

Gas pipeline blown up F.P. Report

MACH: A gas pipeline was destroyed by an explosion in the Mach area of Balochistan, disrupting gas supplies to various regions including Quetta. The Sui Southern Gas Company (SSGC) sources, a 24-inch diameter gas pipeline passing through the Bolan area of Balochistan was targeted and blown up by unknown perpetrators at the Kohbash area.



@thefrontierpost

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

www.thefrontierpost.com

Vol. XXXIXI

No. 157

Regd. No. 241

ZIL-HAJJ 25 1445 -- TUESDAY, JULY 02 2024

PESHAWAR EDITION

12 PAGES

PRICE. 30



ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Kazakhstan to Pakistan, Yerzhan Kishtafin called on Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif.

PM calls for boosting trade with Kazakhstan

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Monday while noting the positive trajectory of bilateral ties between Pakistan and Kazakhstan emphasized the need to enhance trade and investment, besides focusing on regional connectivity and security.

The prime minister received the Ambassador of Kazakhstan to Pakistan Yerzhan Kistafin for a courtesy call at the Prime Minister House, PM Office Media Wing said in a press release. The prime minister conveyed his greetings to the President of Kazakhstan Kassym-Jomart Tokayev and expressed his desire to strengthen the excellent bilateral relations between Pakistan and Kazakhstan.

He said he was looking forward to his meeting with President Tokayev during his upcoming visit to Astana for the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) Council of Heads of State meeting on July 3-4. The Kazakh ambassador conveyed the greetings of the president of Kazakhstan and briefed the prime minister on various activities and initiatives currently in progress to expand relations between the two countries.

Business friendly policies infuse foreign investors' confidence: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif said that the business friendly policies of the incumbent government had stabilized the country's economy and restored confidence of the foreign investors. He said that Pakistan was moving on the right path towards economic stability, while steps were taken to provide relief to the public in the current fiscal budget. The prime minister expressed these views during a meeting with a delegation of leading businessmen that called on him, the PM Office Media Wing said in a press release.

The delegation included Shahzad Saleem, Zaid Bashir, Mussadiq Zulqarnain

and Shehryar Chishti. The members of the delegation praised the prime minister for the economic turnaround and provision of a conducive environment for the businesses and investment activities. They also apprised the prime minister of the appreciation of fiscal budget by the business community and expressed the confidence that it would cause positive impacts upon the business activities in the country.

PM to undertake a two-day official visit to Tajikistan from today: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif is scheduled to undertake a two-day official visit to Dushanbe, Tajikistan from July 2-3, on the invitation of President of Tajikistan Emomali Rahmon.

During his visit, the prime minister will meet President Emomali Rahmon, Chairman of Majlisi Namoyandagon of Majlisi Oli Mahmadoir Zoir Zokirzoda and Prime Minister Qohir Rasulzoda, according to a Foreign Office press release. The visit is a part of regular high-level exchanges between Pakistan and Tajikistan. The two sides will engage in wide-ranging discussions on areas of mutual interest to further deepen bilateral cooperation especially in the areas of regional connectivity, trade, people-to-people contacts and energy as well as cooperation on multilateral issues. The two sides will also sign agreements and MoUs in diverse areas of cooperation.

Meanwhile, renowned businessman and member of Economic Advisory Council Jahangir Khan Tareen called on Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif. Tareen, who was accompanied by Istehkam-e-Pakistan Party leader Aon Chaudhry, appreciated the prime minister for presenting a pro-business and people-friendly budget, despite tough financial conditions. He also congratulated Prime Minister Shehbaz for putting the national economy on a positive trajectory.

Credit goes to PM for low taxes, says Tarar

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Information, Broadcasting, Culture and National Heritage Attaullah Tarar on Monday said that credit for minimum taxes and tax exemptions to multiple sectors in the budget went to Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif who ached tough negotiations with the IMF.

"The prime minister played a proactive role in negotiations with the International Monetary Fund to ensure minimum duties and tax exemption for different sectors," he said while addressing a press conference. "Let me be very clear that there is no tax on solar panels, text books, pensioners' income, fertilizers, charitable hospitals and health equipment, and it is all due to the prime minister who wants the nation to be prosper and self-empowered," he said.

The minister said there were multiple sectors on which the tax rates were reduced to 35 % from 45%. PM Shehbaz also ensured that the petroleum development levy to be maintained at Rs 60 in the current fiscal year. However, only Rs 10 margin had to be given as a contingency measure, he noted. The minister said the provision of Rs 38 per unit electricity to exporters was a major relief for industry, clarifying that the exports dividends were only taxed in the budget.

No tax had been



imposed on low wagers while only Rs 1,200 would be deducted from the salaries of those who earned Rs 100,000, he said, adding the high salaried persons were taxed in the budget. He termed the 15 per cent increase in minimum wage from Rs 32,000 to Rs 37,000 as a major step of the government to provide a relief to the salaried class urging the private sector to ensure its implementation in letter and spirit.

The minister said he had requested the Pakistan Broadcasters Association and All Pakistan Newspapers Society to ensure minimum wage and clear all the outstanding dues of journalists and media workers. Responding to the critics, Tarar said Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif had introduced home-grown reforms to ensure growth of the national economy which was in free fall by the end of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) government.

The economic reforms reflected his out of the box

approach that had a sole purpose to boost the revenues and curtail the expenditures for the current fiscal year, he added. The minister said the dissolution of the Public Works Department and privatization of state-owned enterprises were practical demonstration of his vision for bringing down the expenditures, and to increase the revenues. Moreover, the government was carrying forward its agenda of digitizing the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR).

The prime minister, he said, had formed a downsizing and rightsizing committee which would be chaired by Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb to implement the privatization agenda of the government for the SOEs. The minister categorically stated that the cabinet members were not withdrawing any salary, perks and privileges that showed their commitment to reducing the expenditures.

9 terrorists killed in operation

F.P. Report

RAWALPINDI: Nine terrorists were killed by security forces in two separate operations in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Province. An intelligence based operation was conducted in general area Tirrah, Khyber District, where seven terrorists including HVT, Terrorist Commander Najeeb @Abdul Ur Rehman and Terrorist Commander Ishfaq @Muavia were sent to hell by the Security Forces.

The killed terrorists were actively involved in numerous terrorist activities in the area and were wanted by Law Enforcement Agencies. Weapons, ammunition and explosives were also recovered from the killed terrorists.

In another operation, conducted in Lakki Marwat District, own troops effectively engaged terrorists' location in which two more terrorists were sent to hell.

Sanitization operations are being conducted to eliminate any terrorist found in the area as the Security Forces of Pakistan are determined to wipe out the menace of terrorism from the country.

7 killed as rains lash Balochistan

F.P. Report

QUETTA: At least seven people have been killed due to continuous heavy rains that have battered Balochistan in for the past five days. The Provincial Disaster Management Authority (PDMA) has said the downpour have resulted in the N-70 highway, which connects the province to Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, being closed off for traffic. The heavy rains have damaged 258 homes in Quetta, the PDMA report said.

Earlier, the Met Office has forecast likely rainfall with thunderstorm in Karachi and other districts of Sindh from Wednesday to July 1st. Monsoon currents from Arabian sea and Bay of Bengal are likely to penetrate eastern parts of the country from 26th June and a low pressure also lies over south of Indian Gujarat.

Rain with wind/thunder-shower with isolated heavy fall is expected in Karachi, Mithi, Umarmot, Mirpur Khas, Sanghar, Tando Allahyar, Badin, Thatta, Hyderabad, Jamshoro, Shaheed Benazirabad, Naushero Feroze, Khairpur, Dadu, Sukkur, Jacobabad, Kashmore and Larkana from 26th June to 01st July with occasional gaps. Rain with wind/thunder-shower is also expected in Balochistan's Lasbella, Khuzdar, Awaran, Jhal Magsi, Kalat, Naseerabad, Jaffarabad, Dera Bugti, Kohlu, Zhob and Barkhan districts from 26th to 28th June.

CJP: PTI repeatedly sought time, but failed to hold party's polls

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: As the Supreme Court resumed the hearing on the petition filed by the Sunni Ittehad Council – an ally of the PTI – challenging the denial of reserved seats in the national and provincial assemblies, Chief Justice Qazi Faez Isa remarked that the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf could not hold intra-party elections despite taking a year's time.

A 13-member full court, led by Chief Justice of Pakistan Qazi Faez Isa, conducted today's proceedings. Other judges on the bench were Justice Syed Mansoor Ali Shah, Justice Muneeb Akhtar, Justice Yahya Afridi, Justice Aminuddin Khan, Justice Jamal Khan Mandokhail, Justice Muhammad Ali Mazhar, Justice Ayesha A. Malik, Justice Athar Minallah, Justice Syed Hassan Azhar Rizvi, Justice Shahid Waheed, Justice Irfan Saadat Khan and Justice Naeem Akhtar Afghan.

During the proceedings, Chief Justice Qazi Faez Isa noted that the issue of PTI intra-party elections had been ongoing for many years, with the party repeatedly requesting time for these elections. He likened it to extra time in football, stating that despite extensions, the core game remains 90 minutes. Justice Muneeb Akhtar interjected, questioning whether the elections conducted were legitimate.

The chief justice observed that it was evident that the PTI had failed to hold intra-party elections despite a year passing. Justice Ayesha Malik asked about the allocation of reserved seats to the BAP party in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa during the last elections. The lawyer responded that this allocation was not in accordance with the law and there had been no hearing on the matter. Justice Ayesha further questioned how the Election Commission could take different positions on the same issue.

The lawyer explained that the current Election Commission had made the decision after hearing all parties. Justice Mansoor Ali Shah remarked that each election was separate, questioning if it was accurate to say five

elections were held on Feb 8, with federal and provincial elections treated distinctly. Later, Justice Jamal Mandokhail called PTI leader Barrister Gohar Ali Khan to the rostrum. Justice Mandokhail queried whether, during the initial hearing, Gohar Ali Khan had affirmed that PTI's declaration and certificate were submitted correctly.

The judge noted discrepancies with the Election Commission's records, asking for clarification on which forms were submitted. Gohar responded that every candidate could submit two forms, adding that he submitted one form as an independent candidate and the other as a PTI candidate. He mentioned that the ECP had only produced one form. Justice Mansoor Ali Shah commented that elections must adhere to a unified approach, questioning the submission of two forms.

After the break, Attorney General for Pakistan Mansoor Usman Awan began his arguments, stressing that reserved seats were reserved to ensure women's participation in politics. He emphasised that only political parties with proportional representation could be allotted reserved seats. He highlighted that women had gained significant representation in the national and provincial assemblies, as well as the Senate, starting in 2002. He noted that from 1990 to 1997, reserved seats for women had been eliminated.

The AGP clarified that the principle of proportional representation aimed to prevent vacant seats, asserting that independent candidates could not be counted for reserved seats. Justice Ayesha Malik asked for the basis of this assertion. Justice Shahid Waheed commented that the formula provided contradicted Section 94 of the Election Rules.

Justice Ayesha Malik inquired whether the same formula had been applied since 2002 for reserved seats. Justice Waheed explained that the Election Act of 2017 did not exist in 2002. The AGP clarified that the formula for reserved seats had remained unchanged under the new law. During the hearing, Justice Athar Minallah

remarked that the Election Commission had excluded the main party from the election by misinterpreting the Supreme Court's decision.

The PTI had, after losing its electoral symbol 'bat', directed the independent candidates who won election with its backing to join the SIC. In March, the ECP ruled that the SIC was not entitled to claim quota for reserved seats "due to having non-curable legal defects and violation of a mandatory provision of submission of party list for reserved seats". Later, the ECP accepted applications of the opposing parties and decided that the seats in the National Assembly and provincial assemblies would not remain vacant and would be allocated by a proportional representation process on the basis of seats won by political parties.

The development resulted in the PTI-backed SIC losing a total of 77 reserved seats - 23 National Assembly seats (20 women and 3 minorities), 25 Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Assembly seats (21 women and 4 minorities), two Sindh Assembly seats (women) and 27 Punjab Assembly seats (24 women and 3 minority). The PTI dismissed the ECP verdict as unconstitutional.

The SIC then challenged the ECP ruling in the Peshawar High Court, but its plea was dismissed. In May, a three-judge bench of the apex court took up a petition filed by the SIC. The court suspended the ECP decision to allocate SIC's reserved seats to other parties. Justice Mansoor Ali Shah, during the proceedings, remarked that the mandate given by the people should be properly represented in parliament.

The court sent the matter of reserved seats to the Judges Committee to decide whether the case would be heard by the same bench or a larger bench would be constituted. The court also ordered the ECP to suspended victory notifications of 77 lawmakers [on reserved seats], causing the ruling coalition to lose its two-thirds majority in the National Assembly. In late May, a full court was constituted to hear the case.

Pak-India exchange prisoners' lists

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan and India on Monday exchanged lists of prisoners in each other's custody through diplomatic channel, in Islamabad and New Delhi.

According to the Foreign Office, these lists are exchanged simultaneously, in pursuance of the Consular Access Agreement of 2008 on the 1st of January and 1st of July every year. Pakistan handed over a list of 254 Indian or believed-to-be-Indian civilian prisoners and fishermen in Pakistani jails. India shared a list of 452 Pakistani or believed-to-be-Pakistani civilian prisoners and fishermen in Indian jails.

A list of 38 missing Pakistani defence personnel, believed to be in India's custody since the wars of 1965 and 1971, was also handed over by Pakistan. Pakistan has called for the immediate release and repatriation of all Pakistani prisoners who have completed their sentence in India. A request for special consular access to various believed-to-be-Pakistani prisoners, including the physically- and mentally-challenged prisoners, has been made and for expeditious confirmation of their national status.

The government of Pakistan has also urged India to ensure safety, security, and well-being of all Pakistani or believed-to-be-Pakistani prisoners, awaiting their release and repatriation. The government of Pakistan is committed to addressing humanitarian matters as a priority. It will continue its endeavours to ensure the early return of all Pakistani prisoners in Indian jails. As part of these efforts, the repatriation of 62 Pakistani prisoners in 2023, and four in the current year, has so far been secured.



MUZFFARABAD: Local government representatives holding a protest in favour of their demands outside Prime Minister Secretariat.

2 security men martyred in terrorists attack: DPO

F.P. Report

JAMRUD: Two security personnel were martyred during terrorists attack on a police check post in Khyber tribal district.

Khyber District Police Officer (DPO) Salim Abbas Klachi while confirming the incident said that two security personnel including a policeman and FC man were martyred in a pre dawn terrorist attack. The outlaws used rocket launchers and heavy weapons during the assault on Takhtabag check-post.

He praised the bravery of police and FC troops for successfully repulsing the attack. Police and FC have shown bravery and resilience in confronting the attackers, forcing them to retreat under the cover of darkness. DPO Klachi said that police responded with heavy weapons fire, forcing the terrorists to flee. The intense exchange of fire lasted for approximately 10 minutes. Following the attack, a large contingent of police arrived at the scene, cordoned off the area, and launched a search operation.

The Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has said the entire nation is united to eliminate the scourge of terrorism. In a statement on Monday, he appreciated police and frontier constabulary for thwarting a terrorist attempt in Takhta Beg area of Khyber District.

He paid tributes to police personnel Ijaz and FC personnel Shehzad who sacrificed their lives for the sake of the country while fighting terrorists. Praying for the elevated status of martyrs, the Prime Minister condoled with the bereaved families. He noted that the country's armed forces, police and law enforcement agencies have rendered countless sacrifices for peace in the country. He said the nation is proud of its martyrs and their families.

Federal Minister for Interior Mohsin Naqvi has paid rich tribute to the bravery of FC and police personnel for foiling terrorist attack on police checkpoint in Takhta Beg area of district Khyber by laying down their lives.

In a statement on Monday, the interior minis-

ter said that the national will always remember the sacrifices of martyred FC man Shahzad and Shaheed Police official Ejaz who rendered their lives while fighting against terrorists. Mohsin Naqvi was of the view that the brave officers and jawans of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Police and FC have played a significant role in the war against terrorism.

He praised the bravery of Shaheed FC man Shahzad and Shaheed Police official Ejaz, who fearlessly thwarted the terrorists' attack. He said that the nation salutes the sacrifices of the two martyrs who laid down their lives fighting against terrorism. The interior minister further said that the sacrifices of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Police and FC will never be forgotten.

"Brave officers and jawans of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Police and FC have played a key role in the war against terrorism," he added. Mohsin Naqvi said that the nation was united and determined to eradicate the menace of terrorism.

Govt committed to providing best healthcare facilities : CM

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif has said the government is committed to providing the best healthcare facilities for every citizen.

In a meeting with Provincial Health Advisor Major General (Retd) Azhar Mehmood Kayani to discuss reforms in the health sector here on Monday, she said: "I have decided to revolutionize the health sector. The health sector is very close to my heart."

The CM agreed to take all possible measures for the early completion of health projects, saying that work has started on the up-gradation of all health centers, THQ and tertiary hospitals. Medicines for heart diseases,

TB, cancer and hepatitis are being delivered at patients' doorsteps, she noted. "I was very happy when a lady showed me home-delivered heart medicines of her husband," she said.

CM Maryam Nawaz Sharif said field hospitals and clinics on wheels project were one of the most successful projects. In a few weeks, 1.2 million people have been treated at their doorsteps. She explained field hospitals have X-rays, free lab tests and ECG along with free medicines, highlighted that 500 more clinics on wheels would be added soon.

The CM said to check shortage of doctors in remote areas, incentives were being given to doc-

BISP provides unique identity to women

LAHORE (APP): Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP) Chairperson Senator Rubina Khalid has highlighted international recognition of the programme and called it a visionary initiative of Benazir Bhutto Shaheed.

Addressing media representatives at the Pakistan Peoples Party Central Punjab Secretariat in Model Town, Lahore, she highlighted how Benazir Bhutto had conceptualized Benazir Income Support Programme during her exile in Dubai, with President Asif Ali Zardari later bringing the programme to execution.

Senator Rubina Khalid emphasized that Benazir Income Support Programme has provided a unique identity to Pakistani women while empowering them financially. She noted, "Different political parties have attempted to change the name of the Benazir Income Support Programme in the past, reflecting intellectual dishonesty. Upon assuming the role of Chairperson Benazir Income Support Programme, it was President Asif Ali Zardari's clear directive that financial assistance to women beneficiaries must be delivered with complete transparency and respect."

She affirmed that there would be no compromise on corruption or misconduct towards women beneficiaries. Chairperson Rubina Khalid reminded the public of BISP's helpline, 0800-26477, for complaint registration and confirmed that 8171 is the only official number of BISP.

Highlighting her commitment to combating fraud, she announced that BISP, in collaboration with the Ministry of Information Technology (MOIT), is developing a digital payment solution to address fraudulent activities. She also stressed the importance of skill training for the families of BISP beneficiaries, enabling them to start their own businesses, contribute to the country's economy, and rise out of poverty.

Rubina Khalid also unveiled a new payment model under which BISP is engaging six banks to enhance the payment process. This model aims to reduce complaints related to POS agents. "We have established payment campsites for the disbursement of the Kafalat stipend and have deployed our staff to ensure transparent disbursement," she added.



LAHORE: Motorcyclists stuck in water are struggling to move their bikes to the other side from the submerged road during the heavy rain in the provincial capital. —APP Photo

CM Sindh reviews arrangements for Muharram Majaalis

KARACHI (APP): Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah on Monday presided over a joint meeting with administration and religious scholars to finalise arrangements for Majaalis and processions during Muharram ul Haram.

The CM said there would be no load-shedding from Muharram 1 to 12 for which he issued directives to KE, HESCO and SEPCO.

