good reputation should be made honorary trade investment counselors and honorary consulates based on merit so that they can play their role in promoting Pakistani exports.

Referring to the SIFC he said that, “We are going to organize a seminar in the mining sector in June 2024 with the coordination of Pakistan High Commission in which efforts will be made to convince the traders of the local mining sector to invest in Pakistan. He said that they have planned visit of delegations to Pakistan for investment in IT and other sectors also. Dr. Naveed Ahmad Chaudhry, leader of the delegation of Pakistani officers, appreciated the work of Pakistan Southern Africa Trade Federation on behalf of his team and thanked them for hosting them in South Africa.

In his address, he acknowledged the need for efforts made by the Government of Pakistan to promote investment and solve the problems of the Pakistani community in African countries, especially he urged the traders and investors living in South Africa, to invest in Pakistan which he said would open the doors of stability and development.

Arvind Kejriwal returns to jail after India vote ends

NEW DELHI (AFP): A top opponent of Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi said he would return to jail Sunday, the end of the bail term issued to allow him to campaign in just-concluded national elections.

Arvind Kejriwal, chief minister of the capital Delhi and a key leader in an opposition alliance formed to compete against Modi in the polls, was detained in March over a long-running corruption probe.

He is among several leaders of the bloc under criminal investigation, with colleagues describing his arrest the month before

general elections began as a “political conspiracy” orchestrated by the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP). India’s top court granted him bail last month, giving a fleeting boost to the opposition’s quixotic campaign to oust Modi, but ordered him at the same time to return to custody once voting in the six-week poll concluded.

He will hand himself into Delhi’s Tihar prison on Sunday afternoon, he said.

“I came out for election campaign for 21 days... today I will surrender by going to Tihar,” he wrote on social media.

However, he said he would first visit a memorial to Mahatma Gandhi, pray at a Hindu temple and visit his party office to “meet all the workers and party leaders.”

“All of you take care of yourselves,” he added. “I will take care of you all in jail. If you are happy, then your Kejriwal will also be happy in jail.”

Kejriwal’s government was accused of corruption when it implemented a policy to liberalise the sale of liquor in 2021 and give up a lucrative government stake in the sector.

The policy was with-

drawn the following year, but the resulting probe into the alleged corrupt allocation of licences has since led to the jailing of two top Kejriwal allies.

Hindu-nationalist Prime Minister Narendra Modi looks set to win a third straight landslide election victory after voting ended on Saturday.

Exit polls showed he was well on track to triumph and Modi himself was certain he had prevailed, saying he was confident that “the people of India have voted in record numbers” to re-elect his government.



The Frontier Post

JALIL AFRIDI
Managing Editor

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

Peshawar Office: 091-5700095, 0300- 9009001

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

E-mail: fppeshawar@thefrontierpost.com

Lahore Office: 0335-4026284

Email: fplahore@thefrontierpost.com

Islamabad Office: 0321-5066253

Email: mahmoodafridi@thefrontierpost.com

Karachi Office: 021-32213411, 0300-8340907

Email: fpkarachi@thefrontierpost.com

“USA and Canada Toll Free Number 415-3704551

The implications of another Modi victory: A nation’s path towards majoritarianism

As the curtains fall on India's marathon electoral process, all signs point to yet another sweeping victory for Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP)-led alliance. If the exit polls are to be believed, Modi is poised to secure a third consecutive term, a feat only achieved by Jawaharlal Nehru since India's independence. This anticipated victory, however, is not just a political milestone but a pivot point for India's socio-political landscape, particularly concerning its religious and communal dynamics.

Modi's tenure has been marked by a definitive shift towards a more Hindu-centric vision for India, a vision that aligns with the BJP's ideological bedrock rooted in Hindutva. This ideological thrust has increasingly manifested in policies and social narratives that bolster Hindu nationalist sentiments, often at the expense of the secular fabric that has long defined the nation. For many, Modi's leadership has epitomized a departure from secular pluralism towards a more homogeneous national identity, centered around Hindu culture and values.

This majoritarian tilt has significant repercussions for India's religious minorities. Muslims, who constitute the largest minority group, have particularly felt the brunt of this shift. Under Modi's administration, there has been a discernible rise in Islamophobic rhetoric and policies. The controversial Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA), which fast-tracks citizenship for non-Muslim refugees from neighboring countries, is a glaring example of this exclusionary approach. Critics argue that such policies undermine the constitutional guarantee of equality and non-discrimination, fostering a climate of fear and marginalization among Muslims.

The situation is not much different for other religious minorities such as Sikhs, Christians, and Buddhists. These communities have reported a surge in hate crimes and discrimination. The aggressive promotion of Hindu festivals and symbols, coupled with the underrepresentation of minority groups in political and public spheres, underscores a growing sense of alienation. For Christians, the rise in attacks on churches and religious conversions is particularly alarming. Sikhs, though a significant and influential community, have also expressed concerns about being sidelined in the broader national narrative.

Modi's projected victory also implies a continuation, if not an escalation, of the tense and often hostile relations with Pakistan. The BJP has long leveraged anti-Pakistani sentiment as a political tool, rallying nationalist fervor to consolidate support. Modi's tenure has seen a hardening of this stance, with accusations of sponsoring terrorism frequently directed at Pakistan. This rhetoric not only strains diplomatic relations but also stokes internal communal tensions, as Indian Muslims are often unfairly scrutinized and suspected of divided loyalties.

The anticipated election outcome underscores a broader trend in Indian politics where electoral success is increasingly intertwined with majoritarian appeals. Modi's political strategy has adeptly tapped into the aspirations and anxieties of the Hindu majority, framing his leadership as a bulwark against both external threats and internal "others." This strategy has proven electorally potent, but it risks deepening societal divides and eroding the pluralistic ethos that has been India's hallmark.

The impact of Modi's continued leadership will be far-reaching. On one hand, his supporters argue that a strong, decisive leader is essential for India's economic development and global stature. Modi's tenure has indeed seen significant economic reforms and infrastructure projects. However, these achievements are overshadowed by the social costs of his governance style, which critics argue is increasingly authoritarian and dismissive of dissent.

As India stands on the cusp of another Modi term, the need for a nuanced and inclusive approach to governance is more pressing than ever. The challenge lies in balancing the drive for national unity and strength with the imperative of protecting and nurturing the country's rich tapestry of religions, languages, and cultures. Ensuring that India's minorities feel secure and valued is not just a moral and constitutional duty but also a pragmatic necessity for sustained national harmony and progress.

The path ahead for India is fraught with complexities. Modi's likely victory signals continuity but also calls for introspection. As the world's largest democracy, India must grapple with the inherent tensions between majority rule and minority rights. The coming years will test the resilience of India's democratic institutions and the robustness of its commitment to pluralism. In this critical juncture, the voices of those at the margins must be heard and heeded, for the true measure of a democracy lies in how it treats its most vulnerable citizens.

Modi's anticipated electoral triumph is more than just a political event; it is a pivotal moment for India's identity and future direction. It challenges the nation to reflect on its values and the kind of society it aspires to be. The emphasis on a Hindu-centric vision must be tempered with a steadfast commitment to inclusivity and justice for all, ensuring that India remains a beacon of democracy and diversity in an increasingly polarized world.

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 a warming planet threatens the Nile Delta

Hafed Al-Ghwel

The Nile Delta, the cradle of historical, agricultural, and cultural heritage for Egypt, is on the cusp of an ecological disaster largely driven by climate change.

The Delta that has nourished Egyptian civilization for millennia is now gravitating toward becoming an epicenter for some of the most consequential effects of climate change within the region.

The Delta has long been flagged as a zone of high vulnerability, with forecasts of alarming scenarios resulting from rising temperatures and rising sea levels.

The densely populated Delta is home to half of Egypt's population, close to 50 million people. The demographic densification of the region underpins not only the socioeconomic fabric of Egypt but also previews the scale at which climate change could propagate human and economic devastation.

Notably, the region's coastline is acutely vulnerable to rising sea levels, particularly in areas around Alexandria, one of the largest cities on the Mediterranean. Predictive models suggest a grim future; projections indicate that 25 percent of the Delta could be submerged within a few decades if the current trajectory continues.

The socioeconomic ramifications of this are profound. Alexandria's proximity to the sea places a significant proportion of its infrastructure and population at direct risk. Even a small rise in sea level could displace two million people and annihilate more than 200,000 jobs.

The situation gets even worse when we consider the Delta's rural expanses, where population density has reached staggering levels, and agriculture, the backbone of local economies, is already facing grave threats. Irregular weather patterns have led to unpredictable water availability, marked by spells of drought interspersed with record floods, both of which take their toll on agriculture. The sector provides employment for a large proportion of the population in the Nile Delta, so the effects of such dramatic variations have far-reaching socioeconomic consequences.

As noted, the Delta's proximity to the Mediterranean Sea leaves it extremely vulnerable to predicted rises in sea levels, which not only threaten to inundate vast tracts of arable land but also cause the displacement of millions of people. As the sea encroaches on land, saltwater intrusion results in the salinization of soil, with severe effects on crop yields and the livelihoods of farming communities.

Unchecked, these debilitating effects will aggravate existing challenges, such as ensuring food and water security not only for local communities but also for the wider population of Egypt, given the reliance on the Delta region as the nation's breadbasket.

Moreover, environmental stressors can act as catalysts for secondary or follow-on issues, such as irregular migration, as

those who can no longer sustain traditional ways of life are forced to move to already overcrowded urban centers, placing further strain on resources and services.

The resultant socioeconomic pressures can quickly escalate into prolonged periods of unrest, episodic violence, and even all-out conflict. As such, the Nile Delta has become a microcosm for the adverse effects of climate change, as well as a stark reminder of the increasingly urgent need

ages of water specifically, the government has acknowledged the need for comprehensive water management strategies, including planned investments of nearly \$3 billion in desalination plants designed to produce 5 billion cubic meters of water annually by 2050.

Such investments will likely go a long way to reducing the severity of enduring water insecurity issues. At present, the demand for water is about 35 percent higher than sup-

plenges to these approaches. The seawall barriers are a highly visible form of action but offer only temporary relief against the steady encroachment of the sea and do not address the deeper issues of soil degradation inland.

Desalination, meanwhile, could potentially alleviate water scarcity issues. However, it is an energy intensive "solution" which, unless renewable energy sources are used to power it, might contribute to further emissions that exacerbate climate impacts in the quest for adaptation.

Besides, farming in desert areas requires a significant rethinking of traditional cultivation methods due to the vast differences in soil and climate conditions.

A surprising, yet little discussed, type of intervention offers a much more promising adaptation mechanism that can complement the proposed actions to reduce the growing pressure on the Delta. Historically, circular migration has served as a way to cope with a range of threats for the inhabitants of the area. As the threat of runaway warming continues to loom, this adaptive strategy can serve as the means through which we can glimpse the possibilities for sustaining livelihoods under threat.

By temporarily relocating, migrant populations can diversify and mitigate the risks to their livelihoods, thereby reducing their levels of vulnerability. Relocations of populations during periods of acute environmental stress also provide temporary relief to the ecosystems in origin areas, giving overexploited natural resources a chance to recover and thereby contributing, indirectly, to their sustainability and resilience.

When migrants settle in destination communities they can take advantage of the opportunities available in more economically stable regions, and the resulting remittances they send home also ultimately contribute to a more stable life for those unable to migrate, by funding essential needs and, potentially, through investment in adaptive capacities.

Moreover, the resultant skills and knowledge transfers arising from circular migration help to improve the adaptive capacities of origin communities, including new forms of income generation that are less dependent on climate vulnerable resources.

Once established, and carefully managed, periodic migration will facilitate extensive social networks spanning several regions that will be crucial during times of inevitable crises, in terms of providing support and serving as channels for the flow of much-needed assistance.

However, while circular migration is an effective adaptation strategy, its success hinges on how it is implemented. Issues such as the rights and welfare of migrants, social inclusion in host communities, job creation, and the long-term sustainability of such arrangements need careful consideration and management.

The end of ANC dominance in South Africa

Andrew Hammond

Future historians might look back on May 2024 as a pivotal moment in South Africa's post-apartheid history, with potentially major implications not only domestically but internationally as well.

The reason for this tipping point is that the elections on May 29 indicated that the era of political dominance by the African National Congress might be over. In the six prior national ballots since 1994, the ANC won significantly more than 50 percent of the vote but that changed this week, likely heralding a new era of co-governance and, with it, new uncertainties.

There is even a growing possibility that as soon as 2029, South Africa could deliver the first non-ANC government in the nation's post-apartheid history.

The ANC remains the largest party for now, well ahead of a growing number of opposition movements; more than 50 parties registered for the 2024 election, a record number, and independent candidates allowed to stand for the first time.