The meeting was held at CM House and attended by provincial ministers including Sharjeel Memon, Nasir Shah, Saeed Ghani, Zia Lanjar, Riaz Shah Shirazi, Chief Secretary Asif Hyder Shah, IG Police Ghulam Nabi Memon, Commissioner Karachi Hassan Naqvi, Additional IG Karachi Imran Yakoob. Secretaries of different departments, Asadullah of water Borad, Haris Siddiqui of KE and Solid Waste Management representative Ulemae kram - Allama Syed Razi Naqvi, Molana Mohamad Hussain and others also attended the meeting. Addressing the Ulema the CM said that province had full religious harmony where people had been living in peaceful environment. He said :“I am sure this practice of mutual respect would further strengthen.”. After consultation with Ulema-e-karam (religious scholars) the CM directed the IG Police to provide necessary security to the Majalis and Moharram processions across the Sindh province.

The Ulema pointed out that most of the roads and the drain in the city were better but even then, drainage systems in the streets, particularly where Majalis were scheduled to be held. At this, the CM directed the water board to ensure the repair of the drainage system in the city.

The KMC would repair its roads, if necessary. He also directed the water board to provide water to the masjid and Majalis. Mr Shah directed Solid Waste Management to further focus on the sweeping and cleanliness of roads and streets for Majalis and Moharram processions.

The Ulema pointed out the problem of load-shedding in their areas and requested the CM to direct K-Electric not to resort to load-shedding during the month of Muharram, particularly from Muharram 1 to 12. On this, the CM directed KE representatives to ensure an uninterrupted power supply to the masajid, and majalis.

The chief minister directed the administration all over Sindh to cooperate with the organisers of the majalis in renewing their permits. He directed Minister Local Govt Minister Saeed Ghani to visit Imambargah/masajid so that their issues could be resolved. On the directives of

Bilal urges businessmen to cooperate with govt

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Food Minister Bilal Yaseen has said that business segments should cooperate with the government for providing relief to people.

According to official sources here on Monday, he said that facilitators of profiteers and hoarders deserved no leniency.

He said that during the last 24 hours, 629 flour mills, flour dealers and retail shops had been checked. Bilal Yaseen said that 128 places had been checked in Lahore division, 64 in Faisalabad, 30 in Sahiwal, 80 in Rawalpindi division, 74 in Sargodha, 40 in Multan division, 38 in Bahawalpur, 88 in DG Khan, 42 in Gujrat and 45 in Gujranwala.

He said that supply of flour was strictly monitored during Sunday holiday. A sufficient stock was available at retail shops and in wholesale markets in Lahore and other big cities of Punjab, he added. He said that due to increase of transportation of wheat in markets it helped to reduce prices.

People should lodge their complaint on toll free number 080002345 against those who were illegally selling flour and 'Roti' at higher rates. The Punjab food department had imposed a fine of Rs 407,000 besides issuing warning notices to profiteers and law violators, he said.

NDMA activities NEOC in anticipation of rain related emergencies

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Based on predictive modeling, NDMA's National Emergencies Operation Center (NEOC) has been reported a significant activity from the eastern Indian side, indicating intense cloud bursts that may hit Pakistani areas.

Repeated early warnings have been shared with all provinces, and moderate to heavy rainfall is likely to start over the upper catchments of all major rivers particularly Sutlej, Ravi & Chenab from July 2, 2024.

NDMA has also issued an alert regarding lightning, according to which lightning is expected to strike in various cities of South and Central Punjab and Islamabad during July 5-7. This may lead to rapid rises in water levels, flash flooding events, and urban flooding in metropolitan areas.

NDMA warns that the anticipated rainfall poses a significant risk of low to medium level flooding in River Sutlej, with water levels expected to reach low flood levels (approximately 50,000 cusecs) by July 5 and high flood levels (approximately 120,000 cusecs) by July 10, 2024.

NDMA is working closely with federal and provincial departments to ensure preparedness and response to this potential emergency. The public is advised to remain vigilant and follow instructions from local authorities. NDMA advises public to stay informed and download 'Pak NDMA Disaster Alert' mobile app for timely alerts and closely monitor weather reports and updates on the flood situation, follow instructions, evacuate immediately if orders are issued by local authorities, protect yourself from floodwater, avoid contact with floodwater, which may be contaminated or contain debris or electrical wires.

Develop an evacuation plans with your family, identify a safe location, and create an emergency kit with essential supplies. Travelers are advised to avoid unnecessary travel in case of heavy rainfalls and likely flooding situations.

Govt issues notification regarding transfer, posting of several officers

LAHORE (APP): The Punjab government has issued notification regarding transfer and posting of several officers, here on Monday.

According to the notification, DIG Mohsin Rafiq has been transferred from Multan Region to Bahawalpur Region, DIG Prisons Faisalabad Kamran Anjum posted as DIG Multan Region, and AIG Prisons (Industries) Lahore, Razaullah Khan, posted as DIG Prisons Faisalabad Region. Umar Farooq, awaiting posting, has been posted as Deputy Secretary Agriculture, Sajid Bashir, who was awaiting posting, posted as Additional Secretary Schools,

Additional Secretary Food, Lubna Nazir, posted as Additional Secretary Specialized Healthcare Punjab, Rao Nadeem Akhtar posted as Additional Secretary Food Department, Farhat Hussain, who was awaiting appointment, has been designated as Additional Secretary in the School Education Department, Deputy Secretary Finance Department has been designated as Additional Secretary Finance Department.

The services of Additional Secretary Schools, Amna Rafiq, have been assigned to the Director General of the Punjab Food Authority. Imran Hussain Ranjha has

been instructed to report to the S&GAD. The services of Shayan Ali Java, Director Revenue PDMA, have been assigned to the Director General of the Punjab Authority. The appointment orders of Ahmad Kamal Mann as Chief of the Planning and Development Board have been cancelled. He has been instructed to report to the S&GAD. The services of Saifur Rehman, Deputy Secretary School Education Department, have been assigned to the Food Department. Bushra Nasir, Director Monitoring, has been made OSD and directed to report to the S&GAD. Azeem Shaukat, Deputy

PEC conducts 1st ever mega event at KP 7th Engineering Capstone

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Pakistan Engineering Council – PEC has conducted 1st Ever MEGA ENGINEERING CAPSTONE EXPO (FYDP- Final Year Engineering Design Project Exhibition) in KPK, Peshawar on 1st July '2024 at "Galaxie Hall Phase 2 Hayatabad Peshawar near Zargooni Mosque. CAPSTONE EXPO is a project of PEC Pakistan Development committee – PPDC.

This is the 7th EXPO in continuation at National level (2 held at Federal Capital Islamabad Region; 2 held at Lahore, Punjab region and 2 in Balochistan). In this Expo 20 Universities participated and 82 short-listed projects were displayed out of which 20 projects were PEC funded.

Engr. Abdul kareem Tordher, Special Assistant to CM for Industries KPK inaugurated the ceremony as chief guest. Welcome address of the ceremony delivered by the Engr. Syed Zulqurnain Shah, Deputy Registrar, PEC R/o Peshawar in which he appreciated the PEC and PPDC for organizing 1st ever MEGA event at KPK, Peshawar. Purpose of this CAPSTONE is to maximize the industrial-academia linkage and to bring market compatible projects/ideas.

Engr Mir Masood Rashid convenor PPDC and advisor to chairman PEC, had CAPSTONE briefing and discussed about the 10 MEGA projects launched by PEC which all have been successfully launched and available online for easy access to stakeholders, students, Engineers, Industries, employers, universities and foreign organizations.

These 10 projects having tangible deliverables and beneficiaries are now reaping the benefits especially Pakistan-Engineers and society. Ten projects all available at pec-ppdc.org:

STEM education; Day-Trip Learning; Final Year Design Project-FYDP; CAPSTONE; E-Library; Graduate Internship Training Program (6 months paid program); PEC E-gateway for e-procurement; 17-UNSDG's adoption roadmap and Parliamentary Caucus advocacy role).

In CAPSTONE Engineering Universities showcased their Engineering students' projects that pertains to market/industry, in which industries were present to participate and select projects as per their business need. CAPSTONE is the PEC initiative 1st time in Pakistan by PEC Pakistan Development Committee (committee convener Engr Mir Masood Rashid).

This opportunity granted by PEC free of cost to help our universities gain more market exposure as well as be able to network with world-class manufacturers of different varieties of engineering products. Market compatible projects being sponsored by PEC.

Engr Muhammad Najeeb Haroon chief guest in the Closing ceremony address highlighted on the Engineering community critical role especially in such situation in which Pakistan is currently trapped. He promised that INSHALLAH such programs will continue so that Engineers who are core pillars of society may have platform to contribute which is a must need for PAKISTAN.

Its continuous and consistent struggle that can make a difference and bring the country back on track to development journey. As we cannot be always as underdeveloped country which is already over 75 years now, we have to set the right direction so that developed country journey be travelled which is only possible when right direction is set and adoption of certain steps like STEM education (where from school passing level students be educated on the importance of science and technology), bringing practical projects from FYDP and CAPSTONE to market and promote localization of industries. Old mistakes and practices to end up and have to come up and work upon to make the country self-sufficient that is the only bail out for Pakistan and that's possible only when Engineers play their role with the state and PEC support. In house engineering and localization of industry is only possible when engineers put their role in with the support of PEC. PEC focusing on same objective targets started new projects to create opportunities for engineers. Deliverables of such initiatives will result in new startups, engineering entrepreneurs, industry localization and indigenous local manufacturing, inhouse solutions and Engineering services.

Engr. Waqar Ali Khan (PAS), Special Secretary to CM KPK on Development, Briefed audience that Engineers having no limits as he has been developed and drilled to think beyond his own defined limits, it's just the matter of doing. All are engineering and system problems which can be resolved as engineering solution exist along with technology advancement. He also highlighted on the austerity that PEC adopted and same our Islam religion teaches. He also highlighted on the ethical values that engineers must be adhering being responsible citizen.

Engr Ejaz Hussain Ansari, recalled that CAPSTONE one of the great initiatives of PEC which we request to continue in future like this 3 years tenure for betterment of Engineers, Society and Pakistan. He also appreciated the efforts and initiatives taken by PEC chairman and PPDC committee to get the reach of PEC in all cities of Pakistan which was never before.



KARACHI: Community Midwives (CMWs) are frontline first contact healthcare heroes whose services are indispensable to healthcare service delivery. Empowering CMWs has led to positive family planning results in the project districts (Matiari and Tando Muhammad Khan), highlighting the need to expand this successful approach.

Building on the achievements of the CMWs Plus project, the government plans to replicate and scale it up across Sindh province", stated Rehan Iqbal Baloch, Secretary of Health, Sindh, during the dissemination event of the project "Strengthening Community Healthcare System through Community Midwives in Sindh".

This initiative, implemented by the Population Council in collaboration with Health and Population Welfare Departments of Sindh, aimed to enhance the role of community midwives in providing comprehensive reproductive health services, with a special focus on family planning (FP) and postpartum family planning (PPFP) services. The community-based health system in Pakistan, particularly in rural areas, relies heavily on CMWs to deliver critical reproductive health services, including antenatal care, delivery, postnatal care, and family planning.

However, recent assessments revealed that CMWs were not fully engaging with their communities, resulting in gaps in service provision.

To address these challenges, the Population Council designed and piloted a model to enhance CMW

engagement in rights-based FP services in the Tando Allah Yar district during 2019–2020. Building on this success, the project was expanded to Matiari and Tando Muhammad Khan during 2023–2024. Dr. Zeba Sathar, Country Director of the Population Council, highlighted the importance of enhancing community-based healthcare services and emphasized the critical role of community midwives in improving contraceptive prevalence rates in Pakistan.

She stated, "The remarkable achievements of the CMWs Plus project in Sindh offer a compelling blueprint for progress in health and family planning initiatives across Pakistan. By scaling up this successful model, we can empower communities, particularly those in rural and remote areas. This expansion has the potential to improve maternal health outcomes, reduce infant mortality rates, and ultimately empower women to reach their full potential." She also stressed the importance of delivering healthcare services through trusted providers in rural communities to achieve Universal Health Coverage (UHC).

The project involved several targeted interventions. CMWs received extensive training in FP and PPFP, including hands-on training for intrauterine contraceptive devices (IUCDs) and emergency preparedness for FP services during natural disasters. Free contraceptives, including Sayana Press and IUCDs, were provided to CMWs through the Population Welfare Department,

Sindh. Additionally, CMWs were equipped with essential medical equipment and IUCD kits to ensure high-quality service delivery.

Iram Kamran, Director of Research at the Population Council, shared the project's findings. "Through the CMWs Plus project, 97% of CMWs in Matiari and 91% in Tando Muhammad Khan have functional birth stations, compared to less than half at the project's start. CMWs were also trained in FP and PPFP during the project, resulting in increased knowledge, skills, and income."

She also highlighted that as part of the GANC model, pioneered by the Council in Pakistan, which promotes PPFP, 650 pregnant women were served in both the districts. "The project also expanded contraceptive use, with 74% of CMWs offering five or more methods, and 66 CMWs serving over 25,000 clients from June 2023 to March 2024, leading to a significant uptake in FP methods," she added.

Dr. Khalid Memon, Director General, RMNCH Sindh, while addressing the event mentioned that CMWs, once an overlooked cadre, were revitalized with the technical support of the Population Council.

"This project demonstrated that with proper training and supplies, CMWs can significantly strengthen healthcare systems in communities, especially in rural areas with limited access to medical care. The findings highlight the effectiveness of the community-based GANC model in promoting PPFP, with a remarkable 79.3% of GANC members opting for PPFP after delivery", he added.

The event culminated in a panel discussion advocating for the widespread adoption of this model across Sindh and beyond. Panelists highlighted the potential to leverage existing CMW resources for significant gains in family planning (FP) and postpartum family planning (PPFP). They envisioned an expanded CMW role, encompassing a wider range of contraceptive methods and a more comprehensive approach to reproductive health services. Regular refresher trainings were also emphasized as crucial for maintaining and enhancing CMWs' skills.

Court orders UOP to enlist 8 employees in next selection board

Humayun Khan

PESHAWAR: Civil Judge Peshawar Shabeena Noor ordered University of Peshawar (UOP) to enlist BPS-17& 18 employees in next meeting of Selection Board for promotion, on Monday.

The applicants including Gohar Rehman, Akhtar Amin, Dr. Abdul Hamid, Dr. Tahir Jan, Engineer

Hasan Iqbal, and Fazal Mahmood seeking promotions to next positions.

The counsel Tariq Afghan and Sajeed Afridi advocates argued that UOP had advertised various posts for promotion, but the selection committee did not consider the petitioners, despite meets the required qualifications.

The lawyers informed that the educational quali-

cations required for the promotion were complete, but some favorite individuals were included in the selection process, while the applicants were excluded.

The counsel argued that the civil court had already ordered the selection board to consider the applicants' names in the selection board meeting scheduled on June 21, 2024, but the order was not implemented

due to unknown reasons.

The applicants' counsel had requested the court to order the selection board to consider their clients' names, as they had already been ignored twice in previous meetings.

The court has ordered the selection board to consider the applicants' names in the next meeting, directing the board to resolve the promotion issue.



PESHAWAR: July 1 - Youngsters find relief from scorching temperatures by jumping into a canal for swim in the city

Rainfall expected in parts of KP as Peshawar sizzles

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Peshawar, capital of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, sizzles in another scorching summer week, with city and areas in its vicinity baking under temperatures soaring above 40 degrees Celsius.

However, the Pakistan Meteorological Department has issued a weather advisory predicting heavy rainfall across

several districts of Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa from 3rd to 7th July, with intermittent breaks in between.

According to the advisory, Dir, Chitral, Swat, Kohistan, Malakand, Bajaur, Shangla, Battagram, Buner, Kohat, Bajaur, Mohmand, Khyber, Mansehra, Abbottabad, Haripur, Peshawar, Mardan, Charsadda, Hangu, Kurram, Waziristan, Bannu, and

Dera Ismail Khan are likely to experience rain, accompanied by thunderstorms and occasional heavy to very heavy downpours.

The Met Office has warned that these torrential rains could lead to flash floods in local streams and nullahs in Manshera, Kohistan, Abbottabad, Dir, Swat, Kashmir, and the hill torrents of Dera Ghazi Khan between 4th and 7th

July. Travelers and tourists have been urged to exercise caution, adjust their travel plans according to weather updates, and avoid risky situations during this period of inclement weather.

The authorities have advised residents to take necessary precautions to prevent any potential damage caused by the anticipated heavy rains and flash floods.

KP Govt seals Daewoo Bus Terminal

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR (APP): District administration Peshawar in a joint operation with the Regional Transport Authority (RTA) sealed the Daewoo Bus Terminal on Monday for not replacing the old buses and consecutively plying them on the route of the southern districts of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The action has been taken in light of the directives of the provincial government. The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government has taken notice of the operation of old buses on various routes, particularly southern districts and served notice on the transport company to replace them. The officials of the district administration Peshawar along with the RTA carried out an operation and sealed the terminal of the company situated on G.T. Road by erecting concrete blocks at the entry gate of the service. The management of the Daewoo Bus Service has been directed to arrange new buses for the route of the southern districts and strictly following the official code of conduct, otherwise legal proceedings would be initiated against them.

Kundi condemns attack

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Kundi has strongly condemned the terrorist attack on Takh Bai Chowki in Khyber district. Expressing sorrow over the martyrdom of police and FC personnel in the incident, Governor Kundi extended his heartfelt condolences to the families of the martyrs.

Afghan female journalist seeks immediate asylum

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: A female Afghan journalist Fershta Azizi requested United Nation High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) for provision of asylum in western world as pending since Taliban takeover on 15 August 2021, on Monday.

This she requested while talking to media personnel and claimed that she fled Afghanistan after the Taliban takeover on August 15, 2021, and is now facing numerous challenges in Pakistan. Despite her efforts to seek asylum in a Western country through the United Nations High Commissioner for

Refugees.

The female journalist worked with various organizations in Afghanistan, promoting women's rights and freedom of expression. However, after the Taliban takeover, she was forced to flee to Pakistan with her elderly mother, leaving behind her home, livelihood, and colleagues.

In Pakistan, she is struggling to survive, facing numerous obstacles, including difficulty obtaining a visa, limited access to healthcare, and inadequate living condition, she claimed.

Fershta has applied for asylum in a Western country through the UNHCR, but her application has been

delayed due to bureaucratic hurdles. She has appealed to the UNHCR and other Western embassies and organizations to grant her political asylum on an emergency basis, citing her deteriorating health condition and the risks she faces as a female journalist and activist.

Fershta is living in a rented house in Peshawar with her mother. She has limited financial resources and is struggling to access basic necessities like healthcare and food.

She has urged the Pakistani government to simplify the visa process for Afghan refugees like her, who are waiting to be resettled in other countries.

Speeding up work on foreign funded projects directed

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Minister for Agriculture Major (retd) Sajjad Barkwal has issued instructions to the concerned officers of the Agriculture department to speed up the work on foreign funding projects including World Bank projects and complete them within the speculate time.

While the speed of work on ongoing and new AWP schemes in the province should also be accelerated and completed in time in the best interest of farmers and people.

He issued these instructions while presiding over the review meeting of the Joint

Coordination Committee of the Agriculture department.

Secretary Agriculture Javed Marwat and the Director Generals of all wings of the Agriculture Department, besides Registrars of Agriculture University Peshawar, Swat and DI Khan participated in the meeting. The provincial minister was informed in detail about the decisions taken in the last meeting and the progress made in this regard.

While the provincial minister was also briefed about the steps taken so far by the said committee in the meeting.