There is a possibility the ANC could form a minority government but that would constrain its ability to adopt policies and introduce legislation. So it will probably have to strike agreements or form a coalition with other parties to remain in government under President Cyril Ramaphosa — or possibly his successor, such as his deputy Paul Mashatile — if he decides to step down or if there is a leadership challenge.

When the final election results are confirmed, the ANC will have 14 days to form a government before a new parliament must convene to elect a president. The speed with which a coalition can be formed, or not, might well prove to be

in living standards, with its people more than 20 percent less well-off on average.

It is estimated that about a third of the labor force is unemployed, the highest rate in any country monitored by the World Bank. Income inequality is exceptionally high, with more than twice as many people (over 18 million) on welfare benefits compared with the number of taxpayers (about 7 million).

One consequence of this economic malaise is that a significant proportion of South African-listed firms are currently valued at a discount relative to those in other key emerging markets. This creates a potential opportunity for investors, albeit one with political risk.

The key variable that will affect the economy most, in the next few years at least, is perhaps the nature of the co-governance the ANC opts for. Prior to the election, there were hopes within the business community that the party would win close to 50 percent of the vote and so be able to co-govern with one or more of the smaller parties, such as the Inkatha Freedom Party, the Patriotic Alliance and/or the Muslim party Al-Jama-ah.

However, the ANC has underperformed even in terms of these reduced expectations, raising the possibility it might need to do a deal with a larger party. One option in this case is the business-friendly Democratic Alliance, which took second place in the ballot.

However, investors are concerned that a window of opportunity might now open up for the ANC to govern with the leftist Economic Freedom Fighters, led by the radical

One consequence of this economic malaise is that a significant proportion of South African-listed firms are currently valued at a discount relative to those in other key emerging markets. This creates a potential opportunity for investors, albeit one with political risk. The key variable that will affect the economy most, in the next few years at least, is perhaps the nature of the co-governance the ANC opts for. Prior to the election, there were hopes within the business community that the party would win close to 50 percent of the vote and so be able to co-govern with one or more of the smaller parties, such as the Inkatha Freedom Party, the Patriotic Alliance and/or the Muslim party Al-Jama-ah.

a leading indicator of how much political gridlock to expect in the next few years.

While much of the focus is on the domestic implications of the significant political change the 2024 election delivered, the international ramifications could also be key. In the past decade or two, South Africa's economy — the largest on the continent, with a gross domestic product of about \$370 billion — has badly underperformed. Its GDP is only about one-fiftieth that of China, despite both nations being members of the BRICS group of emerging markets alongside founder members India, Russia and Brazil.

What this highlights is the significantly diverging economic trajectories of these key emerging markets in recent years. Among the original BRICS members, China and India have enjoyed generally robust economic performance over the past two decades, in contrast with disappointing results not only in South Africa but also in Brazil and Russia.

So a key question, not only domestically but internationally, is whether South Africa can turn this economic situation around. According to the World Bank, the nation's economy has retrogressed over the past decade and a half, with per capita GDP falling from a high point in 2011. This has led to a significant drop

Julius Malema, and/or former President Jacob Zuma's uMkhonto weSizwe Party. These parties have plans to potentially expropriate land without compensation, and nationalize the nation's central bank. Many investors are therefore worried that an ANC collaboration with one or both of them could result in the reversal of some early signs that Ramaphosa's economic reforms might slowly, but surely, be working.

There is also broader uncertainty over the implications of the growing fragmentation of the nation's polity. The country increasingly seems split along identity lines; the ANC, once depicted as unifying a "rainbow nation" now increasingly draws its support from the 80 percent black majority population.

For now, no major political group seems able to reflect the multiracial reality of a country that also has a significant number of people who are white, of Indian heritage or who are of biracial ethnicity.

The election has, therefore, created significant political and economic uncertainty, and there are several possible trajectories the nation could take in the second half of this decade. The key variable now is which, if any, political partners the ANC will choose to help it govern Africa's largest economy.

As the world runs out of patience, Israel is running out of excuses

Only days after the decision by Karim Khan, the International Criminal Court’s chief prosecutor, to seek arrest warrants for leaders of Israel and Hamas, and after the International Court of Justice ruled that Israel must halt any military offensive in the southern Gaza city of Rafah that risks harming civilians, Israeli forces last Sunday killed at least 45 people in a tent camp in the city when an airstrike ignited a massive blaze.

It was almost as if Israel was doing the job for the court by demonstrating the urgent need for an intervention to end this war.

The latest deadly assault was further tragic evidence that what Israel describes as its “limited operation” in Rafah is extremely deadly for the people who remain there, civilians in particular, and it was similar to the attacks already inflicted by the Israeli military on other parts of the Gaza Strip.

For a change, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu took responsibility for the incident but refused to apologize for it. Instead he described a strike that killed dozens of displaced Palestinians as a “tragic mishap.”

But by this stage of the war the international community has run out of patience with such excuses, as the evidence continues to mount against Israeli authorities for their neglect in the failure to protect the lives of many thousands of civilians.

The situation was not improved by an Israeli army spokesperson who said the deadly attack had been carried out “according to international law.”

And so innocent people continue to be killed, with no end in sight to the war. On Wednesday, Israel’s national security adviser, Tzachi Hanegbi, said: “We expect another seven months of fighting in order to deepen the accomplish-

ments and achieve what we have defined as the destruction of the governmental and military capabilities of Hamas.”

In other words, Israel is set on prolonging this hell on Earth for the people of Gaza for many more months.

The reaction to the killings in Rafah might have been more muted had this been an isolated incident but that is not the case. Hence the ICJ, in response to South Africa’s request to the court for an interim

Yossi Mekelberg

Israel’s Defense Minister Yoav Gallant, as well as the leader of Hamas in Gaza, Yahya Sinwar, the commander of its Qassam Brigades, Mohammed Deif, and the head of its political bureau, Ismail Haniyeh, all on charges of crimes against humanity — the horrendous reality for the 2.3 million people in Gaza remains unchanged and is not going to improve any time soon.

So many of them have

in Gaza as antisemitic, and reinforces their deep-seated belief that the entire world is against Israel. This view is cynically exploited by Netanyahu and others in his government to fend off all criticism, be it constructive and legitimate or otherwise.

But realistically, as long as Israel can rely on the full backing of Washington, including the latter’s calls to sanction the ICC, cut the funding that supports the court’s programs or, as was suggested by US Secretary of State Antony Blinken, to

ence of Israel’s judiciary that has saved the nation from such investigations in the past. However, its present passivity — especially among senior law-enforcement officials, who have failed to exercise the complementarity principle of international law, which states that “the ICC has secondary jurisdiction after national courts, and can only act in a given situation if the relevant states are unwilling or unable to prosecute the crimes within their jurisdiction” — has forced the international legal system to conclude that allegations of war crimes are not going to be investigated by Israel’s own legal system, and certainly not while the war is ongoing.

The moves by the ICC and the ICJ might turn out not to be deciding factors in halting the war. But, as much as protests within Israel itself, they certainly contribute to the erosion of the legitimacy of authorities in the country as a result of their war in Gaza and their relations with Palestinians more generally.

Israel might have a point when it argues that international law and its related institutions are not treating every country equally. However, it was one of the beneficiaries of that system for many years. One can but hope that all investigations of war crimes brought against leaders and countries believed to merit such action will be carried out in the same, unbiased manner.

For Israel, this is also a time to put its own house in order and ask how it reached this point of international isolation, when even its closest friends are finding it difficult to defend the actions of the nation.

It is for the courts to decide the legality of Israel’s behavior during this war, but the immorality and self-defeating nature of its actions are clear for all to see.

Taliban need to change their ways

Luke Coffey

Last month, Afghanistan was hit by yet another major natural disaster. There was significant flooding in the northern provinces of Badakhshan, Baghlan, and Takhar. Estimates vary but it is thought that hundreds of people died and thousands were displaced from their homes.

This latest catastrophe comes on the heels of a series of earthquakes in western parts of the country late last year that left at least 2,000 people dead and 150,000 in dire need of humanitarian aid.

The effects of these disasters on Afghans are particularly bad because of the lack of good governance and economic development in the country. Since the Taliban took back power in August 2021, Afghanistan has been on a downward spiral. Basic medical supplies are in short supply. Millions of people are affected by food insecurity. The Taliban, who proved to be very effective as insurgents, have been unable to govern effectively since regaining power.

This terrible humanitarian situation is worsened by another issue: the Taliban’s inability to earn formal diplomatic recognition from the international community. Not one country has formally recognized the Taliban as the legitimate government of Afghanistan so far. The effect of this, in part, is that the economic investment and international aid that would otherwise be available to the country simply does not exist. These are things the Afghan people desperately need.

While many countries have indirect or de facto engagement with the Taliban, all stop short of formal recognition. This is because the Taliban have done nothing to reassure the international community that they have changed their ways from their rule during the 1990s.

Many of the promises they made in the lead-up to their takeover in 2021 have not been honored. Girls are still not allowed to attend school. Terrorist groups such as Al-Qaeda freely roam the country. Women have been removed from the workplace.

Further complicating matters, splits within the top ranks of the Taliban movement mean the international community is not sure with whom it should engage. All these factors make formal recognition of the Taliban difficult, if not impossible.

Where there has been international engagement with the Taliban, it is usually for pragmatic reasons of national self-interest.

For example, northern neighbors in Central Asia engage with Kabul purely for economic and security reasons. Kazakhstan recently signed trade deals with the Taliban worth about \$200 million and lifted travel bans placed on senior Taliban officials.

Meanwhile, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan’s engagements with the Taliban are driven by border security and counterrorism concerns.

Surprisingly, Iran is probably the country in the region that has the best relationship with the Taliban. This unorthodox mix of Shiite and Sunni sectarian extremism is driven purely by national self-interest and geopolitics. One of the main drivers of Tehran’s relations

ing problems with international recognition, they are not the only ones in Afghanistan. Major anti-Taliban groups also come up short when it comes to persuading the international community to recognize them.

The most prominent and largest organization of this kind, the National Resistance Force of Afghanistan, has had no formal engagement from any country other than Tajikistan, and even that takes place quietly and carefully.

Even though many countries will, as noted, indirectly deal with the Taliban there is no such equivalent engagement with the NRF. If countries such as the US and others

Surprisingly, Iran is probably the country in the region that has the best relationship with the Taliban.

This unorthodox mix of Shiite and Sunni sectarian extremism is driven purely by national self-interest and geopolitics. One of the main drivers of Tehran’s relations with the Taliban is access to water from the Helmand River, which originates in Afghanistan but flows into Iran. Regional dynamics between Iran and its Sunni Arab neighbors have led Tehran to believe its best counterbalance is engagement with the Sunni Taliban. Furthermore, and in a twist of geopolitical irony, the Taliban and Pakistan are now at odds after years of cooperation, and border skirmishes occur from time to time. With relations between Tehran and Islamabad also experiencing difficulties, the unusual Iranian-Taliban relationship is not so surprising. Other powers on the Eurasian landmass, such as China and Russia, have chosen to engage with the Taliban for geopolitical reasons, too. From the perspective of Moscow and Beijing, the fact that the Taliban defeated the West in Afghanistan is enough of a reason to maintain cordial relations with Kabul.

Other powers on the Eurasian landmass, such as China and Russia, have chosen to engage with the Taliban for geopolitical reasons, too. From the perspective of Moscow and Beijing, the fact that the Taliban defeated the West in Afghanistan is enough of a reason to maintain cordial relations with Kabul.

Furthermore, Russia naively sees the Taliban as a possible bulwark against Daesh, while China views Taliban-controlled Afghanistan as a potential source of mineral resources.

The Taliban have also been frozen out of regional and international organizations. Regional blocs such as the Shanghai Cooperation Organization and the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation, all of which pre-Taliban Afghanistan participated in, have excluded the country. The same is true of international organizations such as the UN and the World Health Organization. In fact, the UN has a number of Taliban leaders still under international sanctions.

If the Taliban are hav-

can engage with the Taliban indirectly, there should be no reason why they cannot do the same with opposition groups such as the NRF.

Until the Taliban starts governing responsibly in Afghanistan, while also demonstrating to the international community that it can be a trusted partner, few countries, if any, will establish diplomatic relations.

And for as long as the Taliban remain international pariahs, the Afghan people will continue to suffer as a result of the lack of economic investment in the country and the mere trickle of international humanitarian aid that can be provided.

The fastest way for the suffering of the Afghan people to end is for the Taliban to live up to their promises, reject terrorism, protect the rights of women and minorities, and form an inclusive government that represents the interests of all Afghans.

Sadly, the Taliban have shown no desire to change their ways and, once again, the Afghan people are the ones who suffer.

Restoring ecological balance through conservation of native

As we endeavor to rebalance the ecological scales, we find there are no quick fixes for restoring our planet’s health. It cannot be achieved in a day, a month or even a year. It requires the relentless dedication of the brightest of minds and the most passionate of hearts, a tireless spirit, and a commitment to long-term goals.