Provincial minister directed that a departmental sub-committee should be formed. Which can

speed up taking practical steps to utilize the funds allocated for the projects in a proper manner.

Because the timely completion of the schemes will not only benefit the landowners but will also play a key role in the economic stability of the province.

He strongly urged the field officers of the Agriculture department to spend most of their time in field activities instead of sitting in their offices.

So that the farming community can be benefited from the agricultural scientific knowledge of the officers, he warned that the officers who are not interested in their work and work with hesitation action will be taken against them.



F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Special Assistant to Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister on Industries, Commerce and Technical Education, Abdul Karim Tordher inaugurated Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system at Pak-German Wood Working Centre, a subsidiary of the Small Industries Development Board (SIDB) here on Monday.

Under this system, the affairs of this centre of the furniture manufacturing in the public sector of the province has been digi-

tized formally through a latest software and now all the information regarding the operation of the centre will be available online.

The initiative will play useful role in bringing modernism and transparency in the performance of the centre as well as better planning of the resources, financial affairs, human resource, purchase and other matters of the organization.

Besides, the Managing Director (MD) SIDB KP, Habibullah Arif, Deputy Managing Directors (DMDs), Nauman Fayyaz, Sahibzada Zulfikar and Manager Pak-German

Wood Working Centre, other officers and staff were also present on the occasion.

In a briefing given by the consultant of the project regarding the software system, the special assistant was told that the ERP system is being introduced under the latest technology of the world and all affairs of the organization have been saved in a software and now instead of the conventional official manner, the record and other information of the organization will be available online.

Speaking on the occasion, the special assistant

Abdul Karim Tordher termed the uplift of the Pak-German Wood Working Centre, a well-coming and said that giving practical shape to the digitization vision of the government is a crucial step introduced in the industrial sector.

He also hinted at bringing further improvement in the uplift of the organization and bringing more improvement in it and leaving no stone unturned in developing Pak-German Centre including local wood working centres in line with uplifting them as a brand.

The special assistant further said that ERP system of the Pak-German will be adopted as a model in other wood working centres of the province also. He directed initiating of steps for the brand promotion of the under-training skilled workers at Pak-German to inform the people about the quality work carried out in the centre.

On this occasion, the special assistant also visited a training centre inside Pak-German Wood Working Centre and appreciated the quality of the furniture manufacturing carried out there.



PESHAWAR: Laborer pulling his hand cart heavily laden with pillows to deliver in the market at Dabgari area. — APP photo

PDMA issues Monsoon contingency plan 2024 to minimize disaster risks

PESHAWAR (APP): The Provincial Disaster Management Authority (PDMA) Khyber Pakhtunkhwa on Monday unveiled the Monsoon Contingency Plan 2024, a comprehensive strategy aimed at minimizing disaster risks and facilitating a coordinated and timely response.

The PDMA has actively engaged district administration, provincial and federal line departments, and humanitarian partners in developing this plan, incorporating valuable lessons learned from previous incidents.

The primary objective is to mitigate the impact of disasters and safeguard the lives and livelihoods of the people residing in the province.

According to the Monsoon Plan 2024, 11 districts, including Chitral Upper, Chitral Lower, Swat, DI Khan, Charsadda, Nowshera, Shangla, Dir Upper Dir Lower, Tank and Peshawar are identified as highly flood risk.

Additionally, 14 other districts, Malakand, Tor Ghar, Kohistan Lower, Kohistan Upper, Kolai Palas, North Waziristan, Mardan, Abbottabad,

Karak, Buner, South Waziristan, Laki Marwat, Swabi, and Mohmand are classified as medium to flood risk during the season.

Floods have been an ongoing issue, particularly in lowland areas, resulting in waterborne diseases, loss of human and livestock life, and damage to infrastructure.

The Monsoon Plan 2024 addresses this concern through a comprehensive flood risk management approach that encompasses prevention, mitigation, preparedness, emergency response, and recovery measures.

Prevention measures focus on discouraging construction in current and future flood-prone areas, adapting future developments to flood risks, and promoting appropriate land-use and agricultural practices.

Mitigation strategies include structural and non-structural measures aimed at reducing the likelihood and impact of floods in specific locations.

Preparedness efforts aim to educate the population about flood risks and provide guidance on appropriate actions during a flood. Emergency response

plans are being developed to ensure a swift and effective response in the event of a flood. Furthermore, the plan incorporates recovery and lessons learned components to minimize the social and economic impacts on affected communities and facilitate their return to normalcy.

The Monsoon Plan 2024 builds upon the lessons learned from past flood events, such as the catastrophic floods of 2010, heavy monsoon rainfalls of 2011, and flash floods in 2012 and 2022 and subsequent disasters.

By conducting risk and vulnerability assessments, the plan aims to strengthen preparedness and response capacities while identifying and addressing gaps and challenges.

Key outcomes expected from the Monsoon Plan 2024 include raising awareness and building capacity for effective response, anticipating and allocating necessary resources based on threat perception, developing

Muhammad Qasair Khan, Director General of PDMA, stated that the Monsoon Contingency Plan for 2024 focuses on

mitigating the potential impact of floods, building on the lessons learned from previous years' events. It includes the implementation of improved early warning systems, streamlined evacuation procedures, and enhanced communication channels.

Moreover, the plan places significant emphasis on community engagement to ensure their active participation in disaster preparedness.

By involving and empowering the community, the plan aims to enhance resilience and response capabilities, fostering a collaborative approach to tackle the challenges posed by monsoon-related disasters.

PDMA's Spokesperson Anwar Shahzad said that the contingency plan focuses on planning for the upcoming Monsoon 2024 hazards to identify and analyse related risks for not just their humanitarian impacts but also the associated adverse effects on private and public infrastructure and to define the roles and responsibilities of diverse stakeholders for preparedness and response.



PESHAWAR: A man busy in making rubber tubs with scrap tires at his workplace.



In brief

Three brick kiln laborers killed F.P. Report

LAKKI MARWAT: Unknown armed men shot dead three laborers of a brick kiln in the vicinity of Ghazni Khel police station in Lakki Marwat district, police informed on Monday. On receiving information local police reached the site of the incident and shifted the dead bodies to hospital for medico-legal procedure. Police said those killed were identified as Salih Khan, resident of Khwaja Khel, Farooq and Naqibullah, residents of Tor Lawang Khel area. Police said they were investigating what was the motive behind the killing of the laborers. Heirs of the deceased laborers placed the dead bodies on the road near Tajazai Adda, blocking the Indus Highway for sometime in demand of early arrest of the perpetrators involved in this heinous crime.

Two die, three hurt in mishap F.P. Report

KOHISTAN: Two people died and three others were injured when a vehicle fell into a deep gorge here on Monday, police said. According to details, the accident took place in Lotar area of Upper Kohistan where a vehicle with five people on board got out of control of driver due to negligence of driver and plunged into a deep ravine. Two people died on the spot in the accident while three others sustained wounds. The bodies and injured were pulled up of the gorge and shifted to hospital.

Section 144 imposed F.P. Report

KOHAT: In order to maintain law and order and security in Kohat and to ensure safety to the life and property of the people during the upcoming Muharram, the Deputy Commissioner Kohat Dr. Azmatullah Wazir on Monday imposed Section 144 Cr. PC. Under the section wall-chalking, pillion riding (excluding government servants engaged in Muharram Duties, raising of provocative sectarian slogans and speeches, assembly of five or more persons at a public place for any nefarious purpose, display of weapons and use of loudspeaker except for Azaan and Muharram mourning has been banned. Moreover, distribution of objectionable/sectarian material, tinted glasses on vehicles, aerial firing, sale of petroleum products in small containers, sale and use of firecrackers, standing on the rooftops of buildings/houses in the surrounding of procession routes and Imambargahs, stay of strangers in hostels which fall on the roots of processions and Imambargahs premises, dumping of construction materials at the roadsides and movement of Afghan refugees except their camps will also remain banned in the district. The notification said this order shall come into force with immediate effect for a period of 30 days. Those who violate this order will be punished under Section 188 of the Pakistan Penal Code.

Withdrawal of tax demanded F.P. Report

BANNU: The President of KP Senior Staff Association (AKSA) Azmat Ullah Khan has said that the federal government will review the decision on the unjust salary tax and withdraw it, and the provincial government will issue a notification on the salaries of twenty-two and twenty-five in the next six months.



KOHAT: KP Minister for Law, Aftab Alam Afriidi inaugurating Law Library at office of the District Attorney.

Jirga urges govt to stop militants on borders

F.P. Report

LOWER DIR: Rejecting the planned Azme Istihkam targeted military operation; a peace building body demanded the federal and provincial governments and chief of the army staff to handle the intruding militants on the borders. The Talash Dushkhel Qaumi Jirga, a citizens' body represented by more than 300 area elders, arranged a grand jirga at Kalpani Talash with its president Muhammad Ibrahim in the chair.

The Jirga's members from all villages of Talash and leaders of the Dir Qaumi Paseon (DQP) attended the event. The gathering was addressed by the Jirga's president Muhammad Ibrahim Hassankhel, general secretary Dr Noor Muhammad, former provincial minister Muzafar Syed advocate, tehsil chairman Mufti Irfan

ud Din, DQP chief Malik Jehan Alam, president Malik Shah Naseem, Muslim Khan, Talash Jirga former president Malik Taj Muhammad Khan, active members Aftab Alam, Malik Muhammad Irshad, Yasin Khan, retired director agriculture and social activist Shafiq ur Rehman and others.

The speakers were of the view that Dir was a peaceful district and its people would not let anyone disturb peace. They said the residents were not ready to accept militancy and military operation. They announced the people would not leave their homes at any cost. They argued the government and security agencies to stop militants on the borders.

In a joint declaration, the Jirga maintained the people of Pakistan loved and trusted its army and security agencies. They said the proposed military offensive

would widen the distance between the public and the army. It said the Jirga would play its active role to unite the people for peace without taking law into their hands. It also demanded local police to collect data of people who had migrated to the area while the Jirga members would fully cooperate with police in that regard. The declaration said the federal government should review its decision regarding the launching of the Azme Istihkam operation. It said the people would strongly resist if they were forced again like 2009-10 to leave their homes.

Later the participants held a peace walk while carrying a banner inscribed with a slogan of 'we want peace on our soil'. They marched on the roads for some time and chanted slogans in favour of peace. The participants then dispersed peacefully.

Marble factories shutdown due to load shedding F.P. Report

BUNER: Buner Marble Association (BMA) leaders have complained that the country's larger marble industry is at verge to collapse due to the government's worst policies and threatened of protest if the government did not revise the policies.

In this connection a meeting of the Marble Association was held in chair of president Khurshed Khan at Swari. In the meeting cabinet members and marble factory owners participated. The participants discussed the marble industry related issues in detail. They also discussed their problems and difficulties being faced by them due to government worst policies. They shared their valuable suggestions and recommendations for future course of action.

Briefing media persons the Marble Association District President Khurshed Khan, District General Secretary Musa Jan and Finance Secretary Zia ur Rahman said that there are about 600 marble factories in Buner in which thousands of people are labouring to keep their kitchen hot. They added more than half of the marble factories are about to be shut down due to the over load shedding and unannounced load shedding in Buner. They complained of massive increases in MDI and royalty and other taxes.

BMA claimed that the solution to all these problems lies in the establishment of Marble City and ease in government policies and also demanded heatwave relaxation for the marble factories. They repeatedly supported establishing the long awaited Marble City in Buner. They asked the government forth with establish it in any part of Buner district as soon as possible.

However, they suggested a favourable policy for shifting already established factories to the marble city as the adopted formulated is not suit to them because none of them would be able to pay government fixed rupees 20 million for single plot in the marble city.

They termed the government policy of huge amount for shifting to marble city is nothing but discouraging marble factory owners. They termed the hard policy a deliberate attempt to sabotage the marble city project.

Minister's law administers oath from KBA cabinet

Sahibzada Afriidi

KOHAT: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Minister for Finance and Law Aftab Alam Afriidi has said that the lawyers of Kohat have always played a key role for the supremacy of law and have raised an effective voice against the any usurper and powerful, on Monday.

He expressed these views while addressing the oath taking ceremony of the newly elected cabinet of Kohat Bar Association as chief guest. Members of the National Assembly Sharyar Afriidi and Shandana Gulzar, members of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Assembly Daud Shah Afriidi and Shafi Jan and the President of the Bar also addressed the ceremony.

Earlier, the Law Minister Aftab Alam also inaugurated

the law library in the office of District Attorney Kohat, where he was given a detailed briefing by District Attorney Akbar Ali. The provincial minister said, until the supremacy of law is established in the country and the powerful are not brought under the law, the dream of progress and prosperity of any country cannot be fulfilled. Referring to the founder of PTI, he said that if Imran Khan is imprisoned today, it is because he wants the rule of law in the country. While congratulating the newly elected cabinet, the Law Minister hoped that the new cabinet will play its due role for the welfare of its community and the supremacy of law and will spare no moment for providing quick and cheap justice to the people and the supremacy of law.

The minister maintained, establishment of rule of law and easy justice is the manifesto of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf. He paid rich tributes to Insaf Lawyers Forum and Kohat Bar Association for supporting the party in difficult times.

Referring to the problems and demands of the bar, the law minister assured, that he is still a part of the Kohat Bar, so he will make all possible efforts to solve all the problems of the bar. He on this occasion announced Rs.2.5 million for the welfare of the bar while Member National Assembly Shahryar Afriidi also announced Rs.2.5 million and rupees upto 10 million for the expansion of Kohat bar Hall. Similarly, Daud Shah Afriidi MPA also announced the solarization of the Bar Hall.

Tribesmen vow to resume peace in Khyber

F.P. Report

LANDI KOTAL: The tribesmen of Landi Kotal vowed that they will adopt all necessary initiatives to retain stable peace in the area and win justice for the deceased journalist, Khalil Jibran.

In a protest sit-in held at Charwazi Square of Landi Kotal on Monday, a large number of protestors while holding black flags and chanted slogans against killing of a tribal journalist and intentional efforts of disturbance of peace.

Speakers including Member National Assembly Iqbal Afriidi, district head of

Awami National Party (ANP) Shah Hussain Shinwari, tehsil Ameer Jamat-e-Islami (JI) Murad Hussain, Pakistan People Party (PPP) Khyber chief Shah Rehman Shinwari, political worker Hussain Afriidi, social worker Shakir Afriidi, Zia-ul-Haq Afriidi and others said that they leave no stone unturned to win justice for the slain journalist and to get basic rights for them. Time has come to unite the whole nation and to say no to tyranny and cruelty in every form and shape, they remarked.

They went on that they were not against the State and its department but the anti-people policies, formulated by it. Some people deliberately disturbed peaceful environment of Khyber that was unfair to them, they opined. They regretted that if the security agencies could not provide protection against militants then whom they would seek safety.

The protestors demanded the authorities concerned to trace the killers of late journalist, Khalil Jibran and grant them punishment as per law. They threatened that they would not give up their agitation till the win of justice for the journalist and for restoration of permanent peace in the area.

Grand jirga rejects detention of tribal Malik

F.P. Report

WANA: A historic grand jirga of the Karey Khel tribe gathered at Malik Sardar Ali's residence in Wana Bazaar, drawing a large and united gathering of tribesmen from across the region. With one voice, they denounced Malik Sardar Ali's detention under the 3MPO act as unjust and oppressive, demanding his immediate release.

In a show of collective strength, the jirga resolved to hold a larger grand jirga of the entire Uthman Khel tribe in Wana Bazaar, uniting elders, leaders, and representatives from all segments of the tribe. Together, they will devise a comprehensive plan to secure Malik Sardar Ali's release.

The Karey Khel elders pledged to present a united front, demonstrating their unwavering solidarity and determination. As a powerful protest against the government, the jirga declared a shutdown of all shops and markets in Wana Bazaar until further notice. This move sends a clear message to the authorities that the tribe will not tolerate the unjust detention of their leader.

The Karey Khel tribe extends an urgent appeal to all individuals to join the upcoming grand jirga,

emphasizing the critical importance of unity and collective action in this moment. United, they will secure Malik Sardar Ali's release and ensure his safe return to the community.

Meanwhile, in a bid to restore peace in the volatile region of Waziristan, Taj Muhammad Wazir, leader of the 3MPO act as unjust and oppressive, demanding his immediate release. In intense consultations with various stakeholders, including people from different schools of thought. The efforts aim to bring stability to South Waziristan and Lower Waziristan, which have been plagued by violence and unrest.

In a significant development, former Senator Mustaq Ahmad Khan from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa is expected to arrive in Waziristan to lend his support to the peace initiative. His involvement is seen as a major boost to the efforts, given his experience and influence in the region.

Taj Muhammad Wazir issued a stern warning to those who might try to disrupt the peace efforts, saying that no one would be allowed to compromise the hard-earned calm in South Waziristan. He assured that

every possible effort would be made to maintain peace, and any attempts to sabotage it would be met with firm resistance. Despite the challenges, Taj Muhammad Wazir expressed his determination to succeed in restoring peace to Waziristan.

He acknowledged that the region had faced numerous setbacks in the past, but he was confident that the current efforts would yield positive results. "We will not let anyone compromise the peace in Waziristan, no matter the cost," he emphasized. This development comes as a ray of hope for the people of Waziristan, who have been suffering from violence and instability for years. The success of these peace efforts could mark a significant turning point in the region's history.

Tribesmen knocks court 150 kilometers away: Engineer Muhammad Lqman, the leader of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf in South Waziristan, issued a statement saying that unfortunately, it has been six years since the merger of FATA and two years since the bifurcation of South Waziristan into two districts, but the judicial system of South Waziristan is still located in Tank, which is 150 kilometers away from South Waziristan Lower.

Transformative civil service reforms need of the hour

Noor Ali

CIVIL Servants are governed by the Civil Servants Act 1973 along with Rules of Business 1973 as approved by the Cabinet. In recent times, great efforts are made in order to revamp our Civil Superior Services. The country is not faring well in all departments and the brunt of blame is allegedly put on civil bureaucracy. So in order to develop efficient system of public delivery constant efforts are being made. In 2016, major changes in the recruitment and appointment of civil servants were made in order to take new developments into consideration.

This was done by introducing new subjects into the curriculum which relates to the present day issues faced by Civil Servants like governance and planning, gender studies etc. Furthermore, the age of the aspirants was also increased to 30 years, which was important in order to provide equal opportunity to those belonging to rural areas. There is a need to revamp civil bureau-

cracy in order to make it internationally competitive.

The first aspect should be towards Institutional overhauling for enhanced service delivery. This initiative will aim to develop and implement public institutions tailored to meet specific needs, fostering efficient and sustainable structures and processes.

Key indicators will include assessing the number of institutions with updated frameworks and their impact on service quality and efficiency. While prioritizing efficiency and sustainability, challenges may arise in implementing significant structural changes across diverse organizational landscapes. Nonetheless, this initiative will be deemed crucial for streamlining administrative processes and elevating service quality standards.

A Holistic Government Approach to Program Delivery will be focused on enhancing the delivery of government programs, emphasizing collaborative efforts among various agencies. Metrics such as successful inter-agency collaborations and

their impact on program outcomes will gauge effectiveness. While promoting synergy across government entities, robust coordination mechanisms will be vital to overcome potential bureaucratic obstacles. This initiative will be seen as essential for optimizing resource utilization and ensuring comprehensive development outcomes.

The Development of a Globally Competitive Human Resource Base will aim to cultivate an innovative and adaptable human resource pool within the civil service. It will be assessed through metrics like the human resource skill development index and employee feedback on training programs. While striving to enhance service delivery capabilities and foster innovation, addressing skill gaps and ensuring sufficient investment in training and development will be paramount. This initiative will be crucial for equipping the workforce to tackle emerging challenges effectively.

Efforts to Ensure Efficiency in Government Programs will seek to promote strategies for efficient resource utilization and cost-

effectiveness in government programs. Metrics such as the cost-effectiveness ratio of programs and their impact on service quality will be closely monitored. While enhancing accountability and transparency, rigorous monitoring mechanisms will be necessary to address potential resistance to change. This initiative will be imperative for optimizing resource allocation and enhancing public trust, playing a pivotal role in promoting fiscal responsibility.

A High-Performance Culture will be fostered, centered on excellence and citizen-centered service delivery. This initiative will be evaluated through citizen satisfaction ratings and employee feedback on service quality. While enhancing organizational effectiveness and citizen trust, challenges in cultural transformation and overcoming resistance to change from entrenched practices must be addressed. Essential for fostering innovation and responsiveness, this initiative will shape the organizational culture within the civil service.

The Promotion of Open Government Partnerships will

aim to facilitate collaboration among government, civil society, private sector, and citizens. It will be measured by successful partnership establishment and stakeholder engagement levels. While enhancing transparency and accountability, robust communication channels will be crucial to address challenges in balancing diverse interests. This initiative will be critical for fostering public trust and promoting inclusive governance, enhancing civic participation and decision-making processes.

Efforts will be made to instill a Transformative Leadership Culture, with the goal of promoting value-driven leadership to facilitate positive change and innovation. This initiative will be measured through the leadership effectiveness index and alignment of leadership values with organizational goals. While inspiring organizational change and fostering agility, overcoming challenges such as leadership development initiatives and resistance from traditional structures will be imperative. Essential for driving organizational transformation, this initia-

tive will shape the leadership culture within the civil service.

Digital Technologies should be utilized for to achieve efficient and transparent governance. It will be measured by the digital adoption rate in governance processes and improvements in decision-making. While enhancing efficiency and transparency, investments in technology infrastructure and addressing challenges in digital literacy will be essential. Crucial for modernizing governance structures, this initiative will enhance service delivery efficiency and citizen engagement.

The integration of quantitative and qualitative measures will ensure a comprehensive assessment of the transformative civil service reforms in Pakistan. As the nation embarks on this ambitious journey, embracing innovation, fostering collaboration, and upholding principles of accountability and transparency will pave the way for a responsive and effective public administration system, enriching the lives of citizens and propelling the nation towards sustainable development and prosperity.



Tuesday, July 02, 2024



TOKYO: Japan's H3 rocket with satellite Daichi 4 lifts off the launch pad in Tanegashima Space Center, Tanegashima, Kagoshima prefecture, southern Japan.

Australia appoints second woman governor-general in 123 years

MELBOURNE (AP): Australia appointed Sam Mostyn on Monday as only its second woman governor-general, a largely ceremonial role representing the British monarch who is the nation's head of state. It is the first such Australian appointment since the reign of King Charles III began in 2022 and the first by Prime Minister Anthony Albanese's center-left Labor Party government that wants to replace the British monarch with an Australian president as head of state.

The businesswoman and gender equality advocate, who in 2005 became the first woman Australian Football League Commissioner, was sworn in as Australia's 28th governor-general since 1901. In her first speech in her new role, Mostyn quoted Australia's first woman governor-general Quentin Bryce, who described her role in 2013 as "striking a balance between observing traditions and protocol and being thoroughly contemporary." "I will be an optimistic, modern and visible governor-general, committed to the service and contribution that all Australians expect and deserve from the holder of this office," Mostyn said.

Mostyn said she had spoken about the role with all five surviving former governors-general, including Bryce who was appointed by Queen Elizabeth II on the advice of a Labor prime minister and served from 2008 and 2014. Albanese's government was elected in 2022 advocating for a referendum to create an Australian republic with an Australian citizen as head of state.

But he gave preference to holding a referendum in his government's first three-year term to enshrine in the constitution an Indigenous panel that would advise the government on Indigenous issues. That referendum was defeated last year and though Albanese has not yet announced plans for a public referendum, the office of Assistant Minister for the Republic has been created to prepare the nation for change.

Critics of Mostyn's appointment highlight her past activism. She had also supported an Australian republic and described Australia Day, the arrival of the first British colonists at the site of Sydney on Jan. 26, 1788, as "Invasion Day," a term used by some Indigenous leaders. Mostyn said she had met the king in Britain in

May and passed on Australians' best wishes for the health of both he and Kate, Princess of Wales, who are being treated for cancer. "I am not the first Australian to be struck by the interest and warmth the king feels for this country where he lived and studied as a young man," Mostyn said, referring to several months he had spent as a teen in an Australian boarding school in 1966.

Many Labor Party supporters who want a republic remember the 1975 dismissal of Labor Prime Minister Gough Whitlam's government by then Governor-General John Kerr. Mostyn recalled watching television news coverage of that constitutional crisis as a 10-year-old in a Canberra hospital where she was being treated for a broken leg. Mostyn replaces Gen. David Hurley, a former Australian Defense Force chief.

The government last week passed legislation to raise the governor-general's pay to 709,000 Australian dollars a year (\$473,000) for her five-year term, drawing criticism from some lawmakers that the salary was excessive. Hurley was paid AU\$495,000 (330,000) a year, but also received a military pension.

Japan launches an advanced satellite

TOKYO (AP): Japan deployed an upgraded Earth observation satellite for disaster response and security after it was launched on a new flagship H3 rocket Monday. The H3 No. 3 rocket lifted off from the Tanegashima Space Center on a southwestern Japanese island and released its payload about 16 minutes later as planned, the Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency, or JAXA, said during a livestream.

The Advanced Land Observation Satellite, or ALOS-4, is tasked primarily with Earth observation and data collection for disaster response and mapping. It's also capable of monitoring military activity, such as missile launches, with an infrared sensor developed by the Defense Ministry. The rocket appeared to fly as planned, and JAXA is expected to give further details at a news conference later Monday. The launch was initially planned but was delayed due to bad weather at the launch site.

The ALOS-4 is a successor to the current ALOS-2 and can observe a much wider area. Japan will operate both for the time being. The launch was the third of the H3 system, after the successful one on Feb. 17, and the shocking failed debut flight a year earlier when the rocket had to be destroyed with its payload - a satellite that was supposed to be the ALOS-3. Japan sees a stable, commercially competitive space transport capability as key to its space program and national security.

JAXA and its main contractor Mitsubishi Heavy Industries have been developing the H3 launch system as a successor to its current mainstay, H-2A, which is set to retire after two more flights. MHI will eventually take over H3 production and launches from JAXA and hopes to make it commercially viable by cutting the launch cost to about half of the H-2A.

RSF claims it has captured a key city

KHARTOUM: Paramilitary forces battling Sudan's army for more than a year say they have captured a key state capital in the war-torn country's southeast. "We have liberated the 17th Infantry Division from Singa [the capital of Sennar state]," the Rapid Support Forces (RSF) announced on X.

Al Jazeera's Hiba Morgan, reporting from the capital Khartoum, said the RSF is gaining control of an increasing number of territories across Sudan, especially in eastern and western parts of the country's south. "They already control a large portion of the Darfur region, with the exception of el-Fasher, which is the only remaining city under the army's and allied groups' control," she said.

Morgan said the Sudanese army does not dispute the RSF's statement that it has taken control of the 17th Infantry Division. "However, they say their forces are still present in the city and they are still fighting," she said. "What we can definitely confirm is civilians have witnessed clashes and many of them have started leaving the city since Saturday and more people are leaving the city this [Sunday] morning." Sudan has been gripped by war since April 2023, when fighting erupted between forces loyal to army chief Abdel Fattah al-Burhan and the RSF led by his former deputy Mohamed Hamdan Dagalo. The conflict in the country of 48 million has killed tens of thousands, displaced millions and triggered one of the world's worst humanitarian crises. — Aljazeera

Millions in Nigeria have little to no electricity

IBADAN, Nigeria (AP): Dimly lit and stuffy classrooms stir with life every morning as children file in. Rays of sunlight stream through wooden windows, the only source of light. Pupils squint at their books and intermittently the blackboard as teachers try to hold their attention.

It's a reality for many schoolchildren across Nigeria, where many buildings don't have access to the national electricity grid. In Excellent Moral School in Olodo Okin in Ibadan, "the entire community is not connected, including the school," said school founder Muyideen Raji. It acutely affects pupils, he said, who can't learn how to use computers or the Internet and can't study in the evenings. About half of Nigeria's more than 200 million people are hooked up to a national electricity grid that can't provide sufficient daily electricity to most of those connected. Many poor, rural communities like Olodo Okin are off the grid entirely.

In a country with abundant sunshine, many are looking to solar energy to help fill the gaps, but getting risk-averse investors to finance major solar projects that would give Nigeria enough reliable energy is an uphill struggle. It means that millions in the country are finding ways to live with little to no electricity. Studies have shown that Nigeria could generate much more electricity than it needs from solar energy thanks to its powerful sunshine. But 14 grid-scale solar projects in the northern and central parts of the country that could generate 1,125 megawatts of electricity have stalled since contracts were signed in 2016. Those trying to develop solar projects in the

country blame interest rates for borrowing which can be as high as 15 percent, two to three times higher than in advanced economies and China, according to the International Energy Agency.

That means it's more costly for solar companies to work in Nigeria or other developing nations than in rich countries. Africa only has one-fifth the solar power capacity of Germany, and just 2% of global clean energy investments go to the continent. "The same project put up in Nigeria and Denmark; the Danish project will get funding for 2 to 3 percent" interest rate, said Najim Animashaun, director of Nova Power, one of the stalled solar projects. Meanwhile he struggles to get loans even with interest rates of 10 percent or higher, "even though my solar project can produce two and half times more power," than a Danish one. Nigeria also does not set so-called cost-reflective tariffs, meaning the price consumers pay for electricity doesn't cover the costs to produce and distribute it. This means distribution companies can't fully pay producers and the industry relies on government interventions to stay afloat, scaring off lenders from investing in the solar industry.

Currently, power producers say they are owed up to 3.7 trillion Naira (\$2.7 billion) by the government, making it difficult to meet obligations to their lenders and contractors. One option would be getting World Bank guarantees that would put investors at ease and make them more willing to put money into solar projects - but the government is wary of signing up to anything that would force them to pay large sums even if

electricity from the projects does not get the consumers because of inadequate transmission and distribution infrastructure. But without World Bank guarantees "nobody will develop or finance a project with a government subsidy, because it can dry off," said Edu Okeke, the managing director of Azura Power. Azura Power has a stake in the now-stalled 100 megawatt Nova solar project in Nigeria's northern Katsina State.

With less than 8,000 megawatts of capacity and an average supply of less than 4,000 megawatts - less than half of what Singapore supplies to just 5.6 million people - power outages are an everyday occurrence in Nigeria. Communities like Excellent Moral School's in Ibadan that have no access to electricity are often surrounded by more fortunate ones that are connected to the grid but experience frequent outages and have to use gasoline and diesel-run private generators. With the long-running petroleum subsidies now removed, many households, schools, hospitals and businesses struggle with the cost of the fuel for their backup generators.

"We have stopped using a diesel generator as an alternative due to costs," said Abdulhakeem Adedoja, the head of Lorat Nursery and Primary School in Ibadan. He added that although the school is in an Ibadan area that is connected to the grid, they could go two weeks without a power supply. The problem is not just the lack of electricity for computer-aided learning, proper lighting, and fans to make classes less stuffy for pupils and teachers, but also that students are unable to complete their school assignments at home, Adedoja said.

UK election winners inherit huge challenges, from economy to health

LONDON1 (Reuters): The winners of Britain's election - which looks set to end 14 years in power for the Conservative Party - will take on some of the biggest challenges faced by any new government since the end of World War Two.

The economy has struggled to grow, health and other services are under severe strain and there is little room in the public finances to fix them. The government is also lagging behind its targets for immigration and house-building. Opinion polls give a large lead to Keir Starmer's opposition Labour Party over Prime Minister Rishi Sunak's Conservatives. The graphics below highlight some of the main tasks ahead for the next government.

A web-based version of the story is available here. Britain, like many other rich nations, has managed only sluggish economic growth for most of the period after the global financial crisis of 2008-09. Growth in Britain since 2010 - when the Conservatives took power - has been stronger than in Germany, France or Italy. But the lead is marginal. Taking account of changing population numbers - which have risen sharply in Britain

due to high immigration - growth since 2010 has been weaker than in Germany and lags far behind the United States. Living standards are on course to suffer their first fall over the course of a parliament since the 1950s.

Sunak says the economy is turning a corner after COVID and the energy price surge. Starmer says Labour would deliver the strongest sustained growth among the Group of Seven nations. Since the COVID pandemic, Britain's economy has been the second weakest in the G7. Poverty has continued to diminish but the pace of the improvement has slowed since 2010. Absolute poverty - measuring people on incomes below 60% of the median - fell five times faster in the 13 years to the 2009/10 financial year than it has since then, the Institute for Fiscal Studies, a think tank, says. Other gauges of hardship have worsened recently, showing the impact of high inflation on poorer households more clearly. In 2019/20, 4% of working-age adults were unable to heat their homes adequately. Three years later, that share had risen to 11%, according to the IFS. Successive Conservative

governments missed their targets to lower net migration, even after Britain left the European Union and scrapped freedom of movement for workers from the bloc. More workers from EU countries are now leaving Britain than arriving, but the number of people coming from other countries - especially India and Nigeria - has increased sharply. Net migration fell to 685,000 in 2023 from a record 764,000 in 2022 but is almost four times its level in 2019 when former Conservative leader Boris Johnson promised, before an election that year, to bring it down.

One of the reasons immigration has risen so much is a shortage of workers. Employers have struggled to fill vacancies since the pandemic as the number of people classed as having long-term sickness hit record highs and the number of students also grew. Britain is the only country in the G7 where the inactivity rate - measuring working-age people who are neither employed nor seeking a job - is higher than before the coronavirus pandemic. The Conservatives plan to tighten rules on long-term sickness welfare benefits. Labour says it will address

the problem by investing more in Britain's health service. The health service is struggling. The number of people waiting for non-urgent treatment, which was already growing between 2010 and early 2020, surged after COVID struck and then hit almost 8 million in late 2023 in England alone, almost doubling from four years earlier. The backlog has fallen slightly in recent months but the National Health Service is far behind a target to start treating almost all non-urgent patients within 18 weeks. It is also missing its target for treating emergency patients promptly. Since 2010, health spending adjusted for inflation has grown more slowly than the average increases seen since the 1950s at a time when the population is growing and ageing.

Another promise that the Conservatives look set to miss is to increase construction of new homes after running into opposition to their plans to make it easier to build. In the 12 months to the end of March 2023, just over 234,000 new homes were built in England and the figure has been persistently below the 300,000 target set for the mid-2020s.

Far right wins first round in France election

AMSTERDAM/LONDON (Reuters): Marine Le Pen's far-right National Rally (RN) party won the first round of France's parliamentary elections, exit polls showed, but the final result will depend on days of horse-trading before next week's run-off.

The euro gained around 0.23% to trade around \$1.0736 in early Asia-Pacific trading. European markets have been rattled since President Emmanuel Macron's shock decision on June 9 to call a snap election.

The prospect of a far-right, or leftwing win has unsettled investors, as both have pledged big spending increases, which could undermine France's already fragile finances. "A hung

parliament would appear to remain the base case, loosely in line with market expectations. That said, uncertainties are high and the NR looks like it will be the largest party in the new Assembly.

"We would caution about drawing too firm an inference about the exact seat projection, because the high turn out has seen an eruption of three-way contests. This complicates matters. "How leaders respond and how alliances bear out will be significant for the end result. A hung parliament is far from politically ideal, but is not necessarily the most unfriendly market outcome. "As such, OAT-Bunds may take some comfort, but we struggle to see a material and sustainable snap back."

"I think it's a slight 'well, there was no surprises', so there was a sense of relief there. Le Pen had a slightly smaller margin than some of the polls had pointed to, which may have helped the euro a little bit higher on the open." "Attention now is on July 7 to see whether the second round supports an absolute majority or not. So it does feel like we're a little bit in limbo, but relief that it wasn't worse." "One of the things you think about is this is going to be a big protest against Macron and a big positive for RN." "But, of course, it is going to take a little bit longer to really find out what that vote percentage of theirs is, because the polls really were very positive and getting higher and higher and Macron was

getting around the 20% level and that was feeding into a lot of concern about France, Europe and the euro and a possible French version of Truss." "We're not going to know any more before next Sunday. How is it going to go, if those three-way polls go to two, because there is a party that stands down to push back against RN, what is that going to mean? That is all open at the moment. What we're going to be looking at is a bit of uncertainty across all European indices and the euro going into next week." "Perhaps the result isn't as bad as the market had feared. The exit polls... had Le Pen's party winning between 240 to 310 seats, so the midpoint of that is just shy of a majority."

Storms in Switzerland and Italy cause flooding, 4 die

BERLIN (AP): Storms in Switzerland and northern Italy caused extensive flooding and landslides, leaving at least four people dead, authorities said.

The bodies of three people were recovered following a landslide in the Fontana area of the Maggia valley in the Italian-speaking Ticino canton (state) on the southern side of the Alps. Storms and heavy rain pounded southern and western Switzerland. Camping sites along the Maggia River were evacuated, and part of the

small Visletto road bridge collapsed. One person was missing in the nearby Lavizzara valley.

Farther north, the Rhone River burst its banks in several areas of Valais canton, flooding a highway and a railway line. Police said that side valleys south of the Rhone saw particularly heavy rain, and the body of a man whose partner had reported him missing was found at a hotel in the Alpine resort of Saas-Grund. They said he is believed to have been caught by surprise by floodwaters.

Another man has been missing in the Binn area, in the upper Rhone valley near the Italian border, police said. Floods, thunderstorms and landslides also hit various regions in northern Italy. Firefighters said they carried out about 80 rescue operations, evacuating dozens of people in the northern Piedmont region. Between Montanaro and San Benigno Canavese, two adults and a 3-month-old girl were rescued after the rising waters of the Orco torrent left them stuck in their car, firefighters said.

The Frontier Post

Rehmat Shah Afridi (Late)

Founder

Bilal Shah Afridi

Chief Executive

Jalil Afridi

Managing Editor

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

Peshawar Office: 091-5700095, 0300- 9009001

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

E-mail: fppeshawar@thefrontierpost.com

Lahore Office: 0335-4026284

Email: fplahore@thefrontierpost.com

Islamabad Office: 0321-5066253

Email: mahmoodafridi@thefrontierpost.com

Karachi Office: 021-32213411, 0300-8340907

Email: fpkarachi@thefrontierpost.com

USA and Canada Toll Free Number 1-800-5905747

Extreme heatwaves aren't just summer

THE heat wave that left more than 100 million people sweating across the eastern US in June 2024 hit so fast and was so extreme that forecasters warned a flash drought could follow across wide parts of the region, the AP reported.

Prolonged high temperatures can quickly dry soils, triggering a rapid onset drought that can affect agriculture, water resources and energy supplies. Many regions under the June heat dome quickly developed abnormally dry conditions, the news agency said.

The human impacts of the heat wave have also been widespread. In Ohio and Pennsylvania, emergency room visits for heat-related illnesses surged.

Several Massachusetts schools without air conditioning closed to protect kids and teachers. In New York and New Jersey, electric wires sagged in the heat, shutting down trains into and out of New York City and leaving commuters stranded, the AP added.

We study weather patterns involving heat. The June 2024 heat wave was unusually early and long-lasting compared with typical patterns for the Northeast US.