Regeneration is a slow process and the time to act is now. This principle of immediate action to safeguard and rejuvenate flora and fauna underpins the ecological regeneration initiatives underway in AIUla, and across Saudi Arabia more broadly. In tandem with its evolution as a luxury boutique heritage destination, AIUla has consistently focused on land restoration to reclaim the ecological balance it once had, while ensuring benefits for the local community.

AIUla has set aside 12,500 square kilometers to create six nature reserves: Sharaan, Wadi Nakhlah, Gharameel, Harrat Uwayrid, Harrat AlZabin and Harrat Khaybar. This allocation represents more than 50 percent of the region’s total area. The identification of more than 500 species of flora in AIUla underscores its rich biodiversity and diverse

landscapes.

The Kingdom is also actively reintroducing native animal species to their natural habitats, enhancing biodiversity and contributing significantly to the revitalization of AIUla’s ecological cycle. Since 2019, these efforts have been supported by sci-

Jose Ferreira

International Union for Conservation of Nature to ensure their conservation initiatives are effective and sustainable.

In 2023, the Royal Commission for AIUla achieved a significant milestone with its largest-ever

In 2023, the Royal Commission for AIUla achieved a significant milestone with its largest-ever release of about 1,000 animals across three nature reserves. This initiative focused on reintroducing four native herbivore species: Arabian gazelle, sand gazelle, Arabian oryx and Nubian ibex. This strategic reintroduction of large herbivores represents a critical step in reconstruction of the ecosystem, setting the stage for the eventual reintroduction of the critically endangered Arabian leopard. AIUla operates a state-of-the-art breeding center that has enjoyed remarkable success. In 2023, the center celebrated the birth of seven leopard cubs and has effectively doubled the captive-breeding population from 14 to 27 over the past two years. This growth is a hopeful sign for the survival of this majestic species.

entific insights and strategic refinements. AIUla monitors animal populations and collects data, adhering to international standards and collaborating with organizations such as Panthera and the

release of about 1,000 animals across three nature reserves. This initiative focused on reintroducing four native herbivore species: Arabian gazelle, sand gazelle, Arabian oryx and Nubian ibex.

This strategic reintroduction of large herbivores represents a critical step in reconstruction of the ecosystem, setting the stage for the eventual reintroduction of the critically endangered Arabian leopard.

AIUla operates a state-of-the-art breeding center that has enjoyed remarkable success. In 2023, the center celebrated the birth of seven leopard cubs and has effectively doubled the captive-breeding population from 14 to 27 over the past two years. This growth is a hopeful sign for the survival of this majestic species.

These endeavors are not only about preserving the past but also about shaping a sustainable future, contributing significantly to the goals of Saudi Vision 2030. By taking decisive action now, AIUla is not only planning for its future as a global destination, it is actively securing a brighter, more sustainable future for the planet and all its inhabitants.

These endeavors are not only about preserving the past but also about shaping a sustainable future, contributing significantly to the goals of Saudi Vision 2030. By taking decisive action now, AIUla is not only planning for its future as a global destination, it is actively securing a brighter, more sustainable future for the planet and all its inhabitants.

vival of this majestic species.

This ongoing effort is part of a broader vision for AIUla that aims for holistic and sustainable regeneration. It is an approach that integrates the protection and revival of ancient heritage sites with the development of a vibrant natural habitat. It also ensures that indigenous plants and animals will coexist with new infrastructure such as hotels, homes, schools and community centers.

The exemplary integration of heritage and nature is showcased through AIUla’s Hegra Wildlife and Nature Tour. This safari-style experience allows visitors to immerse themselves in the stunning landscapes and diverse wildlife near Saudi Arabia’s first UNESCO World Heritage site, illustrating the practical and inspirational reasons behind AIUla’s conservation efforts.

These endeavors are not only about preserving the past but also about shaping a sustainable future, contributing significantly to the goals of Saudi Vision 2030. By taking decisive action now, AIUla is not only planning for its future as a global destination, it is actively securing a brighter, more sustainable future for the planet and all its inhabitants.

World is a shameful spectator to injustice

Dya-Eddine Said Bamakhrama

The war on Gaza that Israel launched last October, killing nearly 40,000 Palestinians, mostly women and children, and destroying cities and infrastructure, reaffirms the pressing need for global and regional solidarity, and the highest state of alert to intensify efforts toward achieving lasting peace and security in this sensitive region.

There are immense human and material losses caused by the war, which continues to have painful negative impacts as the entire world stands powerless before it, and the adverse effects are clearly reflected on global peace and stability.

The war has exposed the ugliness and brutality of the Israeli occupation, disproving Israel’s claims to

be an oasis of democracy in a disparate environment. This falsehood was highlighted by protests in many cities and universities worldwide, expressing outrage over the mass killing of unarmed civilians in Gaza.

It is shameful that the international community remains a mere spectator to this injustice, brutal destruction, and barbaric killing that defies international laws. While we condemn the global silence, we must commend the positive steps taken by Spain, Norway, and Ireland to recognize the state of Palestine. The decision by these three European countries is a significant stride toward achieving global peace and security, as the Palestinian cause is one of the most significant causes

worldwide. Its exacerbation over decades has been a major cause of many crises in the world and the region due to the occupation and displacement of the Palestinian people.

We should also appreciate the efforts by the Arab-Islamic committee established during the Arab-Islamic summit in Riyadh last November, chaired by the Saudi minister of foreign affairs. Its efforts aim to achieve a ceasefire, the release of hostages, the delivery of aid and UN recognition of the state of Palestine based on 1967 borders.

The Israeli government opposes any peace plans that acknowledge Palestinian rights. This means no progress will be achieved unless Israeli political forces become

convinced of the need to abandon the notion of hegemony and the imposition of force. The events in Gaza, notwithstanding the staggering number of casualties, have proved that military force will not provide the desired solution sought by the Israeli right wing.

Today, more than ever, it is imperative to join hands at various levels to find a just and lasting solution to the Palestinian cause based on the two-state solution. The use of violence and excessive force has proved that there can be no rest or stability without sustainable peace. It is crucial that the Palestinians take sincere and serious steps to consolidate their ranks and strengthen their united

movement toward this goal.

Resolving the Palestinian issue and achieving peace in the Middle East require strong political will and sustained efforts by all parties. This represents a significant challenge, but it is not impossible if sincere intentions and a commitment to justice and equality are present. Peace is the only way to achieve stability and prosperity in this sensitive region of the world.

In this regard, we can draw on the experiences of countries with a history of sponsoring peace, such as Saudi Arabia, which enjoys unparalleled acceptance in the Islamic world and has sponsored many peace talks to resolve crises in the

Middle East.

The Kingdom actively sought solutions to the Arab-Israeli conflict, presenting two key initiatives in 1981 and in 2002. It also participated in the Madrid Conference in 1991 and endorsed King Abdullah bin Abdulaziz’s peace initiative approved by the Arab summit conference in Beirut in 2002. It is fair and just to acknowledge that from the era of King Abdulaziz to the reign of King Salman and Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, Saudi Arabia has stood by the Palestinian people since the onset of their plight.

A notable example of this support is King Saud, who offered Ahmed Shaqiri, the representative of the Palestine Liberation Organization, the Saudi

seat at the UN, allowing him to defend his country’s cause not only as a Palestinian representative but also from his position as a representative of Saudi Arabia.

My own country, Djibouti, is renowned for its pioneering role in peace and reconciliation efforts in the Horn of Africa, and for hosting refugees fleeing conflicts in neighboring countries. Since gaining its independence in 1977, Djibouti has defended it, and continues to do so, in various international and regional forums.

Everyone must understand that Israel will not enjoy peace unless it recognizes the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people. The continuation of the Arab Peace Initiative is contingent upon Israel’s

beginning to fulfill its commitments within the framework of international references to achieve peace in the region. The starting point must be an immediate and unconditional ceasefire in Gaza and the exchange of prisoners and hostages, as a prelude to finding a just and comprehensive solution that ends the suffering of the oppressed Palestinian people by declaring their independent state recognized by the UN with East Jerusalem as its capital.

I call on all countries that have not yet recognized the state of Palestine to do so. This will encourage peace, contribute to achieving stability and development, and put an end to the decades-long suffering of the Palestinian people.



In brief

Shoriful injured

NEW YORK (Agencies): Bangladesh pace spearhead Shoriful Islam is a doubt for the team's first match of the ICC T20 World Cup 2024 after he split the webbing between his index and middle finger while fielding a warm-up in New York on Saturday. The injury to the left-arm's bowling hand needed stitches and leaves him racing against time to make Bangladesh's opening match against Sri Lanka on Friday in Dallas. "He's got six stitches," Bangladesh Cricket Board physician Debashis Chowdhury said in a video message on Sunday. "Considering his importance, we are trying to give our best so that he can come back quickly," Chowdhury said. The left-arm paceman tried to stop a drive from Hardik Pandya in the final over of India's innings and was hit on his bowling hand. He was taken from the field for treatment. Struggling Bangladesh, who lost the match by 60 runs, are also battling to get fellow pace bowler Taskin Ahmed fit for the Sri Lanka clash. Taskin missed the recent three-match series against the United States, which Bangladesh lost 2-1. Bangladesh have never qualified for the knock-out phase of the T20 World Cup and are drawn in a tough Group D against Sri Lanka, South Africa, the Netherlands and Nepal.

Peshawar to host Games

PESHAWAR (APP): On World Organ Transplantation Day, once known as the city of flowers, Peshawar is going to host the Transplant Games to bring joy to organ transplant patients. This announcement was made by Dr. Asif Malik, an eminent physician and the administrator of the Kyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) Medical Transplantation Regulatory Authority (KPMTRA), during a meeting with sports organizers and players. Secretary KP Badminton Association Muhammad Amjad, Provincial Table Tennis Association President Kifayat Ullah Orakzai, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Police Coach Naeem Khan, and various players were in attendance. Talking to APP, Dr. Asif Malik highlighted, "For the first time in Pakistan's history, sports competitions will be held to commemorate World Organ Transplantation Day. Events will include cricket, volleyball, dot games, table tennis, and badminton. Participants will be patients who have undergone liver, heart, lung, kidney, pancreas, or solid bone marrow transplants." The main objective of these competitions was to raise awareness about organ transplantation and help recovered patients rediscover the joys of life. Regular participation in sports was crucial for the well-being of transplant patients. Dr. Asif Malik stated, "The competitions will take place at Hayatabad Sports Complex on June 5, with support from the Directorate General Sports and Provincial Sports Associations. Special guests at the closing ceremony will include Syed Aqil Shah, President of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Olympic Association, and squash legend Qamar Zaman, who will distribute prizes to the athletes." "These groundbreaking competitions are a first for Pakistan, inviting organ transplant patients from across the province to participate," Dr. Malik emphasized. He expressed confidence that the event would significantly raise awareness about organ diseases and transplantation.

Jones blasts USA to debut T20 World Cup win over Canada

DALLAS (AFP): Aaron Jones struck an explosive unbeaten 94 from 40 balls as the USA beat Canada by seven wickets in the opening game of the T20 World Cup on Saturday. Jones, born in New York but raised in Barbados, bludgeoned the Canadian attack, smashing ten sixes as he totally changed the momentum of the game in a superb 131-run third wicket partnership with Andries Gous. Jones took full control in the 13th over when he went on the attack against the slow left-arm of Canada captain, Saad Bin Zafar, smashing three sixes in one over. Then the game shifted decisively towards the Americans when Jeremy Gordon's medium-fast seamers went for 33 off one disastrous over, with the Canadian adding to his misery with three wides and two no-balls, including a no-ball that cancelled out a potential dismissal of Gous. Former South Africa Under-19 batsman Gous made 65 off 46 balls before he holed out to deep mid-wicket off Nikhil Dutta, ending a partnership that had taken the Americans from struggling at 42-2 in

the seventh over to close to their finish line at 173-3 in the 16th. Corey Anderson, the former New Zealand all-rounder, came in to accompany Jones who fittingly ended the contest with his 10th sixth of the night. It was the perfect start to the tournament for the co-hosts, with the crowd at the compact Grand Prairie Stadium roaring with delight as Jones smashed the Canadian attack around the ground. "I don't think it is easy to put it into words," said Jones, whose 10 sixes are the second most in a T20 World Cup innings behind West Indian Chris Gayle's 11 against England in 2016. "With our batting line-up, we knew anything under 200 is chaseable. I go through my processes and I like my power hitting. I know if I get it in the middle, it will go for sure. I like to come in when the team is under pressure, it brings out the best in me," he said. Canada, also making their T20 World Cup debut, had set what appeared a challenging target with Navneet Dhaliwal making a well-paced 61 off 44 balls, including six four and three sixes after opener Aaron

Johnson had set the early pace with an aggressive 23 off 16 balls. Nicholas Kirton maintained the momentum in the back half of the innings with 51 off 31 balls and Shreyas Movva's 32 off 16 was crucial in getting Canada to what looked to be a strong total in the Group A match before Jones wreaked havoc. "We started well, But Jones and Gous batted exceptionally. Our bowlers had no chance," said skipper Bin Zafar. "Our bowlers missed their lines and lengths, and we shouldn't have given away the no-balls and extras. We played an exceptional game overall. Nothing to be sad about, the effort from the boys was good. This is just the start and hope we can do well in the next game," he said. The USA is co-hosting the tournament with the West Indies with 16 of the group stage games being held in three American venues -- South Florida and New York along with Dallas. India, Pakistan and Ireland are also competing in Group A with two nations qualifying for the Super Eight stage.



DALLAS: Aaron Jones' magnificent 94* took USA over the line, USA vs Canada, T20 World Cup 2024.

WAPDA wins Memorial Basketball Tournament

ISLAMABAD (APP): WAPDA emerged victorious in a nail-biting showdown against Pakistan Air Force, clinching the All Pakistan Muhammad Majid and Abdul Nasir Memorial Basketball Tournament on Sunday at Siddique Memon Sports Complex Karachi. In a fiercely contested match, both teams displayed exceptional skills and tenacity, battling until the final moments. Wapda, however, seized control in the last quarter, securing a thrilling 68-67 points victory, said a press release. Zainul Hassan of Wapda emerged as the hero of the day, contributing a stellar performance with 34 points, while teammate Muhammad Israr added 10 points, respectively. Despite a valiant effort from PAF, Wapda's dominance in the closing stages proved decisive. Umair Jan led the scoring for PAF with 26 points, followed by Umair Siddiqui with 12 points. Managing Director of United Medical and Dental College Dr. Bilal Faiz who was the chief guest of concluding ceremony presented the winning trophy to the captain of the Pakistan Wapda team while Pakistan Basketball Federation (PBBF) Secretary General Khalid Bashir, Karachi Basketball Association (KBBA) President Muhammad Yaqoob, Tournament chief organiser Dr. Umer Daraz Khan, PBBF Associate Secretary Yaqoob Qadry and other dignitaries were also present during the concluding ceremony. Earlier In the third position match, Punjab Rangers secured a convincing 72-61 points victory against Islamabad, claiming the third position.

Pakistan will look to be positive in T20 WC: Babar Azam

LONDON (Reuters): Pakistan captain Babar Azam called on his side to stay in high spirits as they begin their Twenty20 World Cup campaign off the back of a poor run of form. Pakistan, T20 World Cup champions in 2009, have performed well in the past two editions of the competition, reaching the semifinals in 2021 and losing to England in the final in 2022. However, their preparations for this year's tournament in the United States and West Indies has been far from ideal, with a sobering defeat by Ireland in an eventual 2-1 series victory followed by a 2-0 defeat by England in a rain-affected series. "Effort is in our hands, but results, we do not know," Babar said in an episode of the Pakistan

Cricket Board (PCB) podcast released on Sunday. "How we present ourselves on the ground, our body language and how we communicate with each other will matter. We must be positive, so results will come... Conditions in the USA may pose challenges as we are going there as a national side for the first time. "We are in the process of collating various cricket and match-related information from players who have played there, which can help and assist us in our preparations." Pakistan are in Group A of the World Cup and begin their campaign against hosts US on June 6. They will then take on arch-rivals India in one of the event's highly-anticipated matches three days later.

Pakistan and India have faced each other seven times at the T20 World Cup, with Pakistan winning just once. "An India-Pakistan match is always the most talked about; it is discussed too much wherever you go in the world," Babar said. "The players get different vibes and excitement. What will happen is that everyone supports their country, so the focus is on that match. The whole world is focused on the day when the India-Pakistan match is held. "Naturally, there will be nerves, but we need to keep our focus, stick to the basics and play easy cricket. It is always a pressure game; the more you keep cool and calm, believe in your skills and hard work, then things get easier."

Pakistan downs Kazakhstan in AVC Challenge Cup

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Pakistan Volleyball team kicked off their AVC Challenge Cup 2024 campaign with an impressive victory over Kazakhstan in Bahrain. According to details, in a dominant display of skill and teamwork, Pakistan secured a 3-0 win, with set scores of 25-19, 25-19, and 25-21. The match, held as part of the Preliminary Round, saw the Pakistani team exhibit exceptional coordination and resilience, laying a strong foundation for the rest of the tournament. This victory marks a significant achievement for the Pakistan Volleyball Federation and showcases

the team's potential on the international stage. Head Coach Ruben Wolochin from Argentina expressed his satisfaction with the team's performance, saying, "The boys played with great determination and executed the strategies perfectly. This win is a testament to their hard work and dedication." Supporting Coach Wolochin is Brazilian Physical Trainer Lucas Rodrigues, who has been instrumental in enhancing the team's physical conditioning. Assistant Coach Muhammad Ismail Khan and Analyst Juan Cobucci have also played crucial roles in preparing the team for this high-

stakes tournament. Team management is headed by Manager Sardar Muhammad Nawaz, with Deputy Manager Mazhar Fareed assisting in ensuring smooth operations and support for the players. Chairman of Pakistan Volleyball Federation, Chaudhry Muhammad Yaqoob, praised the team's performance and expressed optimism for the upcoming matches. "This victory against Kazakhstan is a significant morale booster. We are confident that the team will continue to perform at this high level," he said. Pakistan's next challenge is set for tomorrow, June 3 against Thailand at 4pm.

Real Madrid crowned Kings of Europe for 15th time



WEMBLEY (Agencies): Real Madrid have been crowned the kings of Europe title for a record-extending 15th time with a 2-0 victory over Germany's Borussia Dortmund in the final of the Champions League at Wembley on Saturday. Carlo Ancelotti got the victory for the fifth time as a manager of the club. Meantime, the club won the first title at Wembley. It was a dramatic final against Borussia Dortmund. Despite being the favourites, the Spanish side faced tough competition but ultimately pulled off dominating with a 2-0 victory. Dortmund undeniably played an excellent game. It is a big deal for the club to have gone this far to

play a final of the Champions League. Real Madrid broke the deadlock when right back Dani Carvajal met a Toni Kroos corner with a precise header in 74th minute. The ball went right into the net, sparking renewed energy in Carlo Ancelotti's team. It was Dani's 13th goal during his Real Madrid career after 11 seasons. The Brazilian forward, Vinicius Jr., sealed the win for his side by sliding home Real Madrid's second goal in 83rd minute. His clinical finish silenced the passionate Dortmund fans who had been creating noise throughout the final. Borussia Dortmund had their plenty of chances in the first half, but luck was not on their side. Niclas

Fuellkrug came closest, hitting the post from close range. However, Dortmund showed no fear of Real Madrid's impressive record in this competition and dominated the first half. The crowd cheered loudly for them when the referee signalled half-time. Real Madrid's victory solidifies their status as European football giants, adding another trophy to their impressive collection. Real Madrid have not lost a European Cup final ever since they lost 1-0 to Liverpool in 1981. They have now won nine consecutive finals over the span of 43 years, bringing their total to 15 titles. This is more than double the seven titles won by second-placed AC Milan.

Djokovic beats Musetti in 3:07am finish in Paris



PARIS (Agencies): Novak Djokovic came through a five-set epic against Italy's Lorenzo Musetti at the French Open, which ended at 03:07 local time in Paris. In a third-round contest that did not start until 22:37 on Saturday, towards the end of a rain-affected day at Roland Garros, the defending champion fought back from two sets to one down to win 7-5 6-7 (6-8) 2-6 6-3 6-0. The 37-year-old from Serbia appeared to be on the brink of exiting the tournament at the hands of an inspired Musetti, the 30th seed. But a rejuvenated Djokovic found fresh momentum midway through the fourth set, reeling off six consecutive breaks of serve to force - and then ease to victory in - a decider. There was a warm embrace between the pair at the conclusion of the match,

with Djokovic joining the Court Philippe Chatrier crowd in applauding his 22-year-old opponent in what was the latest finish in French Open history. Victory in four hours and 29 minutes continued the world number one's bid for a fourth French Open crown and he will play 23rd seed Francisco Cerundolo of Argentina in the last 16. "I don't want to get into it [the schedule]. I have my opinions but I think there are great things to talk about in this match today," said Djokovic. "Both Lorenzo and my performances stand out so I don't want to be talking about the schedule. I think some things could have been handled a different way but there's also a beauty in winning a match [so late]." As a teenager, Musetti

pushed Djokovic close in the fourth round at Roland Garros in 2021 before retiring injured in the fifth set. The 22-year-old started quickly on this occasion too, breaking serve in the third game of the match, although Djokovic responded immediately in kind and then outlasted his opponent in a lengthy rally to convert his first set point. But Musetti fought back from 4-1 in the second set and saved a set point on Djokovic's serve in the tie-break on his way to levelling the match, before then breaking twice in the third set to move within one of victory. At 2-2 in the fourth, while Musetti's level barely dropped, Djokovic drew on his many years of experience to find an extra gear and victory was wrapped up with a stunning cross-court forehand return winner. Top seed Swiatek won 48

points - against 10 won by world number 41 Potapova - and did not face a single break point. It was the quickest win of Swiatek's career - and the second shortest completed match at Roland Garros after Steffi Graf's 32-minute triumph over Natasha Zvereva in the 1988 final. "It went pretty quickly," Swiatek said. "I was really focused and in the zone. I wasn't looking at the score, so I continued working on my game." She will face Wimbledon champion Marketa Vondrousova next after the Czech ended Serb qualifier Olga Danilovic's run in a 6-4 6-2. US Open winner Coco Gauff made light work of Italy's Elisabetta Cocciaretto, winning 6-1 6-2 to set up a meeting with either Ons Jabeur or Clara Tauson. The stats tell most of the story: Swiatek made just two unforced errors, won 94% of points behind her first serve and held to love five times. She took the first set in 19 minutes and only showed frustration when she missed two break points on Potapova's serve in the second set, before taking the third. It was a far cry from her second-round match against fellow four-time major winner Naomi Osaka, where she had to save a match point before progressing in three tough sets. Should she retain her title,

Swiatek will be the first woman since Justine Henin in 2007 to win the French Open singles three times in a row. Swiatek is on an 18-match win streak at Roland Garros, having not lost since the 2021 quarter-finals. She is also on a 16-match winning streak on clay courts this season, having claimed big titles in Madrid and Rome before arriving in Paris. Slam champions Gauff & Vondrousova progress. Fifth seed Vondrousova, who stunned Jabeur to win Wimbledon last year, has form at Roland Garros, having lost out to Ashleigh Barty in the 2019 final. She has had a mixed start to the year but did reach the semi-finals on the Stuttgart clay in the build-up to Roland Garros. She recovered from going an



early break down against Danilovic and saved four of the five break points she faced on her way to victory. Gauff is also a former finalist at Roland Garros, having finished runner-up to the ever-dominant Swiatek in 2021. Unlike many American players, Gauff has had plenty of experience of clay, having won the Roland Garros girls' title as a junior in 2018. She put all her experience to use against Cocciaretto, who had heavy strapping on her leg and looked to be feeling the effects of reaching the second week of a major for the first time. Third seed Gauff moved well and played with some excellent control, breaking early in both sets and shaking off five double faults to close out victory in 60 minutes.



In brief

Nanha death anniversary

ISLAMABAD (APP): Fans remember famed comedian Rafi Khawar alias Nanha on his 38th death anniversary on Sunday. Rafi Khawar, one of the prominent names in Pakistan's film industry during its golden era, made a mark through his eccentric comedy, facial expressions and ability to utter extempore jokes during movies without any script. Born on August 3, 1942, Rafi Khawar started his career in 1966 by featuring in the Urdu film 'Watan Ka Sipahi'. Nanha got fame from the 1973 Punjabi film Ziddi and later on with the Urdu movie Naukar in 1976. Nanha got the chance to play the lead character in the movie Tekhan Pahlawan-1979 and Dubai Chalo, the same year that became a blockbuster movie. The play continued to entertain Pakistanis for more than two decades. He worked in many super hit films and TV dramas including 'Alif Noon'. He got two Nigar Awards for Best Supporting Actor and Best Comedian in 1977 and 1983. His services to the film industry and TV would always be remembered. Nanha earned exemplary fame before going through a long phase of decline that eventually led to his tragic suicide on June 2, 1986.