It was caused by a large high-pressure system called a heat dome that extended from the ground more than 10 miles up through the atmosphere.

A heat dome is both a cause and an effect of extreme heat. Very large and strong heat domes, like the Northeast event - which reached higher into the atmosphere than any previous June event - have a greater potential for higher temperatures impacting more people.

It was also part of a global outbreak of early season heat that put lives at risk in many countries around the world, the report further observed.

Record heat has hit several countries across the Americas, Europe and Asia in 2024. In Mexico and Central America, weeks of persistent heat, with temperatures as high as 125 degrees Fahrenheit (51.8 Celsius), combined with prolonged drought have led to severe water shortages and dozens of deaths.

Extreme heat turned into tragedy in Saudi Arabia as over 1,000 people on the Hajj, a Muslim pilgrimage to Mecca, collapsed and died. Temperatures reached 125 F (51.8 C) at the Grand Mosque in Mecca on June 17.

In Greece, where temperatures were over 100 F (38 C) for several straight days in June, at least several tourists died or were feared dead after going hiking in dangerous heat and humidity.

India also faced temperatures around 120 F (49 C) for days in April and May that affected millions of people, many of them without air conditioning.

Although heat waves are a natural part of the climate, the severity and extent of the heat waves so far this year are not "just summer."

A scientific assessment of the U.S. heat wave estimates that heat this severe and long-lasting was two to four times more likely to occur today because of human-caused climate change than it would have been without it. This conclusion is consistent with the rapid increase over the past several decades in the number of U.S. heat waves and their occurrence outside the peak of summer.

These record heat waves are happening in a climate that's globally about 2.2 F (1.2 C) warmer than it was before the industrial revolution, when humans began releasing large amounts of greenhouse gas emissions that warm the climate.

While a temperature difference of a degree or two when you walk into a different room might not even be noticeable, even fractions of a degree make a large difference in the global climate.

At the peak of the last ice age, some 20,000 years ago, when the Northeast U.S. was under thousands of feet of ice, the globally averaged temperature was only 10.8 F (6 C) cooler than now. So, it is not surprising that 2.2 F (1.2 C) of warming so far is already rapidly changing the climate.

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.



Electoral turmoil in US and France threatens twilight of the West

Baria Alamuddin

OVER the past few days in France I have spoken to many people who profoundly fear for the future of Western democracy.

Influential cultural figures and intellectuals spoke eloquently about their trepidation over France's very identity amid the malign rise of extremes. Second-generation citizens worry that their European nationality could come under threat. Everyone I spoke to was determined to make their votes count.

President Emmanuel Macron warned that France risked being plunged into civil war if either of his "extreme" opponents won a parliamentary majority. The far-right National Rally looks set to emerge as parliament's largest party after next week's second round of high-risk snap elections called by Macron after the right's dominant performance in the European Parliament elections. The left-wing New Popular Front also looks set to perform strongly, auguring an implosion of Macron's centrist Ensemble alliance.

As one French academic put it, if Macron's snap elections gamble pays off, "he'll go down as a brilliant strategist." If not, he'll "go down in history as somebody who essentially exploded the traditional party system in France and ... took a grenade to the institutions of the Fifth Republic." Far-right leader Marine Le Pen threatened to reduce France's support for Ukraine and Macron's ability to control defense policy. While Macron has been one of Ukraine's fiercest supporters in Europe, Le Pen has a long record of flirtation with Putin. Macron accused her of being on the Kremlin's payroll.

Financial markets have been spooked at outlandish economic proposals by both left and right, and the campaign has been distinguished by rabid anti-semitism, Islamophobia, racism and anti-immigrant incitement. Whether the outcome is far-right or far-left government, or a hung parliament, few doubt that France — a keystone state of the EU — is hurtling toward a new phase of dysfunction and polarization. Few European nations have not been rocked by extreme-right ascendancy. Populist-right leaders in Hungary, Austria and the Czech Republic launched the "Patriots for Europe" parliamentary bloc, with an anti-immigrant, anti-European integration and anti-Ukraine agenda. Britain is a rare nation bucking this trend, with the election on Thursday set to deliver in a center-left majority.

Ahead of NATO's 75th anniversary summit in Washington, nervous Europeans are gazing across the Atlantic with increasing certainty that Donald Trump is returning to the presidency. Why worry? Because a Trump presidency would spell disaster for Ukraine, given his unabashed affinity for Putin. Trump's notorious ambivalence to democratic governance norms would furthermore offer succor to autocrats and fascists worldwide. We may be aghast at the Biden administration's handling of the Gaza conflict, but at least Israel has been gently pressed to allow some aid in. Is there anybody who believes that Trump would lose any sleep if Palestinians were left to starve, or were expelled from their homeland altogether?

During his first presidency Trump's worst impulses were constrained by heavy-hitting ministerial appointments, and even famously hawkish figures such as John Bolton curbed potentially disastrous policy lurches. It was Trump, before Biden, who ordered a rapid withdrawal from Afghanistan, while seeking to end other American overseas commitments. In the incoming Trump presidency, those appointed would be MAGA yes-men. NATO nations fear the alliance may not survive a further term of Trump unleashed.

The blustering Trump and stumbling Biden in the latest presidential debate did more to discredit Western democracy than Moscow, Tehran or Beijing could ever hope to — a debate so disastrous that many Biden allies are pleading for him to withdraw. If Biden were to step down he would be remembered as a leader who put his nation first: staying and losing would entail historical ignominy as a disastrous president who imperilled US democracy for his own ego.

In another highly significant election contest, "reformist" candidate Masoud Pezeshkian will go up against hardliner Saeed Jalili in the second Iranian presidential election round. Perhaps the decision has been made that an unthreatening candidate — a cardiac surgeon indeed — is less likely to put Tehran in the US's crosshairs, given the possibility of an impulsive Trump holding the nuclear trigger. The regime's escalatory language nevertheless persists, with Iran's UN mission last week warning of "an annihilating war" if Israel embarked on "military aggression" in

Lebanon. "A regime that threatens destruction deserves to be destroyed," Israeli Foreign Minister Israel Katz retorted, in no less provocative language.

Macron has warned of the dangers for Europe of an "unreliable America" under Trump's sway; calling for a "more independent, more sovereign Europe able to defend itself and survive against all threats." However, at the moment when a new Trump presidency looks imminent, the National Rally's surge threatens to cut away Macron's powers to push for European military integration. Nearly 200 French diplomats made a public appeal that "our adversaries will view the victory of the extreme right as a weakening of France" and encouragement "to aggression against Europe."

As the French cornerstone of the EU and NATO faces collapse, with Germany also grappling with economic weakness and an ascendant far right, and with Britain having already quit the EU altogether, European freedoms and democracy have scarcely ever looked in more peril. Macron warned this year: "Our Europe is mortal ... it can die, and whether it does depends entirely on our choices."

My recent days in Europe served as a reminder that, compared with the US, this is a highly educated, cosmopolitan and cultured continent, populated by sizable demographics who are well aware of the menace posed by all-pervasive xenophobic right-wing autocracy. No less than the future of the Western world is at stake as progressive and freedom loving people embark on this decisive fight to protect their cherished way of life.

Cut dollar's hegemony

SINCE the 1970s, nearly 200 financial crises, big and small, have erupted globally, largely triggered by the tide of the US dollar. The latest episode happened during the past five years, something we all experienced firsthand.

When COVID-19 struck in 2020, countries were forced to impose lockdowns, which led to a halt in economic activities. The US was no exception. However, to appease its people and businesses, the US government adopted the handout policy, giving each household thousands of dollars in cash. Where did the money come from? Well, they printed it. From 2020 to 2021 alone, the amount of new cash printed and injected by the US government into the economy was nearly half of all dollars that were ever in circulation in US history.

This flood of funds flowed into the US stock market, sending the stock soaring and attracting international capital, particularly from the Global South countries, into the US. The US economy, as a result, grew at a record rate in 2021, the highest since 1984. The surplus dollars that could not be absorbed by the American stock market flowed out of the country again, causing severe financial volatility and disrupting the exchange rates of other currencies against the US dollar.

Many Global South coun-

tries, already grappling with low foreign exchange reserves, were forced to follow suit with the US to print more money and lower interest rates. However, such moves unfortunately led to the depreciation of their own currencies, high inflation and economic recession, further reducing people's already dwindled assets. The US, to satisfy its own economic needs, abused its position as issuer of the world's reserve currency. By over-issuing dollars, the US shifted its crisis onto other countries. While it remained unaffected, other countries, especially those of the Global South, had to bear the brunt.

When the pandemic was over, countries rushed to stimulate economic recovery and tackle rising inflation triggered by money printing. The US was no exception. Once again, the US, ignoring the impact on other countries, raised federal funds rate 11 times in a short span of over one year from 0 percent to 5.5 percent, attracting an in-flow of more than \$10 trillion to the US and creating a dire shortage of dollars among the Global South countries. Such sudden outflows of capital left many Global South countries with a capital crunch and dim prospects for economic recovery. Moreover, the international financing cost went higher, making it more expensive to repay

Vox South dollar-denominated debt accumulated during the pandemic.

According to the IMF, this round of rate hikes by the US Federal Reserve left at least 33 Global South countries with a high-level of debt, the negative impact of which may linger on for well over another two years. Faced with debt distress and dollar appreciation, these countries had to sell off more assets to repay dollar-denominated debts, and buy raw materials, food and other necessities with larger amount of their local currencies. Some of the countries subsequently suffered from debt default, economic bankruptcy, and social turmoil.

What made things worse was that the US-dominated international institutions such as the IMF seized the chance to harvest the Global South again, by attaching harsher conditions to the aid packages in an attempt to hold greater political and economic sway over them. The US monopoly capital, secretly pleased at the plunging price of assets in these countries, wasted no time in snatching up their assets, making them more dependent on the US.

In fact, no country, be it members of the Global South or American allies and partners, is spared the tidal effect of the US dollar. Look at Japan's "lost 30 years", the 2008 European debt crisis,

the Euro's dilemma since the Russia-Ukraine conflict in 2022, and the recent wave of currency depreciation in Asia such as Japanese yen and South Korean won. They all lay it bare once again that greenback's hegemony only serves American interests.

That being said, American interests are not the same as American people's interests. Instead, they are probably interests of only a handful of financial monopolies. According to the US Federal Reserve, in 2021, the richest 1 percent American households owned a record 32.3 percent of the country's total wealth, up from 23.6 percent in 1989. In contrast, the poorest 50 percent American households, or roughly 63 million in total, only had 2.6 percent, down from 3.7 percent in 1989. Debt of the US government has hit a historic high of over \$34 trillion, 12 times the total GDP of all African countries. In 2024, the interest payments of American national debt will be over US\$1 trillion, equivalent to the GDP of Brazil and Mexico combined. Such debt is like a sword of Damocles, hanging over the people of the US and the world. Are we really going to put up with this? As President Lula da Silva of Brazil put it, "I know you all got used to using US dollars. But in the 21st century, we can try something different."

— China Daily

Potential instability on Cyprus a concern for Turkiye and EU

Sinem Cengiz

THE Eastern Mediterranean has long been a hotspot for geopolitical tensions. Hezbollah's mention of Cyprus recently has added a new dimension to the Israel-Hamas war in Gaza. Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah threatened repercussions for Nicosia if it allowed Israel to use its bases for military forces in a potential war between the Lebanese militant group and Israel. The EU responded to this threat saying, Cyprus "is a member state of the EU, this means the EU is Cyprus and Cyprus is the EU." Nicosia is a member of the EU but not of the NATO defense alliance that obliges member nations to come to each other's defense in case of an attack.

On the other side, Hezbollah's mention of Cyprus was actually a threat directed at the EU and the US, drawing an EU country, for the first time, into a war that has already spread across the Middle East. Hezbollah would not be interested in expanding the Gaza war into the EU and Nicosia, following Nasrallah's threat, has also announced that it would remain neutral and not get involved in any war.

Yet the potential instability in Cyprus due to Hezbollah's threats underscores the fragility of the Eastern Mediterranean region's security landscape. Cyprus has been divided since 1974, when Turkiye sent troops to the island in the aftermath of a Greek-inspired coup. The Cypriot administration in the south is internationally recognized, while only Turkiye recognizes the Turkish administration in the north. This long-standing division continues to influence geopolitical tensions and reflects the rivalry between Ankara and Athens, although both sides have recently sought a thaw in their icy relations.

Yet the potential instability in Cyprus due to Hezbollah's threats underscores the fragility of the Eastern Mediterranean region's security landscape. Cyprus has been divided since 1974, when Turkiye sent troops to the island in the aftermath of a Greek-inspired coup. The Cypriot administration in the south is internationally recognized, while only Turkiye recognizes the Turkish administration in the north. This long-standing division continues to influence geopolitical tensions and reflects the rivalry between Ankara and Athens, although both sides have recently sought a thaw in their icy relations.

their icy relations.

Since the island hosts Turkish Cypriots, Turkiye is also under the spotlight. Following Nasrallah's threat, Turkish Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan also warned Nicosia to avoid becoming a part of the larger conflict, arguing that it has already become an "operation center" in the Israel-Gaza war. "When you become a part of the ongoing wars in the Middle East, this fire will come and find you too. And as we share the same geography, it will then come and hit us too."

Cyprus' strategic location in the Eastern Mediterranean makes it a valuable partner for Western allies. However, this positioning also makes it vulnerable. Any instability on the island could lead to increased military tension in the region.

Turkiye maintains a significant military presence in the north and closely monitors developments in the south, especially its military cooperation with others. For instance, back in 2015, one newspaper stated that "Cyprus is the training base of Israelis," as the Greek Cypriot side had become a regular exercise base for the Israeli air force. Nicosia considers its relations with Israel to be at the level of strategic partnership. Even when the Israeli president visited

Turkiye to mend ties, he assured the Greek Cypriots that this normalization would not be at the expense of Israel's relations with them.

Meanwhile, the Turkish Cypriot side is sharply critical of Israel's actions in Gaza. Israel has even accused the Turkish Cypriot authorities of allowing Iran to use its territory for attacks on Israel — a claim that was denied and has not been proven. Thus, the Israeli war on Gaza has brought a new dimension to the tensions between Turkish and Greek Cypriots, as they stand on totally opposite sides of the conflict.

Ankara has already been disturbed by Nicosia's policy of excluding Turkiye from the energy and military cooperation that it engages in with other external actors, including Israel. Nicosia was a founding member of the Eastern Mediterranean Gas Forum, which sought to deepen energy cooperation with Israel and Arab states amid maritime tensions with Turkiye. However, taking steps — such as supporting Israel in this conflict — that could drag the island to war would have significant repercussions for Turkiye, given the complex political, economic and security dynamics in the region.

For Turkiye, this situation presents a multifaceted challenge, intertwining military, economic and refugee dimensions. The Eastern Mediterranean is rich in hydrocarbon resources and the island of Cyprus has been at the center of energy exploration efforts. Instability could jeopardize these projects, affecting Turkiye's energy strategy and its economic interests in the region.

Although Nicosia's unilateral energy exploration and drilling operations with other nations have frustrated Turkiye, Ankara is very much concerned about the stability of the Eastern

Mediteranean. Turkiye is not alone in this; the last thing Greece and the EU would want is an escalation in tensions triggering a new wave of refugees seeking safety on the Greek part of the island. Given its proximity, both Turkiye and Greece will be the ones facing pressure to manage a potential influx. It is crucial to recognize that the situation in the Eastern Mediterranean is highly complex and not easily reduced to black and white. Moreover, the regional and international environment is not static. Any instability concerning Cyprus will involve several actors: the guarantors, Greece and Turkiye, and then the EU and the US. Therefore, the international community's engagement will be crucial in preventing the island being dragged into a war and in ensuring the stability of the Eastern Mediterranean.

Even if the island is not physically at war, it has psychologically been under tension for decades due to irregular migration, the Cyprus dispute, energy exploration and territorial sovereignty in the Aegean. The Israel-Gaza war further exacerbates this situation. At least for now, the EU and the US should keep serious pressure on Israel, because the fire is right on Europe's doorstep.

— Arab News

Elderly factor damaged Biden’s attacking approach in debate

WHEN US President Joe Biden lost last Thursday’s televised debate with rival Donald Trump age was touted as the causal factor, Biden is elderly 81 while Trump is a senior citizen of 78. At the outset of the 90-minute exchange, Biden was limp, listless, unfocused; Trump was energetic, snappish, and focused. Biden stumbled; Trump held firm. Even when he rallied, Biden failed to lay claim to achievements of his administration or challenge Trump on 30 lies, false-hoods, and misrepresentations he uttered. Trump got away with a spate of untruths.

An IPSOS poll conducted following the debate reported 60 per cent of watchers said liar Trump won while only 21 per cent said feeble Biden performed better. IPSOS also revealed how respondents intended to vote for each before and after the debate. Biden’s share fell from 48.2 per cent to 46.7 per cent while Trump went from 43.5 per cent to 43.9 per cent.

As Republicans celebrated Trump’s triumph, Democrats despaired. Some urged Biden to step aside in favour of a younger candidate. A number of names were put forward. However, 18 hours after Biden’s flop, he rallied and put on a dramatic performance at a campaign rally in North Carolina. There he condemned Trump’s record in the White House and repeatedly warned as he has done for months that a second Trump term would pose a danger to “America’s democracy.”

Biden’s rally performance created a quandary for Democrats. While he demonstrated that he has no intention of standing down, some worry that he is not physically and mentally reliable. He cannot be counted on to perform credibly at every stage of the campaign or in office

if he wins re-election. They do not seem to realise that there are two Joe Bidens campaigning for re-election. There is the elderly, faltering, foggy Biden of June 27th and the aggressive, clear minded octogenarian of June 28th. No one knows who will turn up at a public meeting. In the privacy of the White House, staff

Michael Jansen

appoint officials who adhere to his ideas. This would leave an unbridled Trump to do his worst. In the initial months of his first administration, there were “adults” in his entourage who could restrain him. Democrats also know that both Bidens are very

Trump dismissed the two-state solution for the emergence of a Palestinian state alongside Israel, and proposed economic development in the West Bank and Gaza without out a political horizon for Palestinians. Trump cut funding to UNRWA, the UN agency carrying for 5.9 million Palestinian refugees in the region. He

Palestinians betterment. Biden partly restored the US contribution to UNRWA but did not reopen the East Jerusalem consulate or the Palestinian mission in Washington. Biden did not re-enter the Iran nuclear deal.

During their debate on the 27th, Trump said if he were in office he would have let Israel to “finish the job” in Gaza where it had already killed more than 37,000 Palestinians and turned the strip into a wasteland. Trump also criticised Biden for calling for a ceasefire in Gaza and dubbed him a “bad Palestinian” because he was too weak to achieve a halt to Israel’s offensive.

Proud to profess Zionism, stubborn Biden has staunchly backed Israel in its deadly and devastating war on Gaza, repeatedly refused to demand a ceasefire, or use US leverage to compel Israel to allow food, water and medicine into Gaza. Biden has provided Israel with at least 14,000 of MK-84 2,000-pound bombs, 6,500 500-pound bombs, 3,000 Hellfire precision-guided air-to-ground missiles, 1,000 bunker-buster bombs, 2,600 small-diameter bombs, and other munitions since last October. Biden has also dismissed global and US domestic criticism of the Gaza war and granted full US support for Israel’s disproportionate onslaught on Gaza.

Whoever wins the White House, the Palestinian situation will be bleak. Both Biden and Trump say Israel has the “right to defend itself” against Palestinians resisting Israeli occupation. Neither recognises that Israel is waging offensive warfare against Palestinians in Gaza, East Jerusalem, and the West Bank to compel capitulation to forever Israeli occupation, expropriation, and insecurity and denying them human rights and a national home.