287,400 cusecs water released

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Indus River System Authority (IRSA) on Sunday released 287,400 cusecs water from various rim stations with inflow of 273,400 cusecs. According to the data released by IRSA, the water level in River Indus at Tarbela Dam was 1467.83 feet and was 69.83 feet higher than its dead level of 1,398 feet. The water inflow and outflow in the dam was recorded as 106,400 cusecs and 120,000 cusecs respectively. The water level in River Jhelum at Mangla Dam was 1188.85 feet, which was 138.85 feet higher than its dead level of 1,050 feet. The inflow and outflow of water was recorded 55,000 cusecs each. The release of water at Kalabagh, Taunsa, Guddu and Sukkur was recorded as 163,000, 162,300, 151,500 and 76,200 cusecs respectively. Similarly, from River Kabul, a total of 75,200 cusecs of water released at Nowshera and 9,000 cusecs released from River Chenab at Marala.

CDA to address water shortage

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Water Management Wing of the Capital Development Authority (CDA) has intensified its efforts on several projects to mitigate water shortages in the federal capital on the arrival of the summer season. "The authority has instructed the relevant departments to expedite all repair and maintenance work, addressing issues such as leakages and replacing old and rotted pipes at the Simly Water Filtration Plant and Main Distribution Line," an official told APP. He said that timely repairs and maintenance by the Water Supply Wing had not only saved eight lac gallons of water per day but also improved water pressure in the pipelines. Similarly, addressing complaints related to leakages from old and deteriorated pipes in water supply lines across different sectors of the federal capital would enhance water availability for the residents, he said. The official said that water levels in dams like Khanpur Dam had decreased over time due to insufficient rainfall in the federal capital.

Education is top priority of incumbent govt: Wani

ISLAMABAD (APP): Education is among this government's top priorities, said Mohyuddin Ahmad Wani, Secretary Ministry of Federal Education and Professional Training, while speaking as the chief guest at the graduation ceremony of the 9th Cohort of Teach For Pakistan Fellows held the other day.

Speaking on the occasion he said "The Teach For Pakistan model inspired me to design a Tech Fellows Program in Gilgit Baltistan during my stint there before I took up my current assignment; I urge Pakistan's development partners to help Teach For Pakistan expand its Fellowship program all over the country?"

The occasion also marked the completion of the Education Fellows project, a partnership between the Education Ministry, Teach For Pakistan, and the UK's Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO). Under this project, 87 teaching Fellows, the

brightest graduates of top-tier universities, taught around 8000 students for two years in 47 public schools in underserved, rural areas on Islamabad's outskirts.

"The Education Fellows project has provided a blueprint for replication and scaling up the best practices in teacher recruitment, training, M&E, accountability, and coaching support for systemic change in education," said Khadija Bakhtiar, CEO of Teach For Pakistan.

On average, She said that Pakistani children lag 4-5 years behind their grade level. She said that during the two-year Fellowship, the Teach For Pakistan classrooms close as much as 4.4 years of the gap.

"Having taught almost 25000 students across 107 schools, Teach For Pakistan is expanding its program to under-resourced public schools in Sindh, beginning from Karachi in August", she maintained.

Commending the government's unwavering commitment to education

under Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif's stewardship, Education Team Lead, FCDO, Mazhar Siraj stated that the empirical evidence from the project is a testament to the fact that government schools in under-resourced communities can achieve excellent learning outcomes.

"The Education Fellows project aimed to inform Pakistan's education reform program with data on teacher recruitment and training and assess the effectiveness of public-private partnerships in the sector; the encouraging outcomes would warrant expansion in such collaborations," he added.

The impressive graduation ceremony was attended by prominent educationists, development partners, senior diplomats, the graduating cohort, Teach For Pakistan students and parents concluded with a resounding renewal of the pledge to remain committed to the lifelong mission of 'Quality Education for All.'



ISLAMABAD: A beautiful view of sunset at Rawal Dam in the Federal Capital. —APP Photo

HRCP builds case for constitutional amendment to strengthen local govts

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Human Rights Commission of Pakistan (HRCP) held a consultation in collaboration with Dehleez on the need for constitutional protection for local government by presenting its policy paper, proposing a constitutional amendment of Article 140A. Legislators, policy makers and civil society members debated the paper at length.

Director Farah Zia in her introductory remarks, stressed the need for a more comprehensive constitutional protection for the local government bodies.

Zafarullah Khan, civic educator and researcher for HRCP's policy paper, presented on the proposed amendment and expanded on the idea of devolution in other federations across the world, many of which have provincial constitutions.

He underscored why an amendment, delineating a specific period for local government elections, is

essential to guaranteeing that citizens' needs are represented and addressed at every level. Other participants also weighed in on the proposed amendment.

PML-N MNA Bilal Kiyani endorsed the idea of a constitutional amendment to ensure the continuity of local governments, and hoped that with the establishment of standing committees and caucuses, it can be reviewed in earnest.

AWP's Farman Ali emphasized the importance of democratizing the political parties alongside constitutional amendments to strengthen local governance. Other participants, such as PPP representative Sibte Haider Bukhari and FAFEN

National Coordinator Rashid Chaudhry, underscored the importance of strengthening local government and deemed it necessary to have further follow-ups to the HRCP's Council Member

Farhatullah Babar proposed enacting a local government law for Islamabad by Islamabad, which could be presented as a model example for other provincial governments.

He further suggested basing the criteria of provincial share in the National Finance Commission award to the provinces' adoption of the UN SDG goals and empowerment of local governments as further incentives. Moreover, quotas for women, religious minorities, youth, people with disabilities and transgender individuals must be ensured to contest local government seats.

Secretary General HRCP Harris Khalique concluded the proceedings by suggesting that the local government needs to be debureaucratised. He reiterated HRCP's commitment to building political and public support for the amendment in further discussions.

11 temporary cattle markets to be set up

RAWALPINDI (APP): District administration Rawalpindi is finalizing all the arrangements to set up 11 temporary cattle markets in connection with Eid-ul-Adha in different tehsils of the district.

According to a district administration spokesman, all possible facilities would be provided in the cattle markets which would be fully functional 10 days before Eid-ul-Azha.

Three cattle markets would be established in Cantt areas at Bhatta Chowk near Koh Noor Mill, Al-Haram City Mouza Misriot and Gulistan Colony near National Park Rawalpindi.

A cattle market would be at Khayaban-e-Sir Syed, Sector 2 in city area while a cattle market would also be established at Rawat in Saddar division area.

A cattle market would be in Tehsil Gujar Khan at Majeed Mor outside Prism Town main GT Road, he said adding, two cattle markets would be established in Tehsil Taxila at New

Sharif Hospital main GT Road and HIT near Sunday Bazaar in Taxila Cantt.

Two mandis of the sacrificial animals to facilitate the residents of Tehsil Kallar Syedan and Kahota would also be set up, he added. He informed that a temporary cattle market would be established in connection with Eid-ul-Azha at Mangal Bypass cattle sale point in Tehsil Kallar Syedan while a mandi would be in Tehsil Kahota at Sakhi Sarwar Tingi Road.

The Rawalpindi Cantonment Board (RCB) has auctioned fee collection the cattle market in Bhatta Chowk for Rs109.9 million. The entry fee for sacrificial animals such as cows, bulls and camels in the market has been fixed at Rs3,000 each, and for goats and sheep at Rs2,000 each.

According to a RCB spokesman, a total of 20 contractors participated in the auction, while Riaz Hussain won the contract with the highest bid compared to last year.

He said the auction was held in a transparent manner and that the contractors were informed about the facilities to be provided by the civic body. He said the contractor would collect the entry fee from the cattle sellers in the market.

"A Rs3,000 fee has been fixed for the entry of big animals and Rs2,000 for goats and sheep. RCB will provide all facilities in the biggest cattle market of the twin cities of Rawalpindi and Islamabad," he said.

The market would be set up on modern lines where, besides water, veterinary doctors would be available to check the health of the animals. The RCB would form teams to check illegal cattle markets in the cantonment areas, he said, adding that no vendor would be allowed to bring sacrificial animals to residential areas.

The sale and purchase of sacrificial animals on roads and streets would be banned, and all-out efforts would be made to keep the cantonment area neat and

Ashrafi advocates for issuance of structured Fatwa

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chairman Pakistan Ulema Council (PUC), Hafiz Muhammad Tahir Mehmood Ashrafi has emphasized the urgent need for fostering dialogue across various societal factions.

Speaking at a recent national seminar on 'Countering Violent Extremism', organized by Islamabad Policy Research Institute (IPRI) here, he highlighted the ongoing challenges of violent extremism in Pakistan and said that this call for dialogue would reduce misunderstandings and create an environment of mutual respect among different groups, promoting a more harmonious and resilient community.

Ashrafi further highlighted the importance of implementing Paigham-e-Pakistan, a comprehensive doctrine designed to bridge gaps between different schools of thought and unify religious scholars and leaders in a joint effort to combat extremism across the nation. "This collaborative strategy is seen as vital for

ensuring long-term peace and stability not only in the country but also in the region," he added. Addressing the misuse of religious decrees, Ashrafi called for the establishment of a mechanism for issuing Fatwas on matters of public importance.

Citing the examples of Dar-ul-Ifta institutions in Saudi Arabia and Egypt, he emphasized the need for a government-level oversight to ensure that religious decrees are issued responsibly and effectively. He said Dar-ul-Ifta Saudi Arabia and Dar-ul-Ifta Egypt were renowned for their systematic approach to issuing Fatwas as these institutions employ qualified scholars who deliberate on religious matters in a methodical manner, providing well-considered and balanced religious opinions.

He suggested that Pakistan could benefit from adopting a similar model, which would help mitigate the risks associated with arbitrary and unqualified Fatwas that can incite violence and extremism.

Ashrafi proposed taking action against those who issue Fatwas contrary to Shariah, the Quran, and the Sunnah. He urged religious and political leaders to transcend personal interests for the greater good of society. He called for a united effort to create an enabling environment that promotes the equitable growth of all community members.

Ashrafi underscored the importance of collaboration and selflessness among leaders to foster social harmony and counteract extremism. By prioritizing collective well-being over individual gains, he said leaders could contribute to a more inclusive and peaceful society. He opined that this approach was essential for addressing the root causes of extremism and building a resilient society capable of withstanding divisive influences.

In his concluding remarks, he emphasized the urgent need for expeditious judicial proceedings in cases related to blasphemy and violent attacks on minority communities.

IFA seals bakery, destroys 2,000 dirty hatchery eggs

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Islamabad Food Authority (IFA) has sealed a bakery in Islamabad's Lehtar Centre after a surprise inspection revealed severe health and safety violations.

Talking to APP, Deputy Director Operations of IFA, Dr Tahira Saddique said that the inspection, led by food safety teams (FSTs), uncovered the use of rotten eggs, poor sanitation, and unhygienic conditions, prompting immediate action.

She said that the IFA team discovered the bakery using 2,000 dirty hatchery eggs in their sweets, which were subsequently destroyed. The eggs bought cheaply from hatcheries, were part of a broader issue of unsanitary practices at the bakery, she added.

Dr Tahira highlighted the severe lack of cleanliness, noting the presence of live and dead flies in the processing area and sweets, as well as rusted and dirty machines.

Furthermore, the inspections revealed that the bakery used non-food grade paper for packaging and stored sweets in broken, rusty trays. This level of negligence posed serious health risks to consumers, leading to the bakery's closure and the destruction of all defective products, she added.

She emphasised that using broken and dirty eggs in food preparation was a grave violation of food safety laws. She said that the IFA's investigation also aimed to target those supplying these substandard eggs. She warned that the use of such eggs in bakery products could lead to serious stomach and liver diseases.

The IFA maintained a strict zero-tolerance policy on food counterfeiting while supporting businesses that adhere to high-quality standards. Dr Saddique reiterated the authority's commitment to ensuring public health and safety by taking firm action against any violations.

Four absconders involved in heinous crime held

ISLAMABAD (APP): Islamabad Police have arrested four absconders and proclaimed offenders who were allegedly involved in heinous crime during the last 24 hours.

A public relations officer on Sunday said that following the special directions of Inspector General of Police (IGP) Islamabad Syed Ali Nasir Rizvi, the special tasks were assigned to all senior police officials to ensure the arrest of proclaimed offenders and absconders involved in heinous crimes. During the crackdown, the Islamabad police teams have arrested four absconders and proclaimed offenders involved in heinous crimes during the last 24 hours.

DIG Operations Syed Ali Raza said that the Islamabad Capital Police is taking all possible steps to eradicate the crime from the city and those involved in heinous crimes and illegal activities will be dealt with iron hands. The safety of the lives and property of the citizens is the foremost priority of Islamabad Capital Police, he added.

Govt releases Rs33.16bn for various power schemes

ISLAMABAD (APP): The government has disbursed an amount of over Rs 33.16 million for various power sector NTDC/PEPCO schemes under the annual Public Sector Development Programme (PSDP) so far in the current fiscal year 2023-24.

According to the official data issued by the Planning Commission, the government had specified a sum of Rs 55.27 billion for various NTDC/PEPCO projects in PSDP 2023-24. Out of the total release amount, the local component stood at Rs 29.639 billion while the foreign aid component was Rs 25.638 billion. A sum of Rs 38.800 billion had been spent on various water-related projects so far.

Under ongoing schemes, an amount of Rs12,000 million has been allocated for Installation of 2x600 MW coal-fired power project GENCO-1 Jamshoro, Rs 2,536.471 million for interconnection of isolated Makran Network, Rs 1600 million each for 220kV Hairpur Substation, 220kV Swabi Substation, Rs 1200

million for 500kV Allama Iqbal Industrial City for 600 MW Demand of the Special Economic Zone, Rs 1,059 million for replacement of LT Bare conductor with ABC Cable in Peshawar Khyber Circle and Bannu Circle, Rs 1,439 million for 220/132 Kv GIS substation Dhabiji, Rs 964 million for electrification works at different valleys of District Chitral and Rs 900 million for 220 kV Quaid-e-Azam Apparel and Business Park in the PSDP for FY 2023-24.

Similarly, a sum of Rs 13,800 million has been specified for evacuation of power from Suki Kinari, Kohala, Mahal HPPs, Rs 5,667.094 million for evacuation of power from 2160 MW Dasu stage-1, 16,099.255 million for 500 kV HVDC Transmission System between Tajikistan and Pakistan (CASA-1000), Rs 3,904.500 million for 500KV Lahore North, 2,324 million for Upgradation of NTDC's Telecommunication, Rs 7,000 million for augmentation of existing 500kV

and 220 kV grid stations, Rs 3000 million for power distribution enhancement investment programme-II (Advance Metering Infrastructure Project), Rs 950 million for evacuation of power from 1,224 MW wind power plants at Jhamir and others ongoing projects.

Under new schemes, Rs 2,658 million has been allocated for Land acquisition for the installation of a 1200 MW Solar Power Plant at Spher Garh (Layyah), Rs 1133 million for land acquisition for the installation of a 600 MW Solar Power Plant at Tehsil Athara Hazari (Jhang), Rs 1900 million for 500 KV Islamabad West, Rs 1000 million each for electricity distribution efficiency improvement projects in MEPCO and HESCO, Rs 1300 million for augmentation of 2x160 MVA transformers with 2x250 MVA Yousafwala, Rs 639 million for installation of wide area monitoring system and Rs 500 million for 220kV Na Shah Grid Station in the PSDP for FY2023-24.

Railways penalise around 93 officials

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan Railways has held responsible and penalised as many as 93 officials of the department on corruption charges during the last five years, as a part of its efforts to control malpractices.

"Several steps are being taken to control corruption in Pakistan Railways which include introducing ticket vending machines and online reservation of tickets to avoid black marketing," an official in the Ministry told APP.

The official said the task teams have been established to keep watch on any irregularities and check the attendance of staff in the organization. He said the ticketless campaigns through Special Ticket Examiners (STEs) groups and officers are being carried out daily in the divisions to check and charge the ticketless passengers with penalty.

"The payment of pension

is being carried out through online banking system to facilitate the pensioners as well as to eliminate the ghost pensioners," he added. He said all the auctions are transparently held through the designated committee and the deposited amount is being received through CDR duly verified by the concerned Divisional Accounts Officers (DAO).

The official said E-Kacheri as well as Khuli Kacheri are held monthly to resolve the grievances of staff, pensioners and the public. He said that vigilance offices have been established over the system to control corruption and resolve any complaint received from public / Railway staff. "An online booking/reservation application system has been launched by Pakistan Railways known as Railway Automated Book and Travel Assistance

(RABTA)," he added.

He said this application has eased the booking process and also helped monitor cash inflows. To minimize the chances of corruption, the Human Resources Management & Information System, (HRMIS) and Systems Applications & Products (SAP) in Data Processing have been launched to ensure a paperless system, he said.

The official said only authorised personnel have access to the database of SAP and HRMIS.

He said regular performance review meetings are conducted to ensure the timely disposal of disciplinary cases of employees. He said that the focal persons have been nominated from all departments of Pakistan Railways to promptly resolve the complaints reported through the Prime Minister's Performance Delivery Unit (PMDU).

Indonesian envoy shares strategies

ISLAMABAD (APP): Indonesian Chargé d'Affaires, Rahmat Hindia, has visited Jamia Dar-ul-Uloom Haqqania to share Indonesia's exemplary experiences in managing pluralism highlighting its approach to fostering harmony in a diverse society.

The session commenced with Vice Chancellor Maulana Rashid-ul-Haq Sami, accompanied by his brother Maulana Hamid-ul-Haq Haqqani, extolling Indonesia as a model of Islam.

Reflecting on his recent visit to Indonesia in November 2023 as part of the Pakistani Ulema and Scholars Delegation, Maulana Rashid emphasized, "The cleanliness and public order are intrinsic to life in Indonesia. The Indonesian people are known for their friendliness and mutual respect."

In his address, the Chargé

d'Affaires noted Indonesia's status as the world's largest Muslim-majority country, despite its distance from Islam's birthplace in Makkah. "Indonesia comprises 17,000 islands with a population of 280 million, 87 percent of whom are Muslims. The rest are Catholic, Protestant, Hindu, Buddhist, and Confucian," he explained to the Haqqanian students in Arabic.

Highlighting the challenges of managing pluralism, Hindia underscored Indonesia's success through the implementation of Pancasila, a foundational philosophical theory of Indonesia. He remarked, "Indonesia does not explicitly declare itself an Islamic country. However, the first principle of Pancasila is the belief in One Almighty God." He said his visit coincided with Pancasila Day, celebrated on June 1,

every year.

He said Pancasila, first presented by President Sukarno on June 1, 1945, encapsulates five principles: belief in One Almighty God, just and civilized humanity, Indonesian unity, democracy guided by inner wisdom through deliberation, and social justice for all Indonesians. These principles were pivotal during the preparation for Indonesia's independence, reflecting a commitment to a cohesive national identity amidst diversity, he maintained.

In response to a teacher's query about Pakistan fostering unity among its diverse cultural and religious backgrounds, the Chargé d'Affaires expressed optimism, asserting that Pakistan could achieve stronger bonds as long as the spirit of "One Pakistan" was maintained.

Kidnapped children rescued

KABUL (BNA): In a significant operation, the Kabul Police Command has successfully rescued two children and a businessman who were kidnapped a few days ago. In an official statement released by the Ministry of Interior, it was confirmed that the criminal investigation unit of the Kabul Police Command successfully rescued the two children and the businessman who had been abducted from the Karte Sakhi area of Kabul.

4,000 eye patients treated

KABUL (BNA): Under the auspices of the Afghan Red Crescent Society(ARCS) in Herat, the King Salman Humanitarian Aid and Relief Center is treating over 4,000 eye patients. Fakhruddin Dakar, a representative of the King Salman Humanitarian Aid and Relief Center, informed the BNA that the treatment of 4,400 eye patients in the province will be conducted over four days by the Center. This initiative will include surgeries for 400 individuals.

WB urged to resume CASA-1000 power project in Afghanistan

KABUL (TOLONews): Da Afghanistan Breshna Sherkat (DABS) has requested the World Bank resume the remaining work on the CASA-1000 project in Afghanistan.

Hekmatullah Maiwandi, a spokesman for DABS, added that with the implementation of the CASA-1000 power project from Kyrgyzstan to Pakistan, Afghanistan will earn \$70 million dollars annually.

The spokesperson said: "We ask the World Bank to act as quickly as possible to start this project so that it can be operational in a short time."

According to Maiwandi, Da Afghanistan Breshna

Sherkat is ready to cooperate with the World Bank to implement the CASA-1000 power project in Afghanistan as soon as possible.

Hekmatullah Maiwandi added: "Electricity will be transferred from Kyrgyzstan to Pakistan, and this is not only for Afghanistan but an important project for the entire region."

Meanwhile, the Ministry of Energy and Industry of Kyrgyzstan announced a plan based on which this country and Tajikistan will start exporting electricity to Pakistan through Afghanistan in 2025.

The former head of DABS said the CASA-1000 project is considered

one of the important regional projects, where Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan are energy exporters, Afghanistan plays the role of electricity transit, and Pakistan is the buyer of this energy.

Amanullah Ghalib, former head of Breshna Company, said: "CASA-1000 is a regional project that, as its name suggests, connects Central Asia to South Asia, and '1000' means that 1000 megawatts of electricity will be transferred."

Recently, some media in Central Asian countries reported that Kyrgyzstan may export 1.25 billion kilowatts of electricity to South Asia through the CASA-1000 project.

Polio vaccination drive started

KABUL (Khaama Press): The "Afghanistan Free of Polio" organization has announced that a polio vaccination campaign will begin tomorrow in 24 provinces of Afghanistan.

The organization stated on its social media platform X account that the campaign starts from today (Monday) nationwide, targeting children under five for vaccination.

The duration of the polio vaccination campaign has not been specified by the organization. The last polio vaccination campaign in Afghanistan was launched on April 30 of this year, during which approximately 10 million children under five were vaccinated, according to the Taliban's Ministry of Public Health.

The WHO reported two positive cases of polio in the Kunar and Nuristan provinces this year. Afghanistan and Pakistan are the only countries where polio still persists.

Meanwhile, polio in Afghanistan and Pakistan is marked by persistent outbreaks, with efforts to eradicate the disease hampered by conflict, inaccessibility, and vaccine hesitancy.

The severity of polio in these regions is significant, as the virus continues to cause paralysis and, in severe cases, death, highlighting the critical need for comprehensive vaccination campaigns.

Afghanistan attends UIC Assembly

KABUL (BNA): The annual Middle East Regional Assembly of the International Union of Railways (UIC), in which Afghanistan is a member, was held in Jordan. Representing Afghanistan, Mawlawi Bakht-ur-Rahman Sharafat, Deputy Minister of Railways at the Ministry of Public Works, attended the event.

During the assembly, representatives from member countries discussed services, standardization, digitalization, and the electronic integration of railway systems. New telecommunications and communication systems were also introduced.

Additionally, the representatives emphasized the need for increased speed and volume of commercial goods transportation at ports and the importance of electronic system implementation. They also highlighted the necessity of further development in the railway sector.

It is noteworthy that the Ministry of Public Works is striving to facilitate the transportation of commercial goods by constructing and developing railway lines at various ports across the country.

12 prisoners released

KABUL (Khaama Press): The Ministry of Refugees and Repatriation recently announced the release of 12 Afghan prisoners from Pakistani prisons.

The ministry stated on its X account on Sunday that the 12 Afghan prisoners were forcibly deported after being released from Pakistani jails.

The newly released prisoners were introduced to the offices of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees and the World Food Program for assistance.

Earlier, local officials from the Taliban administration announced the release and repatriation of 21 Afghan citizens from Karachi's prisons in Pakistan.

Previously, Afghan citizens in Pakistan have been arrested by Pakistani police for various reasons and subsequently deported, with Pakistani officials repeatedly emphasizing that the primary reason for the arrests is the lack of legal residency documents. This comes amid a dire humanitarian crisis in the country, which was exacerbated by forced deportation, deadly floods and other natural disaster in the country.

United Nations-sponsored Doha meeting:

IEA seeks meaningful participation: Muttaqi



KABUL (Ariana News): The Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan (IEA) seeks meaningful participation in the third meeting of the United Nations-sponsored conference on Afghanistan in Doha, Acting Foreign Minister Amir Khan Muttaqi said.

Muttaqi said this in a meeting with EU's Special Representative for Afghanistan, Tomas Niklasson.

Highlighting the useful discussion held with the United Nations Under-Secretary-General for

Political and Peacebuilding Affairs Rosemary Anne DiCarlo in Kabul, Muttaqi said that IEA is doing its research on the framework of 3rd Doha meeting, following which it will announce its position, according to a statement released by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

He said that the policy of the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan is based on a balanced and positive engagement with all the countries, and it seeks a meaningful participation in

the third Doha meeting, which would bear positive results to the Afghan people and in the property of country, the statement said.

Muttaqi said that following 45 years of war and destruction, Afghanistan now has significant positive achievements in various areas.

Meanwhile, Niklasson underlined the importance of the participation of IEA representatives in the third Doha meeting, saying that key issues will be discussed in the meeting, according to

the statement.

He also shared his observations concerning the meeting with Muttaqi.

The third Doha meeting on Afghanistan is scheduled to be held on June 30.

The Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan (IEA) had refused to join the previous round of the conference.

Court orders Afghan man held after knife attack

MANNEHIM, Germany (Ariana News): A German court on Saturday ordered a 25-year-old man born in Afghanistan held on suspicion of attempted murder in connection with a knife attack at an event organized by a group opposing "political Islam" that left six people injured.