Biden’s rally performance created a quandary for Democrats. While he demonstrated that he has no intention of standing down, some worry that he is not physically and mentally reliable. He cannot be counted on to perform credibly at every stage of the campaign or in office if he wins re-election. They do not seem to realise that there are two Joe Bidens campaigning for re-election. There is the elderly, faltering, foggy Biden of June 27th and the aggressive, clear minded octogenarian of June 28th. No one knows who will turn up at a public meeting. In the privacy of the White House, staff and family member manage to keep secret the fact that there are two Bidens in the race. A second Biden four-year term will be even more difficult to manage as the energy of the octogenarian is clearly flagging. Democrats and some Republicans know that a second term for Trump is likely to be a disaster on both domestic and foreign levels.

and family member manage to keep secret the fact that there are two Bidens in the race. A second Biden four-year term will be even more difficult to manage as the energy of the octogenarian is clearly flagging.

Democrats and some Republicans know that a second term for Trump is likely to be a disaster on both domestic and foreign levels. Trump has vowed to undo most of Biden’s efforts to tackle the causes of climate change, expand medical care, deepen US relations with NATO and , and counter Russia and China.

Trump is expected to surround himself with like-minded advisors and

stubborn. This is why they will carry on regardless even if polls show they face defeat in the election. While the president could very well win the popular vote as he did in 2020, he could lose the Electoral College vote. Trump is now leading the polls in five of six of the swing states which could give Trump the majority in the undemocratic Electoral College vote making him a “minority president.”

Trump was a disaster for this region. Trump began by imposing a ban on the entry to the US of citizens of Muslim countries. Trump recognised occupied East Jerusalem as Israel’s capital and moved the US embassy to the city.

closed the US consulate in East Jerusalem and the Palestinian Authority’s mission in Washington. Trump withdrew the US from the 2015 agreement limiting Iran’s nuclear programme in exchange for sanctions relief. This prompted Iran to eventually breach its commitments under the deal and amass uranium enriched to 60 per cent purity, approaching the 90 per cent needed for bombs.

Biden followed Trump’s example on most of his regional initiatives. Biden went along with Trump’s Jerusalem policy and gave lip service to the two-state solution but did nothing to advance it or provide funds for

Empowering small-scale farmers by integrating the 'four chains'

FOOD security is of paramount importance to a nation, critical to national security, social stability, economic development and public health. As one of the major grain-producing regions in China, Henan province’s production graph shows an upward trend. But Henan’s agricultural sector, dominated by small-scale family farms, faces challenges such as difficulties in achieving economies of scale, limited use of technology, inadequate funds, and poor risk resilience, which hinder the modernization of agriculture, making it difficult to establish an organic connection between small-scale farmers and modern agriculture, severely impacting food security.

Data from the third national agricultural census show that 97.6 per cent of the total farmers in Henan are small-scale farmers.

Strengthening the integration of the “four chains” — the innovation chain, industry chain, funding chain and the talent chain — is an effective way to realize the organic connection between small-scale farmers and modern agriculture, thereby ensuring food security.

While the innovation chain promotes the use of modern agricultural technologies and the industry chain helps achieve economies of scale and integrates markets, a strong funding chain provides necessary financial support for small-scale farmers and the talent chain cultivates and introduces professional talents in the agricultural sector.

Under the guidance of the government and the functioning of market mechanisms, the integration of the “four chains” will facilitate the proper allocation of resources. The integration of the “four chains” signifies mutual empowerment, and optimization of technology, industry, finance and talent, and consolidates core innovative ele-

ments such as technology, management, data and finance into the industry chain, forming a virtuous circle of innovation-driven development.

The industry chain facilitates the cross-application and integra-

Strengthening the integration of the "four chains" — the innovation chain, industry chain, funding chain and the talent chain — is an effective way to realize the organic connection between small-scale farmers and modern agriculture, thereby ensuring food security. While the innovation chain promotes the use of modern agricultural technologies and the industry chain helps achieve economies of scale and integrates markets, a strong funding chain provides necessary financial support for small-scale farmers and the talent chain cultivates and introduces professional talents in the agricultural sector. Under the guidance of the government and the functioning of market mechanisms, the integration of the "four chains" will facilitate the proper allocation of resources. The integration of the "four chains" signifies mutual empowerment, and optimization of technology, industry, finance and talent, and consolidates core innovative elements such as technology, management, data and finance into the industry chain, forming a virtuous circle of innovation-driven development.

tion of talents and innovation resources, promoting agricultural modernization, guiding innovative resources to the talent chain, and increasing talent supply. This leads to better coordination among the industry chain, talent chain and the innovation chain, facilitating the organic connection between small-scale farmers and modern agriculture.

Three major problems have been hindering the establishment of an organic connection between small-scale farmers and modern agriculture. First, insufficient policy coordination and implementation, regional policy differences, and lack of consistency in the agricultural sector call for strengthening the coordination mechanisms between agricultural departments and crop-producing regions.

Also, the implementa-

tion of agricultural policies suffers due to a lack of effective coordination mechanisms across departments and regions. For example, the construction of high-stan-

removed. Despite various measures taken by governments and financial institutions at all levels, multiple obstacles still prevent enough funds from flowing into the farm sector, which especially affects small-scale

implementing specific policies, establishing special funds, giving tax incentives, and ensuring policy consistency.

The authorities should focus on innovation-driven development to achieve breakthroughs in key agricultural technologies, while encouraging leading technology enterprises to play a bigger role in agricultural modernization, building collaborative innovation platforms, forming industry alliances to promote innovation, and facilitating information sharing and resource integration.

Popularizing the use of modern agricultural technologies among farmers, providing technical support for them, and building agricultural technology service systems will promote modern agriculture, and establishing better coordination among industry, the academia and researchers, and encouraging independent research and development by agricultural enterprises will boost the development of modern agriculture.

Besides, talent cultivation is essential to attract bright minds to the agricultural sector, while forming an integrated mechanism for the development of the industry chain and the talent chain will improve the sector. And hiring agricultural technology experts to provide technical guidance and services will help integrate small-scale farmers in distinctive agricultural industry clusters.

Giving financial support by, among other things, removing the obstacles to financing, and expediting the integration of the “four chains”, and establishing interactive mechanisms between the agricultural industry chain and the funding chain will help boost the agricultural sector’s development. More important, the authorities have to ensure the funds meant for the farm sector reach every small-scale farmer to establish an organic connection between small-scale farmers and modern agriculture. So will

farmers and agricultural enterprises.

To address the problems, here are some strategic recommendations. To begin with, there is need to adhere to policy guidance, make agricultural policies more flexible and strengthen the coordination between different departments and between departments and crop-growing regions. The authorities should also boost the integration of the “four chains”, extend the agricultural industry chain, and align the agricultural industry with market demand.

Establishing mechanisms for linking production and sale, promoting cooperation between small-scale farmers and modern agricultural enterprises also can help establish an organic connection between small-scale farmers and modern agriculture. So will

Afrocentric museum tour ignites debate on Egyptian identity

Dr. Abdellatif El-Menawy

THE Afrocentric movement has sparked a significant debate in Egypt about the origins of ancient Egyptian civilization. This movement, based on ideologies dating back to the 19th century, aims to raise public awareness of African culture and its contributions to human civilization. However, it often stirs controversy with its claim that the roots of ancient Egyptian civilization are African and that its greatest achievements were built on the shoulders of Black Africans. This assertion frequently triggers widespread and sometimes angry reactions within Egypt.

Recently, images circulated on social media in Egypt showed an Afrocentric group visiting the Egyptian Museum in Tahrir Square, Cairo. They were accompanied by a tour guide explaining the history of ancient Egyptian civilization from an Afrocentric perspective. This incident provoked intense discussions on social media and in the Egyptian media, with many expressing strong opposition to the views promoted by this movement.

One notable opinion came from renowned Egyptian archaeologist Dr. Zahi Hawass. He asserted that the explanations given by the Afrocentric tour guide were baseless, describing them as “just nonsense.” Hawass added: “The Black Kingdom of Kush ruled Egypt around 500 B.C., after the end of the pharaonic civilization. When the kingdom ruled Egypt, it left no impact on the civilization. I believe that it was the Egyptian civilization that influenced the Kingdom of Kush, not the other way around.”

Hawass emphasized that the inscriptions and paintings on Egyptian temples from the Old Kingdom to the end of the Late Period depict the Egyptian king with captives from Africa, Libya, Syria and Palestine before him. He noted that the features of the Egyptian king do not resemble those of people with dark skin. Hawass accused the Afrocentric movement of causing confusion by spreading false and misleading information, attributing the Egyptian civilization to alleged African origins. He clarified: “We are not against Black people at all, but we are against this group that entered the Egyptian Museum in Tahrir to announce ideas with no basis in truth.”

A leading figure in the Afrocentric movement is African American activist Molefi Kete Asante, who has, since the 1980s, tried to raise awareness of African culture throughout history, highlighting its identity and importance, especially in the US and Europe. Since its inception, the movement has aimed to raise awareness of how Europeans dominated African civilizations through colonialism and slavery. It urges every African or person of African descent to appreciate their roots and cultivate their awareness and knowledge of traditional African civilizations.

One of its most controversial theories is the claim that African history and culture originated in ancient Egypt, which it posits as the cradle of global civilization. The movement asserts that this heritage was stolen and its achievements hidden and falsified by Europeans and Westerners. According to the movement, the roots of Egyptian civilization are purely African. This perspective often leads to controversy, as many archaeologists argue that there is no scientific basis of historical evidence for these ideas.

The origins of the Afrocentric movement can be traced back to the 19th century, a period marked by the emergence of Pan-African sentiments and the effort to restore the honorable historical narrative of African peoples. Today, intellectuals and activists strive to reclaim African history from the shadows of colonialism and Eurocentrism. Figures like Marcus Garvey, Cheikh Anta Diop and Asante have played pivotal roles in shaping this concept.

This is not the first time the Afrocentric movement has sparked debate regarding the origins of ancient Egyptian civilization. In April 2023, Netflix caused controversy and anger in Egypt after producing a docudrama that adopted the movement’s narrative,

depicting Cleopatra with African features. The Egyptian Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities responded officially, accusing the streaming platform of flagrantly distorting Egyptian history.

Many Egyptians criticized the movement on social media following the release of the “Queen Cleopatra” miniseries, accusing it of attempting to steal their civilization and history and falsify facts. In recent decades, the Afrocentric movement has heavily focused on ancient Egypt, claiming it was primarily an African civilization. This perspective challenges traditional Egyptology, which often

civilization.”

Al-Barlasi added: “A few days ago, the Egyptian people were shocked by the visit of a delegation affiliated with the movement to the Egyptian Museum in central Cairo, where a prominent figure of the movement stood among them, explaining their alleged history. Had this person not posted about the event on social media, no one would have noticed and the incident would have passed unnoticed, just as previous incidents did.”

Al-Barlasi warned that “leniency toward this movement and its ideas is leniency in dealing with Egyptian national security. Allowing groups belonging to this movement on Egyptian soil and within Egyptian museums while promoting lies

One notable opinion came from renowned Egyptian archaeologist Dr. Zahi Hawass. He asserted that the explanations given by the Afrocentric tour guide were baseless, describing them as “just nonsense.” Hawass added: “The Black Kingdom of Kush ruled Egypt around 500 B.C., after the end of the pharaonic civilization. When the kingdom ruled Egypt, it left no impact on the civilization. I believe that it was the Egyptian civilization that influenced the Kingdom of Kush, not the other way around.” Hawass emphasized that the inscriptions and paintings on Egyptian temples from the Old Kingdom to the end of the Late Period depict the Egyptian king with captives from Africa, Libya, Syria and Palestine before him. He noted that the features of the Egyptian king do not resemble those of people with dark skin. Hawass accused the Afrocentric movement of causing confusion by spreading false and misleading information, attributing the Egyptian civilization to alleged African origins.

emphasizes the Mediterranean and Middle Eastern connections of ancient Egypt.

Proponents of this movement argue that various pieces of evidence, including historical texts, artistic descriptions and genetic studies, support the African origin of ancient Egyptians. They frequently cite historical texts by ancient writers like Herodotus, who described Egyptians as having Black skin and curly hair, characteristics more aligned with sub-Saharan Africans than with Mediterranean or Middle Eastern peoples. Artistic descriptions in ancient Egyptian art are also contentious, as members of the movement interpret paintings and inscriptions as depicting African features. Furthermore, genetic studies add another layer to the debate, with some research suggesting that ancient Egyptians had genetic ties with Africans, though the interpretations of these studies are often complex and debated within the scientific community.

These claims usually provoke strong reactions in Egypt, where many Egyptians take pride in their pharaonic heritage and consider it a unique product of the Nile Valley. They also see these claims as challenging long-standing national narratives.

News of the Afrocentric delegation’s museum visit even reached the Egyptian parliament, where lawmaker Ahmed Bilal Al-Barlasi submitted an inquiry to the minister of tourism and antiquities. Al-Barlasi described the movement as “African Zionism” and held the minister fully responsible for the incident. He stated: “Amid an inexplicable and unjustifiable governmental silence, the voices of the Afrocentric movement have risen in recent years, aiming to mobilize international support in museums and cultural circles worldwide to falsify Egyptian history and steal Egyptian civilization, stripping Egypt’s identity from its people and attributing them all to African roots. They consider the Egyptian people to be colonizers of the land and thieves of the

makes it easy for them to spread their falsehoods worldwide, claiming they are the rightful owners of the land and identity. The real disaster is that this happens amid official Egyptian silence in the face of these allegations.”

He continued: “The incident at the Egyptian Museum must not pass without informing the entire Egyptian people about the reasons behind what happened, holding the officials accountable and informing the Egyptian nation about the measures the ministry is taking against this movement, which is spreading in museums worldwide and promoting its theories, some of which are being adopted by museums like the national museum of the Netherlands and the Metropolitan Museum.”

In my view, the controversial visit by the tourist delegation should open the door to a broader discussion about Egyptian identity and its place within the Arab and African worlds. Egypt is a country with a complex and multilayered identity, situated at the crossroads between Africa and the Arab world.

Historically, Egypt has been a melting pot of diverse cultures and influences, from the pharaonic era through the Greek, Roman and Arab periods. In modern times, Egypt’s identity has become more integrated with Arab heritage, a fusion solidified by the spread of Islam and the Arabic language.

Nevertheless, Egypt’s African roots cannot be denied, as the Nile River, which flows from the heart of Africa, is the lifeline of Egyptian civilization. I believe it would be best to open a broader discussion about Egyptian identity without bias toward any one identity. Egypt is a composition of the layers formed throughout its history. We cannot exclude one layer in favor of another; it is not logical to discard the Mediterranean layer in favor of the Arab one or the African layer in favor of the Greek one. These are the pillars that supported the building of Egyptian civilization and continue to support it today.



PSX gains 379 points to close at 78,824.33

ISLAMABAD (APP): The 100-index of the Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) witnessed bullish trend on Monday, gaining 379.37 points, a positive change of 0.48 percent, closing at 78,824.33 points against 78,444.96 points on the last working day.

A total of 306,038,889 shares were traded during the day as compared to 347,671,672 shares the previous day, whereas the price of shares stood at Rs 13.746 billion against Rs 11.899 billion on the last trading day.

As many as 425 compa-

nies transacted their shares in the stock market, 183 of them recorded gains and 186 sustained losses, whereas the share price of 56 companies remained unchanged.

The three top trading companies were PTCL with 30,206,071 shares at Rs 12.65 per share, World Call Telecoms with 17,351,472 shares at Rs 1.25 per share and Faysal Bank with 13,622,199 shares at Rs54.47 per share.

Pakistan Tobacco Company Limited witnessed a maximum increase of Rs 89.71 per share price,

closing at Rs 1,169.14, whereas the runner-up was Ismail Industries Limited with a Rs 53.59 rise in its per share price to Rs 1,004.42.

Unilever Pakistan Foods Limited witnessed a maximum decrease of Rs 180.60 per share closing at Rs 18,316.00, followed by Nestle Pakistan Limited with a Rs 153.22 decline to close at Rs 7,000.95.

Gold rates dip by Rs200 to Rs241,500 per tola

The price of per tola 24 karat gold decreased by Rs.200 on Monday and was trade at Rs.214,500 against

its sale at Rs.241,700 on the last trading day.

The rates of 10 grams of 24 karat gold also went down by Rs.172 to Rs.207,047 from Rs.207,219 whereas that of 10 gram 22 karat gold decreased to Rs.189,793 from 189,950, the All Sindh Sarafa Jewellers Association reported.

The price of per tola and ten gram silver were remained stagnant at Rs.2,850 and Rs.2,443.41 respectively. The price of gold in the international market decreased by \$2 to \$2,324 from \$2,326, the Association reported.

Sui Northern achieves major operational milestones

E.P. Report

LAHORE: Sui Northern has successfully achieved three significant milestones to enhance gas transmission and distribution.

Lahore Bifurcation: The bifurcation of Lahore Region into Lahore East and Lahore West regions was completed in six months despite operational constraints. Four new inputs namely SMS Kasur, SMS Ferozepur, SMS Barki, and SMS Dial were added, increasing inputs from three to seven. This project addresses low-pressure issues, improves network operations, and reduces gas losses.

Rawalpindi and Islamabad Isolation: The isolation of Rawalpindi and Islamabad has been completed to ensure better operational efficiency for Rawalpindi and Islamabad.

A 24-inch line was constructed along Kashmir Highway, improving gas flow management and enhancing pressure and flow for both cities.

Upgradation of network in Islamabad and Rawalpindi:

New 24-inch and 18-inch lines were built to address low-pressure issues in the Red Zone and Blue Area of Islamabad, along with an 18-inch line from SMS Ranyal in Rawalpindi. Separate feeds for the twin cities will cater for more accurate UFG calculations and efficiency improvements.

These projects have been completed by June 30, 2024, ahead of the December 2024 deadline, aiming to significantly improve the system operations. The reconciliation of 1400 TBS has also been completed.



BEIJING: Minister of State for IT and Telecommunication Ms. Shaza Fatima Khawaja arrives in China to participate in Global Digital Economy Conference.

Nashpa-4 Well in Karak:

OGDCL successfully optimizes production

E.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Oil and Gas Development Company Limited (OGDCL) on Monday announced the successful revitalization of the Nashpa-4 well, situated within the Nashpa Development and Production Lease (D&PL) in Karak, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

OGDCL thoroughly re-evaluated the well for the potential of the upper zone of the Lockhart formation and achieved a significant increase in the well's production capacity. The Nashpa-4 well is now pro-

ducing an additional 330 barrels per day (BBL/day) of oil and 7.7 million standard cubic feet per day (MMSCF/day) of gas at a wellhead flowing pressure (WHFP) of 1570 PSI. Additionally, 21 metric tons per day (MT/day) of LPG is being recovered, contributing to the country's energy supply. The enhanced gas production from the well is being injected into the Sui Northern Gas Pipelines Limited (SNGPL) network, ensuring a steady supply of natural gas to meet the growing energy demands of Pakistan.

Moreover, the production optimization from the Nashpa-4 well is projected to result in annual foreign exchange savings of \$59.85 million (PKR 16.94 billion) as import substitution for the country. OGDCL is committed to supporting Pakistan's energy needs through the optimization of existing resources and the exploration of new opportunities. The optimization at Nashpa-4 well underscores the company's dedication to enhancing the country's energy security and contributing to its economic development.