The victims included a police officer who remained hospitalized with life-threatening injuries, the Associated Press reported.

Officials offered no information regarding the motive for the attack on May 31 in the city of Mannheim.

Officials said that the suspect, who was shot and wounded by police, was hospitalized and not in a condition to be questioned.

They said he had lived in Germany since 2014 and had no police record.

Panjshir Power Dam 98% completed, says officials

PANJSHIR (TOLONews): Local officials in Panjshir said that the construction of the Parande Power Dam is 98% complete.

According to them, the construction cost of this dam is \$7.6 million and it has a production capacity of 4 megawatts. The pipeline of the Parande Power Dam is 2,200 meters long and 1.2 meters in diameter, with 2 turbines each with a production capacity of 2 megawatts.

Panjshir province governor Mohammad Agha Hakim said: "98% of the work is completed, only 2% of the remaining work will be finished soon. It will produce 4 megawatts

of electricity and meet the needs of the people of Panjshir."

The construction of this power dam started during the previous government but was halted for unknown reasons.

After the Islamic Emirate came to power, the construction of this power dam was carried out by Ukrainian contractors who are using advanced Czech equipment in its construction.

"The equipment for this power dam has been brought from the Czech Republic and meets all global standards," the head of the contracting company said.

The residents of Panjshir said the completion of this

power dam is beneficial and that they face serious challenges in the absence of electricity.

"It is a convenience for the people of Panjshir. For twenty years, the people of Panjshir were waiting for electricity to be completed," said Abdul Majeed, a resident of Panjshir.

"In the past twenty years, we did not have electricity. We had water power but no government electricity," said Abdul Hamid, another resident of Panjshir.

The Parande power dam is built on the Parande river in the center of Panjshir province and is the first and largest government power dam in the province.

Over one thousand Afghan migrants deported from Pakistan

KABUL (Khaama Press): The Ministry of Refugees and Repatriation of Afghanistan has announced the deportation of over one thousand Afghan migrants from Pakistan.

The ministry published a statement on June 1, saying that 1,203 Afghan migrants have re-entered the country after being expelled by Pakistan. According to the ministry's statement, these migrants returned to Afghanistan after being expelled by the Pakistani government.

The returnees re-entered the country through the Spin Boldak border in Kandahar province and the Torkham border in Nangarhar province.

Afghanistan is facing a dire situation marked by severe economic hardship, widespread poverty, and ongoing conflict. The instability has left millions struggling to meet basic needs, with humanitarian



aid often falling short.

The forced deportation of Afghan migrants from neighboring countries, including Iran and Pakistan, has added to the country's woes. Thousands of returnees face limited resources

and support, further straining Afghanistan's already fragile infrastructure.

Recent deadly floods have exacerbated the dire conditions, causing wide-

spread destruction and displacement. The floods have not only taken lives but also destroyed homes and livelihoods, compounding the challenges faced by the Afghan population.

Al-Marsad: Key ISIS members arrested in Western Afghanistan

HERAT (Khaama Press): Media outlets under the control of the Taliban have reported the arrest of members of a "significant" ISIS group in Herat, claiming that those detained were involved in the attack on worshippers in the Guzara district of this province in April.

Al-Marsad, a website affiliated with the Taliban, reported on Sunday, June 2nd, that, according to its

sources, several "important" ISIS members were arrested in Herat during operations by the Special Forces of the Taliban over the past few days.

According to this media report, the arrested ISIS members were involved in all operations carried out by ISIS in Herat.

Al-Marsad, citing unnamed sources, reported that this ISIS network in Herat was directed by the

operational branch of ISIS in Balochistan, Pakistan and that some recently arrested members had traveled to Balochistan.

The media outlet also claimed that after being suppressed in Afghanistan, the leadership of ISIS-Khorasan moved its command center to Balochistan, Pakistan, from where it directs its networks inside Afghanistan and other regional countries.

It is noteworthy that Mr. Farahi, the deputy governor in Herat, also announced yesterday that members of a "significant" ISIS group in the province had been arrested.

Farahi claimed in a post on social media platform X that the detainees were involved in the April 30 attack on the Imam Zaman Mosque in the Mohammadia township of Guzara district, Herat.

Girls seek access to varsity entrance exam



KABUL (TOLONews): As the date for the first phase of the 1403 (solar year) entrance exam approaches, many female students are concerned about their lack of access to the exam.

Despite this, the girls remain hopeful that they will be allowed to take the exam alongside the boys.

Safia, a high school graduate, hopes to be permitted to take the entrance exam and attend her desired college.

She told TOLONews: "When we graduated from school, we hoped to take

ernment to reopen universities.

Noor Afgan, a student, said: "I was in my third year of university when the doors were closed to girls. Only one year remained. We hoped to complete the final year and graduate, but unfortunately, we couldn't start our fourth year."

Meanwhile, some university professors warn that the closure of educational institutions can have severe consequences.

Tafsir Siyahpash, a university professor, told TOLONews: "Ignoring the closure of educational institutions can have negative consequences, especially for the women of this country. We hope the Islamic Emirate pays attention so we don't face more problems."

The National Examination Authority announced that the first phase of the 1403 entrance exam will be held on the 17th of this month (Jawza) for candidates from sixteen provinces.

the entrance exam. We filled out the exam forms sent by the Islamic Emirate, but they didn't hold the exam for us. Our male classmates graduated, but we were left with no future."

Faheema, another student, said: "It has been three years since girls have attended school or university, with the doors of universities closed to them. However, I have not lost hope during these three years."

Additionally, some female university students are urging the interim gov-

Afghan deportees from Iran increase 50 per cent

HERAT (TOLONews): Local officials in Herat said the process of deporting Afghan migrants from Iran has increased by 50% in recent days.

The head of the Refugees and Repatriation department of Herat announced that at least 3,000 Afghan migrants are deported daily by the government of Iran and return to the country through the Islam Qala border.

Abdullah Qayoumi, head of the refugee's department at the Islam Qala port in Herat, said: "Beating, torture, and extortion of migrants in camps and municipalities in Iran are things that everyone is aware of."

According to the officials, the deportation of Afghans with visas by the Iranian police is a challenge that has been increasing in recent months.

"Some days the number of deportees is high; even 10 to 15 people with visas are deported from Iran, and some days it is such that a person has gone to Iran for four days and then has been deported," said Hazratullah Zaeem Agha, commissioner of the Islam Qala port in Herat.

A number of deported migrants, criticizing the mistreatment by Iranian police, said that the police and municipality of this country forcibly take their money under various pre-

texts. Meanwhile, the Iranian consulate in Herat repeatedly denied the mistreatment of Afghan migrants by its police.

"In Isfahan, they took money from us, and after that, they took our money until Sang-e Sefid, and until here we were bribing them," said Mohammad Akbar, one of the deportees.

"Until you come here, you will lose lots of money. They take all your money, meaning you have worked for months," said Mir Aqa, another deportee from Iran.

Most of the deported migrants had illegally entered Iran to find work in this country.

560 emerald mining licenses issued



KABUL (BNA): The Ministry of Mines and Petroleum has announced the distribution of over 560 emerald mining licenses in Panjshir Province.

In statement released by the ministry, Sheikh Shahabuddin Delawar met with

Mawlawi Mohammad Qasim Amiri, the head of Mines and Petroleum in Panjshir, to discuss the better management of the province's

mineral resources, particularly emeralds and rubies.

The head of Mines and Petroleum in Panjshir remarked that since the establishment of the Islamic Emirate, illegal mining and smuggling of minerals and gemstones in Panjshir have been eradicated.

He noted that the Panjshir Mines and Petroleum Directorate has so far issued more than 560 emerald mining

licenses, creating job opportunities for over 10,000 residents of Panjshir.

Furthermore, Mawlawi Mohammad Qasim Amiri requested the ministry to send a technical and survey team to assess all the mineral areas in Panjshir and to facilitate the distribution of ruby mining licenses.

In response to these suggestions, the Acting Minister of Mines and Petroleum assured that the ministry would provide the necessary cooperation to accelerate and improve operations and address the issues faced by the directorate.

In the end, the Acting Minister of Mines and Petroleum underscored the importance of prioritizing the people of Panjshir in job opportunities and in granting emerald and ruby mining licenses.



PESHAWAR: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister Sardar Ali Amin Gandapur addressing a tribal jirga from Khyber Agency.

Zelenskiy dominates Asia security conference as China, Taiwan trade barbs

SINGAPORE (Reuters): Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskiy's unscheduled appearance at Asia's biggest security conference dominated proceedings on Sunday after China's defence chief slammed "separatists" in Taiwan, drawing a sharp response from the government in Taipei.

Dressed in his trademark olive green T-shirt, Zelenskiy addressed the last day of the Shangri-La Dialogue forum in Singapore, asking for support and participation at a summit in Switzerland later this month aimed at bringing peace to his war-ravaged nation.

"We are convinced that our world wants to be united and be capable of acting in complete harmony," he said to a ballroom packed full of delegates in formal business wear and military uniforms.

Reuters was first to

report that Zelenskiy would make an unscripted appearance at the conference, his second visit to Asia since Russia's invasion of Ukraine in 2022.

Earlier, China's defence chief, Dong Jun, warned that prospects of a peaceful "reunification" of Taiwan were being eroded, and promised to ensure the island would never gain independence.

China views democratically governed Taiwan as its own territory, over the strong objections of the government in Taipei, and last month staged war games around the island in anger at the inauguration of President Lai Ching-te, who Beijing calls a "separatist".

"Those separatists recently made fanatical statements that show their betrayal of the Chinese nation and their ancestors. They will be nailed to the pillar of shame in history,"

Dong said.

He added that although China was committed to peaceful reunification with Taiwan, the People's Liberation Army "will remain a strong force for upholding national reunification".

Taiwan's China-policy making Mainland Affairs Council said in response that it deeply regretted the "provocative and irrational" comments, and reiterated that the People's Republic of China has never ruled the island.

China has repeatedly threatened force against Taiwan at international venues, and its threats violate the United Nations charter, the council said in a statement.

A U.S. official, speaking on condition of anonymity because of the sensitivity of the matter, said Dong's speech covered little new ground.

"Every year for three

years, a new Chinese defence minister has come to Shangri-La," the official said. "And every year, they've given a speech at complete odds with the reality of the PLA's coercive activity across the region. This year was no different."

Dong's speech came a day after U.S. Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin told delegates the Indo-Pacific region remained a key focus for the United States, even as it grappled with security assistance for Ukraine and the war in Gaza.

"Let me be clear: The United States can be secure only if Asia is secure," Austin said. "That's why the United States has long maintained our presence in this region."

Dong and Austin met for more than an hour on Friday on the sidelines of the conference, their first face-to-face meeting.

PM felicitates first Christian female brigadier

LAHORE (APP): Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Saturday extended his congratulations to Helen Mary Roberts on her promotion to the rank of Brigadier in the Army Medical Corps.

Brigadier Roberts, a member of the Pakistani Christian community, has made history by becoming the first woman from a minority background to achieve this prestigious rank, the prime minister said in a statement. He said the entire nation including himself extend felicitation to her. The prime minister praised Brigadier Roberts for her hard work and dedication, saying that she had proven that Pakistani women could excel in any field and were second to none. He said the entire nation was proud of Brigadier Roberts and the thousands of hardworking women like her from minority communities who were serving the country with distinction.

The prime minister added that Brigadier Roberts' commitment to service, humanity, and her dedication to her work would serve as a beacon of inspiration for the young women of the next generation.

"We're going to be appealing it on many different things. He wouldn't allow us to have witnesses. He wouldn't allow us to talk, he wouldn't allow us to do anything," Trump said.

The prime minister added that Brigadier Roberts' commitment to service, humanity, and her dedication to her work would serve as a beacon of inspiration for the young women of the next generation.

Ahmadinejad disqualified

TEHRAN (Aljazeera): Iran's ex-President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad and other divisive figures – such as moderate Ali Larijani and ultraconservative Saeed Jalili – have signed up to contest new elections after the death of President Ebrahim Raisi in a helicopter crash last month.

Ahmadinejad, who was president from 2005 to 2013, registered along with dozens of others at the interior ministry on Sunday, a day before the sign-up period ends.

The politician, who had been largely sidelined following his controversial terms in office, said he's only heeding "a call from people from across the country" to run again, and he's confident he can resolve Iran's domestic and international issues.

KP Governor emphasizes political unity to address national crises

F.P. Report

LAHORE: During his visit to Lahore on Sunday, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Governor Faisal Karim Kundi visited the residence of senior Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) leader Haji Aziz ur Rehman Chan. Governor Punjab Sardar Salim Haider Khan was also present on the occasion.

The governors of both provinces met with political and social leaders at Aziz ur Rehman Chan's residence and discussed the overall situation of the country.

Addressing a press conference at the residence, Governor Faisal Karim Kundi stated that the country is currently going through difficult times and invited all political parties to unite and play their part in steering the nation out of crises.

He mentioned that an invitation was extended to the Chief Minister of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa for a meal, but he has been hesitant. Kundi highlighted that Khyber Pakhtunkhwa faces more challenges than Punjab.

He noted that the situation on the ground differs from what is shown on social media, with issues in law and order, health, and education.

The province has 34 universities, with over 25 of them lacking vice-chancellors, leading to the deterioration of the higher education system. He assured that with federal cooperation, the province's difficulties would be addressed.

The governor praised the PPP's work in the health and education sectors in Sindh, describing it as revolutionary, and expressed his intention to replicate such devel-

opmental efforts in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

He credited the PPP for the 18th and 19th constitutional amendments, which empowered the provinces, and emphasized that institutions should work within their boundaries to avoid conflicts.

Kundi criticized the founder of PTI, calling him incompetent and stating that he had handed over his social media account to an equally unqualified person.

He remarked that if there are objections regarding elections, relevant forums are available to address them, and the times of relying on others' shoulders are over.

He pointed out that the same Election Commission was in place in 2018 when the PTI founder had praised it. Regarding the May 9 inci-

dents, he demanded that those involved should be punished and questioned how the system would function if such people came to power.

He mentioned that when the government sent ordinances, the acting president signed them. Reflecting on the justice system, Kundi noted that it took 40 years for them to get justice from the court, and asked rhetorically if Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto could be brought back now.

Governor Kundi called on all political parties to demonstrate unity and solidarity for the country's development and prosperity and to contribute to stabilizing the national economy. Governor Punjab Sardar Salim Haider Khan also addressed the press conference, welcoming Governor Faisal Karim Kundi to Lahore.



Sabah Khaled Al-Sabah announced as crown prince

LONDON (Arab News): Kuwait's Emir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah on Sunday appointed Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Mubarak Al-Sabah as crown prince, state news agency KUNA reported.

Sheikh Meshal instructed the Kuwaiti prime minister to implement the order, KUNA added.

The Emiri order was issued Saturday after reviewing the constitution, taking into account Law No. 4 of 1964 regarding the inheritance of the emirate, the Emiri order issued on May 15, 2024 appointing the prime minister, the Emiri order issued on May 10, 2024, and Decree No. 73 issued on May 12, 2024 forming the Cabinet.

"We ordered the following: Article (1): Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Mubarak Al-Sabah shall be approved as Crown Prince," KUNA reported, citing the order.

Penalty enforcement for Hajj without a permit begins

ISLAMABAD (APP): Saudi Arabia's Public Security has begun enforcing fines up to SAR 10,000 and deportation from June 2 for pilgrims violating Hajj regulations by undertaking the pilgrimage without a permit. According to a report from the Saudi Press Agency, (SPA), the no-permit, no-Hajj policy applies to Makkah city, central areas, holy sites, the Haramain train station, security checkpoints, screening centres and temporary security check-

points. This regulation remains in force until June 20, 2024.

Furthermore, individuals caught transporting Hajj violators without a permit may face imprisonment for up to six months, a fine of up to 50,000 riyals, and confiscation of their vehicle. Non-citizen offenders will be deported following their sentence and prohibited from re-entering the Kingdom for a set duration. Fines will be

multiplied according to the number of transported violators. Violations can be reported by contacting (911) in Makkah, Riyadh, and the Eastern regions, or (999) in other regions. Saudi Arabia's Public Security stressed that repeat offenders will incur double fines, underscoring the necessity of complying with Hajj regulations to guarantee the safety, security, comfort, and peace of Allah's guests during their rituals.



LAHORE: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Governor Faisal Karim Kundi addressing a press conference along with Punjab Governor Sardar Salim Haider Khan.

Trump says prison could be ‘breaking point’ for supporters

WASHINGTON (Agencies): Donald Trump warned in an interview aired Sunday that if he is sentenced to prison after his historic conviction it could mark a 'breaking point' for his supporters.

Trump told Fox News he was personally "OK with" the idea of being imprisoned over the 34 felony counts in his hush money trial but warned, "I think it would be tough for the public to take. You know at a certain point there's a breaking point."

Trump vowed to appeal his conviction, with the focus likely on porn star Stormy Daniels' salacious testimony about their alleged sexual encounter as well as the novel legal theory that prosecutors used in the case.

"We're going to be appealing this scam," Trump, the 2024 Republican candidate for president, said on Friday. He faces an uphill fight.

His defense lawyer Todd Blanche told CNN on Thursday that Trump would appeal after his July 11 sentencing date, meaning it is unlikely to be resolved before his Nov. 5 election rematch with Democratic President Joe Biden.

Twelve jurors found the real estate mogul-turned-politician guilty on Thursday of falsifying business records to cover up his former lawyer Michael Cohen's \$130,000 hush money payment to Daniels to illegally influence the

2016 election which he won.

Trump pleaded not guilty and denies having had sex with Daniels, whose given name is Stephanie Clifford. He argues the Manhattan District Attorney's office, led by Democrat Alvin Bragg, brought the charges to derail his presidential campaign.

To succeed on appeal, Trump, 77, must demonstrate that Justice Juan Merchan made significant errors overseeing the trial.

If Trump's appeal in New York state courts proves unsuccessful, he could appeal to the US Supreme Court. Trump's attorneys would have to persuade at least four of the court's nine justices to hear his case.

To prevail, Trump would then have to demonstrate that the state prosecution violated his federal constitutional rights and that his legal team followed proper procedures during earlier stages of his legal proceedings.

Trump would not be able to bypass lower state courts to immediately appeal to the Supreme Court, but he might try to seek relief if, for example, he was subject to imprisonment in the middle of his election campaign.

The court's 6-3 conservative majority includes three Trump appointees, and it has handled other Trump-related cases in ways that have proven

helpful to his candidacy.

When the court agreed in late February to take up Trump's claim that he has absolute immunity from prosecution for actions taken as president, they put off hearing the case until late April. That delay may prevent Trump's Washington trial on federal election subversion charges, to which he has pleaded not guilty, from taking place before the election.

IS A MAGAZINE SPANKING RELEVANT?

On appeal, Trump's lawyers will likely argue that Daniels' testimony about a Lake Tahoe hotel encounter went into too much detail for a case that hinged on whether Trump falsified documents rather than on whether he had sex with Daniels.

On May 7, Daniels testified that she hit Trump's backside with a rolled-up magazine and that he did not use a condom. She mentioned the position she said they were in. She said she "blacked out" and did not remember how her clothes came off, though she said she did not consume alcohol or drugs and never said "no" to Trump during the encounter.

Defense lawyer Todd Blanche twice asked Merchan to declare a mistrial based on her testimony, which he said prejudiced the 12-member jury.

"How can we come back from this in a way that's fair to President Trump?"

Blanche said outside the jury's presence on May 7.

The judge denied both requests, in part because Blanche said in his April 22 opening statement that Daniels' account of an encounter with Trump was false. Merchan said that entitled prosecutors to elicit testimony to establish her credibility.

Rebecca Roiphe, a professor at New York Law School, said none of Merchan's decisions stood out as obvious mistakes, lessening Trump's lawyers' chances of getting the conviction overturned.

"I can't imagine an appeals court would say the newspaper spanking warrants a reversal," said Roiphe, a former prosecutor with the Manhattan District Attorney's office.

NOVEL THEORY

Besides Daniels' testimony, the defense could argue on appeal that the judge's gag order restricting Trump's public statements about witnesses violated his rights. Trump alluded to that on Friday, complaining about restrictions the judge imposed on potential testimony from an election law expert whom the defense ultimately opted not to call as a witness.

"We're going to be appealing it on many different things. He wouldn't allow us to have witnesses. He wouldn't allow us to talk, he wouldn't allow us to do anything," Trump said.

UN food agency can't feed enough Gazans in ‘apocalyptic’ Rafah

GAZA CITY (CNN): The United Nations food agency is unable to feed most civilians in Rafah, its local director warned Friday, with most border crossings closed amid what he described as "apocalyptic conditions" and the Israeli military pushing further into Gaza's southernmost city.

The World Food Programme (WFP) is currently serving only 27,000 people in Rafah, according to Matthew Hollingworth, the organization's country director in Gaza. That's a tiny fraction of the roughly one million Gazans who have been displaced from the area.

"The sounds, the smells, the everyday life are horrific and apocalyptic," Hollingworth told journalists Friday after returning from a trip to Gaza.

"People sleep to the sounds of bombing, they sleep to the sounds of drones, they sleep to the sounds of war, as now tanks roll into parts of central Rafah, which is only kilometers away. And they wake to the same sounds," said Hollingworth.

"From the seventh of May to the 20th, not a single WFP truck crossed from the southern corridors of Egypt into Rafah," he said. Rafah had previously been the central artery for aid to flow into

Gaza, as the only border crossing not controlled by Israel. But since Israel seized control of the Gaza side of the Rafah crossing on May 7, aid has been blocked, with supplies piling up in Egypt and the enclave teetering close to famine.

Israel's military has continued to push further into Rafah, defying international concern and anger over its operations in the city. The Israel Defense Forces (IDF) said on Friday that its troops were in central Rafah – confirming what eyewitnesses told CNN earlier this week, when tanks were spotted there for the first time since it entered the city in May.

"IDF troops in central Rafah located Hamas rocket launchers, terror tunnel shafts, and weapons. The troops also dismantled a Hamas weapons storage facility in the area," the IDF said in the statement.

On Wednesday, the Israeli military said it had established "operational control" over the Philadelphia Corridor, a 14-kilometer (8.7-mile) buffer zone on the Palestinian side of the Egypt-Gaza border.

The IDF's operations in Rafah have prompted a 67% drop in the amount of humanitarian aid getting through, according to the UN.

Gaza is now receiving a daily average of 58 aid trucks – down from the daily average of 176 trucks between April and May, which itself is far from the 500 trucks that used to enter Gaza each day before the war broke out in October.

With Rafah now the epicenter of hostilities, aid has continued to trickle in from two other crossings: Kerem Shalom in the south and Erez in the north.

CNN has contacted WFP to clarify whether it managed to send trucks via alternative land crossings.

The IDF said 36 trucks were transferred on Thursday through Kerem Shalom and Erez West on behalf of the WFP.

Hollingworth added that the WFP's warehouse in Rafah, which was once capable of storing 2,700 tons of food, is no longer operational.

"We do not have the supplies available to provide significant numbers of ready-to-eat ration boxes. We don't have significant supplies of wheat flour to hand out to those families that have a stove to cook on," Hollingworth said – but added they are providing around 400,000 hot meals to families in central Rafah.

Pakistan team to be ‘royal guests on Hajj’ if they win T20 World Cup

ISLAMABAD (APP): Ambassador of Saudi Arabia to Pakistan Nawaf bin Saeed Ahmed Al Malkhi has announced that the Pakistan cricket team will be the royal guests on Hajj next year if they win the ongoing ICC T20 World Cup-2024.

In a special video message released on Sunday, the top Saudi diplomat also extended his best wishes to the Men in Green for the mega cricket gala. "My message to my brothers of the Pakistan cricket team is that, God willing, you will win this tournament."

The Pakistani people will celebrate the team's success in the World Cup," the envoy said. He also expressed his

prayers for Pakistan's prosperity and development, adding that if the team clinch the ICC T20 World Cup 2024, they will be honoured as royal guests during Hajj next year.

The Pakistan team will be playing its first match of the T20 World Cup 2024 on Thursday against the US.

Pakistan's captain Babar Azam appeared as a special guest in the 52nd edition of the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) podcast on Sunday.

Babar discussed in the podcast that the match between the biggest rivals, India and Pakistan, carries a lot of importance for the world and has a separate fan base.

The most-awaited match between Pakistan and India will take place on Sunday (June 9) during the T20 World Cup 2024.

Moreover, Babar wants his team to perform well against India, play easy cricket, and believe in their skills and hard work.

"The whole world is focused on the day when the India-Pakistan match is held. Naturally, there will be nerves, but we need to keep our focus, stick to the basics and play easy cricket."

It is always a pressure game; the more you keep cool and calm, believe in your skills and hard work, then things get easier," Babar said.

In the episode, the top-order batter of the team

sat down for a candid discussion focusing on the forthcoming T20 World Cup 2024.

Despite suffering a 2-0 defeat recently against England, Babar hopes that the Pakistan team wins this trophy. However, for that, the team needs to play top-class cricket in every match.

"I am happy and excited because when you go to play in a major event, you have different excitement. It's the aim of any cricketer to play in a World Cup, so that kind of feeling is coming over me."

The hope is always to lift the trophy, but for that to happen, we have to play top cricket against every side," he said.