‘Voila Aesthetic Clinic’ by Saima Dahri launches ‘InMode’ Technology



E.P. Report

KARACHI: A leading expert in the cosmetic surgery - Saima Dahri recently hosted a grand event, to celebrate the first anniversary of the ‘Voila Aesthetic Clinic’ (Instagram: Voila Aesthetic Clinic). This clinic is the first of its kind in Karachi, to introduce the revolutionary ‘InMode’ cosmetic surgery machine, based on next-generation technology, imported from the United States of America.

Aesthetic plastic surgery encompasses various procedures designed to enhance the appearance of the face and body. The InMode technology is globally renowned for doing wonders to a person's beauty. The Voila Aesthetics Clinic also offers the highly acclaimed Morpheus 8 procedure, which targets subdermal layers of the

skin and tissue to remodel collagen on the face and body. It ensures minimal risk of post-inflammatory hyperpigmentation, making it suitable for all skin types. Fractional tissue treatment stimulates collagen production. For darker skin and tones, effective skin and tissue remodelling can be achieved.

Saima Dahri - the founder of Voila Aesthetic Clinic stated: “As we celebrate the successful completion of our clinic's first year of operations, I would like to express my gratitude for our customers' overwhelming response and trust in our offerings. Our clinic is fully equipped and certified to provide the most advanced services, promising the best results and addressing the aesthetic concerns of its customers.”

Dr. Sach Mohan - an award-win-

ning cosmetic dermatologist and expert, with over 25 years of experience in facial aesthetics and lasers, chaired the launch event. While Ghazanfar Rauf - the official distributor of InMode, Candela, Hydrafacial Md, Lutronic, and other devices in Pakistan, also attended the ceremony, besides many celebrities who are regular customers of Voila Aesthetic Clinic. These prominent guests who appreciated the high-quality services offered by this clinic included; Javeria Saud, Mariam Ansari, and Shan Baig.

Many of the guests expressed their confidence in Saima Dahri's expertise and personalized care, for enhancing the natural beauty of her clients, while she is also qualified to ensure skillful use of state-of-the-art technology. Selection of the InMode technology has once again proved the highest standards of safety and effectiveness adopted by Voila Aesthetic Clinic by Saima Dahri.

At Voila Aesthetics, we are dedicated to enhancing your natural beauty. Our team of specialized professionals utilizes cutting-edge techniques, procedures and products to ensure your skin is healthy, glowing and ages gracefully. We are committed to offering these advanced services at modest prices, making them accessible to everyone. Rest assured, we exclusively use FDA-approved original equipment to provide the highest standards of safety and effectiveness. Experience the Voila Aesthetics difference and achieve the radiant skin you deserve.

COURT NOTICE

In The Court of Miss Maliha Allauddin Senior Civil Judge Family Court Kohat, Suit no. 28/FC Date of hearing 05-07-2024, Titled:- Rabia Gul Durani Vs Musawir Khan(etc) Notice against:-(4)Khalid Khan Son of Naseer Khan R/o Togh Bala District Kohat, presently R/o (now in Abroad) (Defendant) Whereas the above plaintiff has instituted a family suit of Dowry against you defendant in which date of hearing 05-07-2024 is fixed for your appearance Since your information/service is not possible through ordinary means/mode therefore you defendant is intimated through this publication to appear before this court by person or by pleader on date fixed 05-07-2024 otherwise court shall be proceeded in accordance with law order Issued on 22-06-2024 (Court of SC.J.F.C.Kohat)

Name Correction

/Change Name

I Reemish have changed my name to Reemish Kabir. Please Correct My name in all Government and Non-Government Document as Reemish Kabir D/o Kabir John.

National series of awards concluded



E.P. Report

KARACHI: The national series of awards in Pakistan has concluded, and the Civil Award has lost its former prestige. Once a highly esteemed honor, it has now become more of a recommendation-based accolade. This was stated by legendary film star Mustafa Qureshi during the Icon of the Nation Award distribution ceremony. Qureshi, who has dominated the film industry for forty years, emphasized the importance of selecting deserving heroes without bias for such awards. He expressed that the Icon Award, given by civil society, holds greater significance and brings more joy than official awards.

Qureshi congratulated the winners, who were recognized for their exceptional achievements across various fields.

Chief Secretary of Sindh, Syed Asif Hyder Shah, honoured the 9th Icon of the Nation award as the chief guest and presented the awards. In his speech, Shah highlighted the honor of

the ninth ICON Awards ceremony and praised the merit-based selection process.

He stressed that the Sindh Government supports these positive activities and encourages recognizing educational, professional, and creative achievements Shah highlighted the importance of merit-based recognition for deserving individuals. He stated that the Icon Award, holds greater value.

Founder of Icon Awards and Chairman of ICON Award, Rahmatullah Memon, and CEO Uzma Sabir, expressed their gratitude to the attendees and reiterated their commitment to merit-based awards. They mentioned that the ICON Awards are awarded purely on performance and reject any monetary influence or favoritism. They also announced plans to continue and expand the awards series, emphasizing the need to provide opportunities for youth to utilize their potential.

The event was graced by prominent personalities from various sec-

tors, who were honored with the Icon Award for their outstanding contributions.

Prominent personalities who have received the Icon Award include Qari Sabihuddin Sabih Rahmani, Dewan Muhammad Yusuf Farooqui in business, Mian Mumtaz Umar, Aslam Mianoor, Film Star Adnan Jilani, female film Star Amar Ahsan Khan, Comedian Naima Gurj, Ali Gul Malah, Sohrab Soomro, Managing Editor Qazi Asad Abid in journalism, Mansoor Mugheri, Shan Chaudhary, Maqsood Yousfi, Drama Director Qasim Ali Mureed, Dance. Sheema Kirmani, Imran Sonu, singer Arusa Alig, Shazia Kausar, Shabana Kausar, Ayat Shaikh, Muhammad Ashraf Palari in engineering, Qasim Rahim in talent, Waqas Talib Syed in Business HR, Anchor Baah Pirzada, Film Director Neha Laj, National Foods in Quality Standard Food, Season Canola, Tapal Tea, Electric Motorcycle Dewan Motors, Chief Secretary Syed Asif Haider Shah, Secretary Information Nadeem ur Rehman Memon, Syed Intiaz Ali Shah, Secretary Agriculture Rafiq Ahmad Buriro. Legend Mustafa Qureshi was given the Icon of the Nation Award for Lifetime Achievement.

PMLN Senator Nahal Hashmi, MPA Halar Wasan, Sana Aqeel, Film Star Aslam Sheikh, General Manager PTV Amjad Shah, Tanveer Abbasi, Nisar Solangi, Shams Jafrani, Umar Hanif, Tariq Mehmood, Salim Sharif, Shahzeb Sultan. Hundreds of people participated in the program, and many artists performed.

Fly Dubai starts operations for Lahore, Islamabad



E.P. Report

KARACHI: Fly Dubai has commenced operations for Lahore and Islamabad. The inaugural flight from Dubai to Lahore, FZ 359, arrived at 4:29 AM, where CAA representatives and other officials welcomed the distinguished passengers.

A cake cutting ceremony and gift presentation took place to mark the occasion, and the inaugural flight was treated to a water cannon salute.

Additionally, Fly Dubai's inaugural flight to Islamabad, FZ 353, arrived at 1:13 PM, where it was also greeted with a water cannon salute by the

PCAA's Rescue and Fire Fighting Service.

The airport administration organized a simple celebration, with various officials and representatives in attendance. Fly Dubai will operate one flight daily to Islamabad, with flight FZ 354 departing for Dubai at 02:20 PM with 162 passengers on board.

VIS upgrades entity ratings of Sindh Bank

E.P. Report

KARACHI: VIS Credit Rating Company Limited (VIS) has upgraded Sindh Bank Limited's (SNDB) entity ratings to 'AA-/A-1+' (Double A Minus/A-One Plus) from 'A+/A-1' (Single A Plus/A-One). The long-term rating 'AA-' reflects high credit quality; protection factors are modest risk subject to economic conditions, while the short-term 'A-1+' signals the highest likelihood of timely repayments. The Outlook on the assigned ratings remains 'Stable'.

The upgrade considers the Bank's sub-sovereign ownership, robust sponsor

support, recent capital infusion, and government deposits. The Bank's focus on secured financing, cautious lending expansion, NPL recovery, and prudent investments in sovereign issuances contribute to its credit strength.

Sindh Bank investment portfolio leans towards Pakistan Investment Bonds (PIBs) having mostly floating rate instruments thus reducing market risk. Its emphasis on low-cost funding, strong liquidity ratios, and profit growth reinforce its financial resilience.

In 2023, amid a high monetary policy rate, the sharper increase in yields on earning assets relative to

funding costs, improved the Bank's spread. Bank reported a profit after tax due to higher net markup and non-markup income, despite inflationary pressures on administrative expenses. Overall, further gains in markup income and significant improvement in pre-tax returns are expected for the full year.

Despite initial challenges in 2022, Bank's timely equity injection, improved profitability, and robust Capital Adequacy Ratio (CAR) surpassing regulatory requirements showcase a positive trajectory. Continued improvement in asset quality and stable management would drive future upgrades.

Newly elected chairman, vice chairman Sialkot Int'l Airport assume charge



E.P. Report

SIALKOT: Sialkot International Airport Limited (SIAL) is pleased to announce that the newly elected Chairman Hassan Ali Bhatti and Vice Chairman Faraz Akram

Awan have officially assumed their roles. Newly elected Chairman and Vice Chairman were warmly welcomed at Sial secretariat by Members Board of Directors, CEO Sial AVM Tanveer Ashraf Bhatti (R) & other officials.

This transition marks a significant milestone in the continued growth and development of Sialkot International Airport, the first privately-owned airport in Pakistan. The newly elected Chairman, brings wealthy experience and a

visionary approach to his new role. With a distinguished career Chairman Mr. Hassan Ali Bhatti is set to lead SIAL into a new era of innovation, safety, and customer service excellence.

Joining him is Mr. Faraz Akram Awan the newly elected Vice Chairman, who also boasts an impressive background in the industry.

In a joint statement, Chairman and Vice Chairman expressed their commitment to elevating the standards of Sialkot International Airport. “We are honored to take on these roles and are dedicated to building on the strong founda-

tion laid by our predecessors. Our focus will be on enhancing operational efficiency, expanding our services, and ensuring the highest levels of safety and security for all our stakeholders,” they said.

Under their leadership, Sialkot International Airport aims to continue its trajectory of growth, providing world-class facilities and services.

The Board of Directors and entire management of SIAL extends their best wishes to the Chairman and Vice Chairman and looks forward to a period of dynamic growth and development under their stewardship.



In brief

Junaid wins Championship

ISLAMABAD (APP): Junaid Shafiq emerged victorious in the 2nd Islamabad Tenpin Bowling Ranking Championship held at Leisure City Bowling Club, Jinnah Park. Muhammad Faheem secured the second position in the highly competitive event. The championship concluded with a closing ceremony where President, Pakistan Tenpin Bowling Federation, Ijazur Rehman, distributed prizes among the players. Muhammad Hussain Chatta and Shahzad Akhtar secured third and fourth positions in the championship, respectively. The championship saw a large turnout of players from Islamabad, showcasing their skills and competing for top honors.

Floodlight hockey match held

BAHAWALPUR (APP): Floodlight hockey was held at Hockey Stadium Bahawalpur here which was participated in by several teams from all districts of the division. According to a press release issued here, six teams from all three districts of Bahawalpur division including Raheemyar Khan, Bahawalnagar and Bahawalpur participated in the floodlight hockey match played at local Hockey Stadium. Final match was played between Tiger Hickey Club and Young Fighters Hockey Club Bahawalpur. Tiger Hickey Club Bahawalpur won the match by four goals. Young Fighters Hockey Club got second position. Later, trophy, medals and prizes were distributed among the hockey players.

Raducanu's Wimbledon starts with victory

LONDON (Agencies): Emma Raducanu made a winning return to Wimbledon after coming through a testing first-round battle against Mexican lucky loser Renata Zarazua. The 21-year-old Briton, who missed last year's tournament through injury, claimed a 7-6 (7-0) 6-3 victory on Centre Court. Raducanu was supposed to be playing 22nd seed Ekaterina Alexandrova and thought she would be the "complete underdog" in her first appearance at the All England Club since losing in the second round two years ago. Instead, the 2021 US Open champion found herself in a role reversal when the Russian withdrew through illness on Monday morning. "For the past three days, I've been playing and setting up practice for similar opponents and then it is a change of plan," said Raducanu, who is ranked 135th in the world and was given a wildcard to play. "It took a little bit of adjusting and finding my feet. But I'd like to thank everyone for their support in the crucial moments. I enjoyed playing back here." Zarazua, who lost in the third round of qualifying, benefited from Alexandrova's absence and was handed her main-draw debut at Wimbledon. Despite the size of the occasion, she pushed Raducanu in what was a tense performance at times from the home favourite. But the Briton, who was fired up and showed her passion throughout, had enough quality to eventually come through. After Zarazua saved a match point on her own serve at 5-2, Raducanu set up another with a superb dash to the net to pick up a drop shot and clinched victory when her opponent put a sliced backhand long.

Osaka wins on first Wimbledon appearance since 2019

LONDON (Agencies): Naomi Osaka said it "feels like a dream" as she made a winning return on her first appearance at Wimbledon for five years. The four-time Grand Slam champion came through 6-1 1-6 6-4 against Diane Parry on court two. Japan's Osaka returned to the tour in 2024 after giving birth to her first child, daughter Shai, a year ago.

The 26-year-old, who is now ranked 113rd in the world, was injured in 2022 and also missed the 2021 tournament while taking time off to deal with mental health issues.

Competing as a wildcard, Osaka raced through the opening set in just 22 minutes, firing a series of winners past French 21-year-old Parry.

Her level dropped in the second set, though, as Parry quickly levelled and the world number 53 twice went a break up in the deciding set.

But Osaka, who has never been beyond the third round at SW19, fought back and three double faults in the final game



from Parry proved her downfall.

"I'm really excited to be here and it's funny, Wimbledon was the first tournament I watched after pregnancy and my daughter's turning one tomorrow so, I'm really glad to still be here," said Osaka.

"I wish I could say I enjoyed it all the time but my heart was racing a lot. But, you know, I feel like these are the type of matches that you kind of have to play just in order to ease into the tournament."

Elsewhere, French Open runner-up Jasmine

Paolini, ninth seed Maria Sakkari and Eastbourne champion Daria Kasatkina were among the early first-round winners.

Seventh seed Paolini, who lost to world number one Iga Swiatek at Roland Garros last month, had gone out in the first round on her three previous visits to SW19.

However, the 28-year-old Italian was a comfortable 7-5 6-3 winner over Spain's Sara Sorribes Tormo. Sakkari defeated world number 119 McCartney Kessler of the United States 6-3 6-1 on court 12.

It was a welcome victory for the world number nine from Greece, who had been knocked out in the first round on five of her six previous Grand Slam singles appearances.

The 28-year-old said: "I've been struggling a little bit in Grand Slams in the last couple of tournaments, you know, with first-round losses. So that was in my mind."

"But I feel like today I was brave and strong enough to just overcome that fear."

Russian 14th seed Kasatkina dropped only three games in a 6-3 6-0 win over Zhang Shuai of China and could face Lily Miyazaki in the second round, if the British player beats world number 73 Tamara Korpatsch of Germany later on Monday.

US Open champion Coco Gauff is scheduled to play third on Centre Court against fellow American Caroline Dolehide, but third seed Aryna Sabalenka - who was also due to play on Monday - has pulled out of the tournament with a shoulder injury.

James Anderson set for new role with England after Test retirement

LONDON (Agencies): Experienced pacer James Anderson is set to join England's coaching set-up as the fast-bowling mentor, following his retirement from Test cricket next week.

41-year-old Anderson will play his last Test match against West Indies at the iconic Lord's, the same venue where he made his debut 21 years ago against Zimbabwe.

Anderson is the only pacer in history to take more than 700 Test wickets. He achieved the milestone during England's fifth away Test against India, in March this year.

He is also the third in the list of players with the most Test wickets, only



behind spinners Muttiah Muralitharan (800 wickets) of Sri Lanka and the late Shane Warne (708 wickets) of Australia.

England managing director Rob Key acknowledged James Anderson "got so much to offer" and thus offered

him the role to serve as the mentor for the young pacers.

"He's got so much to offer English cricket. We don't want to see that go. "When we asked him, he was keen. He is going to have a lot of options. English cricket would be

very lucky if he chooses to stay in the game."

For the unversed, James Anderson is currently representing Lancashire in the ongoing County Championship.

The pacer is yet to decide regarding his future with the County side but Rob Key confirmed that he will remain with the England team till the summer.

"What he does with Lancashire will probably work out after the Lord's Test," said Key.

"We've got some conversations to have after to find out what he thinks is the best thing to do. Everything so far has been him gearing up for this Test match," Key concluded.

Afghanistan women call on ICC to form refugee team

SYDNEY (Agencies): Members of the former Afghanistan women's team have called on the International Cricket Council to help them form a refugee team based in Australia.

Formed in 2010, the Afghanistan women's team disbanded in 2021 when the Taliban returned to power and banned women from universities, parks, sports and raided the homes of female athletes.

The ICC requires its full members, of which Afghanistan is one, to have a national women's team, but the men's team has retained its Test status and reached the semi-finals of the T20 World Cup last week.

In a letter to ICC chair Greg Barclay, the Afghanistan women said: "Creating a team of Afghan refugees can give us a chance to play, coach and



administer a cricket team without borders.

"The creation of this team will allow all Afghan women who want to represent their country to come together under one banner."

The Afghanistan women's team was created nine years after the Taliban regime fell at the hands of a US-led military coalition.

More than 20 Afghan women's cricketers managed to leave the country and are currently living in Australia.

"We are asking the ICC to assist us in setting up a refugee team in Australia," said the letter.

"Through this team we aim to represent all Afghan women who dream of playing cricket but are unable to in Afghanistan."

"Our goals in having a refugee team are to develop and showcase our talent, give hope to the women remaining in Afghanistan, and to draw attention to the challenges women of Afghanistan face."

"Like the Afghanistan men's team are afforded, we aim to compete at the highest levels. We want to recruit and train girls and women who love cricket, to show the world the talent of Afghan women and to demonstrate the great victories they can achieve if given a chance through the leadership and financial support of the ICC."

The ICC has been contacted for comment.

George joins Embiid with 76ers as NBA free agency heats up: reports

New York (AFP): Paul George, a nine-time NBA All-Star forward, has agreed to a four-year deal worth \$212 million with the Philadelphia 76ers, according to multiple reports on Monday as free agency began.

The 34-year-old playmaker has averaged 20.8 points, 6.3 rebounds, 3.7 assists and 1.7 steals a game over 867 career contests in 14 seasons for Indiana, Oklahoma City and the Los Angeles Clippers, who he left behind last weekend after five seasons.

NBA clubs have a signing moratorium on finalizing all contracts until Saturday, so it's left to media reports to chart the moves that cannot yet become official.

George's coming to terms was reported by the Philadelphia Inquirer, The Athletic and ESPN through unnamed sources.

The 76ers have not advanced



beyond the Eastern Conference semi-finals since 2001 but might have their best chance with George joining All-Star guard Tyrese Maxey and Cameroonian star center Embiid, the 2023 NBA Most Valuable Player.

Multiple reports on Monday also had Maxey signing a five-year maximum contract extension worth \$204 million. Maxey averaged 25.9

points and 6.2 assists for the Sixers last season.

George declined a \$48.8 million deal for next season with the Clippers to test his value on the free agency market. The 76ers also reportedly have struck a two-year deal worth just over \$10 million with center Andre Drummond, a 12-year NBA veteran and five-seasons league rebounding leader.

Tobias Harris, a forward who played the past six seasons in Philadelphia, is reportedly off to the Detroit Pistons on a two-year deal worth \$52 million.

Center Isaiah Hartenstein, according to multiple reports, will leave New York for a three-year deal worth \$87 million with the Oklahoma City Thunder, who also reportedly struck deals with reserves Aaron Wiggins and Isaiah Joe.



LONDON: Emma Raducanu celebrates during her Ladies' First Round Singles match against Renata Zarazua during day one of The C'ships Wimbledon.

12 Pakistani cricketers participate in ACC Women's Asia Cup

ISLAMABAD (APP): Twelve Pakistani women cricketers under Higher Education Commission (HEC), Inter-Varsity Championships participating in the ACC Women's T20 Asia Cup, which is being held in Dambulla, Sri Lanka from July 19-28, 2024.

HEC said in a statement on Monday this representation showcases the growth of women's cricket in Pakistan and the crucial role of HEC in fostering the sports ecosystem.

Among these cricketing stars, three current students from Lahore College for Women University (LCWU), Najiha Alvi, Tasmia

Rubab, Tuba Hasan Agha and one student from Sir Syed University of Engineering and Technology Karachi, Syeda Aroob Shah, are set to make their mark. Additionally, two former

students of LCWU, Diana Baig and Nashra Sandhu, will join forces with four alumni of Kinnaird College University Lahore, Iram Javed, Sidra Amin, Aliya Riaz, and Sadia Iqbal.

Nida Dar and Gul Feroza, two accomplished alumni from University of the Punjab, Lahore make a force to be reckoned with, epitomising the spirit of Pakistani women's cricket.

This is an incredible achievement owing to HEC's unwavering commitment to promoting university sports and empowering women athletes.

HEC through Pakistan University Sports board actively invests in holding university sports, establishing sports infrastructure in higher education institutions, and providing prize money and scholarships to talented

players.

This approach empowers young women to pursue their sporting dreams while establishing a strong academic foundation. HEC recognises the transformative power of sports in conjunction with continuing academic pursuits.

HEC believes women's participation in sports fosters not only physical well-being but also vital skills like teamwork, discipline, and leadership. These qualities prove invaluable for success on the field and beyond, contributing to a player's personal and professional development.

Furthermore, by encouraging women's participation in sports, HEC promotes socio-economic development by breaking down gender barriers and empowering women to reach their full potential.

Pickford grateful to 'golden boy' Bellingham for sparing England's Euros blushes



BLANKENHAIN (AFP): England goalkeeper Jordan Pickford thanked "two superstars" in Jude Bellingham and Harry Kane for saving the Three Lions from a humiliating Euro 2024 last 16 exit to Slovakia.

Gareth Southgate's men were heading out as they trailed 1-0 in Gelsenkirchen on Sunday before Bellingham produced a stunning overhead kick to equalise in the 95th minute.

Less than a minute into extra-time, Kane then headed in his 65th international goal to take England into a quarter-final meeting with Switzerland on Saturday.

"Two superstars, Jude and Harry come up with the goods," Pickford told reporters at England's training camp in Germany on Monday.

"Jude is the golden boy again with the overhead kick to keep us in the game, keep us in the tour-

nament. We never say die and that's what it was last night."

Despite reaching the last eight, England's performances have been heavily criticised. Hyped as pre-tournament favourites, they have looked fatigued and short on creativity in all four games of the tournament so far.

"(A) rollercoaster but we got over the line," added Pickford on his emotions during the Slovakia match. "It doesn't matter how you play, you've got to show resilience and win the match and that's what we did."

A much-improved display will be needed against the Swiss, who are unbeaten at the tournament so far and easily eliminated holders Italy 2-0 in their last 16 clash on Saturday.

Pickford, though, cited Portugal's unlikely triumph at Euro 2016 as evidence that England do not need to

be perfect to end a 58-year wait to win a major tournament.

"I think if you look at past tournaments, in 2016 Portugal drew all three group games and went onto win the tournament," said the Everton goalkeeper.

"We've just got to keep fighting, keep believing and train hard going into a tough game on Saturday."

Luke Shaw took a full part in training on Monday to offer Southgate hope he could be fit for the quarter-finals. The Manchester United left-back has not played a minute for club or country since February due to injury.

Southgate's decision to bring him as his only natural left-back in a 26-man squad has been heavily criticised and Shaw may be rushed into action as Kieran Trippier was forced off with an injury in the second half against Slovakia.



In brief

IRSA releases 324,300 cusecs water

ISLAMABAD (APP): Indus River System Authority (IRSA) on Monday released 324,300 cusecs water from various rim stations with inflow of 422,100 cusecs. According to the data released by IRSA, water level in River Indus at Tarbela Dam was 1473.80 feet and was 75.80 feet higher than its dead level of 1,398 feet. Water inflow and outflow in the dam was recorded as 220,400 cusecs and 145,000 cusecs respectively. The water level in River Jhelum at Mangla Dam was 1184.60 feet, which was 136.60 feet higher than its dead level of 1,050 feet. The inflow and outflow of water was recorded 52,400 cusecs and 30,000 cusecs respectively. The release of water at Kalabagh, Taunsa, Guddu and Sukkur was recorded as 213,400, 170,100, 85,800 and 18,200 cusecs respectively. Similarly, from River Kabul, a total of 81,100 cusecs of water released at Nowshera and 36,700 cusecs released from River Chenab at Marala.

Bike lifter arrested

RAWALPINDI (APP): Police have arrested a bike lifter and street criminal and recovered two stolen motorcycles and other items from his possession, said a Police spokesman here on Monday. He informed that a team under the supervision of SHO, Rattaamral Police Station managed to net a bike lifter namely Sagib and recovered two stolen motorcycles and other items from his possession. A case has been registered against the accused while further investigation is underway. Superintendent of Police, Faisal Saleem said the accomplices and facilitators of the accused would also be sent behind bars.

Gang of cattle thieves arrested

RAWALPINDI (APP): In a significant operation on Monday, police successfully apprehended a gang of six cattle thieves and recovered five stolen buffaloes. The incident was reported by a citizen who had lost his buffaloes from his camp in the jurisdiction of Saddar Barooni police station. According to a police spokesman, the arrested individuals were identified as Iqbal, Arif, Wasuallah, Adnan, Bilal and Shayan. The police recovered buffaloes worth Rs 3.5 million and confiscated the truck used in the crime. Separate cases have been registered against each suspect, and further investigation are ongoing. SP Saddar Muhammad Nabil Khokhar commended the efforts of the Saddar Barooni Police and expressed confidence in securing justice with substantial evidence. Legal proceedings are underway and the police are committed to ensure accountability and justice in this case.

"Ghazliat-e-Khalid" book launched

RAWALPINDI (APP): Punjab Arts Council in collaboration with Auraq Publications organized a ceremony to launch famous poet Khalid Siddiqui's book "Ghazliat-e-Khalid". The event was presided over by famous poet Naseem Sahar while Shakeel Akhtar, Shahid Masood and Farkhanda Shamim participated as special guests. Naseem Sahar in his address said that Khalid Siddiqui was strongly connected with the classical tradition of ghazal for being a cultural capital. He has also studied the genre of ghazal in depth due to which the traditional themes and subjects appear in his ghazal with a new style, he said adding subjects are connected with the ancient and modern era.



ISLAMABAD: The outgoing Ambassador of Belgium to Pakistan, Charles Delogne called on President Asif Ali Zardari at Aiwan-e-Sadr. —APP Photo

Pakistan making efforts to benefit from UN's carbon trading system: Romina

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister's Coordinator for Climate Change and Environmental Coordination, Romina Khurshid Alam on Monday said Pakistan was making efforts to benefit from the UN's carbon trading system. She made these remarks during the meeting with a 3-member delegation of the United Nations Environment Programme's Denmark Mission, led by Senior Economist, which called on Coordinator to Prime Minister on Climate Change Romina Khurshid Alam here at the Ministry of Climate Change & Environmental Coordination.

During the meeting Advisor Carbon Credit Markets, Urwah Khan at

the United Nations Environment Programme briefed the PM's climate advisor Romina Khurshid Alam about carbon market-related initiatives for their potential benefits Pakistan can gain by selling its carbon credits from different sectors including cement, oil & gas, textile and other industrial industries, a news release said.

He also assured the PM's climate aide of his organisation's fullest technical and non-technical support to build up policy infrastructure and its implementation for creating enabling environment for various potential sectors including cement, waste, textile, oil & gas, telecom and information technology sectors to generate and sell their carbon credits in the international carbon credit markets.

Both sides agreed to work together to enable Pakistan's various industrial sectors to sell their carbon credits in the international carbon trading markets and earn financial benefits.

"We are very much aware of the huge untapped economic potential the carbon markets offer for Pakistan to generate carbon credits in the international carbon market and earn economic gains by selling the carbon credits," said the PM's climate aide during the meeting. Carbon markets are international trading systems in which carbon credits are sold and bought to compensate for their greenhouse gas emissions by purchasing carbon credits from entities that remove or reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Ombudsperson playing leading role in safeguarding women's right

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Ombudsperson for Protection Against Harassment of Women at the Workplace Fauzia Vigar, Monday said that her department was playing pivotal role for providing free of cost excess to speedy justice for women at workplace and spreading awareness for people living in remote areas.

Talking to PTV news channel, she stressed that media should create more awareness about gender harassment through talk shows and implementing laws against harassment of women at workplaces.

Federal Ombudsperson for Protection of Women Against Harassment (FOSPAH) at Workplace is an autonomous body dedicated to safeguarding the rights and dignity of women, she explained its department working. She said it was necessary to provide a proper work environment to women with zero tolerance

for discrimination, fear and harassment.

She said that society needed to bring changes in its attitudes towards gender issues to empower women, adding, government is commitment to ensure equal access to justice and providing safe environment for women in society.

Fauzia also emphasized a collaborative efforts between government agencies, civil society organizations and other stakeholders to promote gender equality and women empowerment in the country. Replying to a question, she said FOSPAH is committed to strengthening public grievance redress mechanisms in the Ombudsman offices of Pakistan and Azad Jammu and Kashmir by enhancing core capacities and achieving higher levels of professionalization in all Ombudsman offices.

To another question, she asked the students and elders to approach the Ombudsman

Office without any difficulty in case of any irregularity and harassment or property related issues. She also lauded the performance and achievements of the Ombudsmen in providing expeditious and free of cost justice to the people against administrative injustices.

FOSPAH will further increase its outreach and efficiency to provide speedy justice to women in harassment and property cases at their doorsteps, she affirmed. She also highlighted FOSPAH's helpline number 03444 367 367 which is open during office hours (9 am to 5 pm) for complainants to seek information about the filing process and the complaint procedure.

She said more actions are required to implement the existing laws for saving women and girls from every sort of discrimination and violence, adding, we need to change our behaviors and bad practices in society.

1400 police cops deployed to provide security to polio teams

RAWALPINDI (APP): As many as 1,400 police personnel have been deployed to provide security to polio teams during the ongoing anti-polio campaign, informed police spokesman here on Monday.

Police are working alongside 677 teams of polio workers to ensure security during the campaign. Senior officers are actively supervising and guiding the police personnel involved in polio campaign. According to SSP Operations Flight Lieutenant (ret'd) Hafiz Kamran Asghar, the security of polio teams is a top priority. He informed that to ensure the security of the teams, the police personnel were also patrolling in their respective areas. He emphasized that the Rawalpindi Police are fully committed and using all available resources to protect the lives and property of citizens.

ANF recovers 833 kg drugs in seven operations

RAWALPINDI (APP): Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) while conducting seven raids across the country managed to recover 833 kg drugs and arrested three accused, said an ANF Headquarters spokesman here on Monday.

He informed that 748 grams ice was recovered from a passenger going to Qatar at Bacha Khan International Airport.

400 grams ice was recovered from a parcel sent to Australia from a cargo office in Rawalpindi. 460 kg opium was recovered from Mashakhil and 319 kg opium was recovered from an area near Pishin Road Quetta.

In an operation, 41 kg ice was recovered from a container in Karachi. 7 kg hashish was recovered from a motorcyclist rounded up near the railway gate in Hyderabad. In 7th operation, 4.8 kg hashish was recovered from the possession of an accused arrested near Sambrial in Sialkot.

Naqvi lauds FC and Police Personnel foiling terrorists' attack

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi on Monday paid tribute to the bravery of FC and police personnel who foiled the terrorists' attack on Takhta Baig police checkpoint in District Khyber.

The Interior Minister said that the sacrifices of Shaheed FC official Shahzad and Shaheed Police official Ejaz, who fearlessly thwarted the terrorists' attack. He said that the nation salutes the sacrifices of the two martyrs

who laid down their lives fighting against terrorism. Federal Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi further said that the sacrifices of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Police and FC will never be forgotten. He said that the brave officers and jawans of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Police and FC have played a key role in the war against terrorism. He said that the nation is united and determined to eradicate the menace of terrorism.

The Interior Minister praised the bravery of Shaheed FC official Shahzad and Shaheed Police official Ejaz, who fearlessly thwarted the terrorists' attack. He said that the nation salutes the sacrifices of the two martyrs

who laid down their lives fighting against terrorism.

Federal Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi further said that the sacrifices of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Police and FC will never be forgotten. He said that the brave officers and jawans of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Police and FC have played a key role in the war against terrorism. He said that the nation is united and determined to eradicate the menace of terrorism.

Ayesha Raza urges parents to cooperate with Polio teams

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime minister's focal person on polio, Ayesha Raza Farooq on Monday urged every segment of society to play a role in eradicating poliovirus from the country. Talking to a PTV news channel, she said that the anti-polio campaign began in forty-nine selected districts of the country today where more than 9.5 million children under five years of age will be administered polio vaccine drops. She also urged parents to cooperate with polio teams

visiting their doorsteps.

She said sixteen districts in Balochistan, eleven in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, sixteen in Sindh and six in Punjab are part of the campaign, adding that, door-to-door polio campaign will be conducted in specific Union Councils of Islamabad as well.

"Government is sending polio vaccination teams to citizens' doorsteps, especially in areas where the virus is present, adding, guardians and parents of children should open their doors for

these health workers who are hardworking in severe heat-wave condition". Replying to a question, she said Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif was working on this matter where he has conducted high-level meetings with all four provinces' chief ministers, and within the next two months, we will also launch another high-quality level drive nationwide. She said that the government was extending every possible assistance and security measure to protect polio workers.

Monsoon rains to enter Islamabad this week: DG

ISLAMABAD (APP): Director General of the Department of Meteorology Mehr Sahibzada Khan Monday said that officially monsoon rains are about to enter Islamabad and other cities of the country on Monday (today), where above to normal rainfall will brought the mercury considerably down.

Talking to PTV news channel, he said that the meteorological department has predicted rain at a few places in the upper parts of the country during the next

24 hours, adding, there is a possibility of rain at a few places in North East Punjab and Upper KP and weather in Islamabad and surrounding areas.

He said Meteorological department had already issued the weather advisory and urging all relevant institutions to make emergency arrangements in anticipation of potential flooding and storm damage.

He said the advisory warns of possible flooding in rivers located in Islamabad, Rawalpindi,

Gujranwala, Sialkot, and Kashmir, due to the expected heavy rains.

Met Department has directed all concerned institutions to take emergency measures to address any adverse effects caused by the predicted weather conditions, he added.

Replying to a question, he said July will witness an impressive spell of downpour during current spell of monsoon, adding, the spell of rain will also help in increasing the water levels at major reservoirs.

Railways earns over Rs 88 bln by fiscal year ending

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan Railways has achieved an unprecedented earning of over Rs 88 billion in the outgoing financial year 2023-24, despite facing a financial crisis due to floods in the monsoon season.

The government had set Rs 73 billion as the revenue target of Pakistan Railways during the just concluded financial year. The department surpassed the target through the consistent efforts and hard work of the Railway workers," official sources in the Ministry told APP.

They said that during the last financial year (2022-23), the department earned Rs 63 billion, a historic 40 percent increase in revenue collection during the same

period of the financial year (2023-24).

The sources said that out of the total revenue of Rs 47 billion was derived from passenger, Rs 28 billion from freight trains while Rs 13 billion generated from other sectors of the department.

They said the department is committed to increase the revenue generation from Rs 100 billion.

At present, they said that Pakistan Railways is operating around 96 passenger trains, up from the previous year when 86 trains were running. Similarly, during the previous year, on average it operated 3.75 freight trains while the number reached seven freight trains this year.

To a question, they said that Pakistan Railways has beefed up preventive measures to reduce passenger train accidents. Only six minor accidents with no causality took place on the entire railway network in the country during the last three months.

The drastic decrease in accidents has been witnessed due to the efforts being undertaken to reduce trespassing at unmanned level crossings and unauthorized locations, they added.

"Our staff is continuously monitoring the railway tracks across the country and conducting thorough inspection of the trains as the safety of the passengers is the top priority of the department," the sources said.

CPEC emerges as catalyst for investment, technology transfer: Gillani

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chairman Senate, Syed Yousaf Raza Gillani has said that China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) has become a catalyst for not only investment but technological transfer, skill development, and knowledge sharing between the two friendly nations.

He was addressing the launch ceremony of the "China Chamber of Commerce Sustainable Development Report 2023" of CCCPK (formerly "All-Pakistan Chinese Enterprises' Association APCEA), co-organized by the Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI) here at the Pakistan Institute for Parliamentary Services (PIPS) Hall.

The report was unveiled by Chairman Senate, Syed Yousaf Raza Gillani, Chinese Minister Counsellor, Yang Guangyuan, Prime Minister's Coordinator on Climate Change, Romina Khurshid Alam, and Chairman CCCPK, Wang Huihua.

Syed Yousaf Raza Gillani said Pakistan has faced a lot of testing times whereas the perseverance and patience of its masses created narratives of resilience emanating from the stories of resilient and successful men and women bracing all the challenges.

He said that the CPEC is a non-partisan agenda in Pakistan as all of its opposition parties support the government on it. The Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) was the first under the leadership of then President Asif Ali Zardari who paved way for initiation of the CPEC. Moreover, the successive governments

of Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N), Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM), and the current government rendered extreme commitment for CPEC, he added. He said the government of Pakistan was mindful of the challenges faced by the Chinese companies, and people working on various projects under CPEC and was ensuring fool proof security for the Chinese citizens.

Gillani informed that the bureaucratic processes were being streamlined and Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC) like institutions were developed to expedite different projects under the second phase of CPEC or CPEC2.0. "CPEC has created 155,000 skilled and unskilled jobs for local masses in Pakistan. However, the singing of MoU for CPEC's second phase underscores continued collaboration in industrial development, green energy initiatives, low carbon development, and other areas," the Chairman Senate said. CPEC 2.0, he said, would upgrade and implement renewed focus on industrialisation, sustainability, and inclusivity.

"Pakistan lauds President Xi Jinping's commitment and funding of \$100 billion for Greening BRI for eco-friendly development. Chinese banks play a fundamental part in greening of the CPEC projects, pivotal for development and environmental protection. Both countries are eager for collaborative green initiatives, such as green bonds, concessional financing, and Just Energy Transition Partnerships (JETPS). I urge Chinese to work out

solutions to improve access to these financing tools and initiate all economic transactions in Chinese RMB instead of USD," Gillani said.

The Senate Chairman underlined that the developmental transition under CPEC should prioritise wealth creation and human development, whereas fostering public private partnerships can help achieve this crucial goal.

Chinese Minister Counsellor, Yang Guangyuan termed the occasion as an opportunity to express that China was confident of Pakistan's bright future. He noticed that within three months of the new government's operationalization all economic indicators have improved significantly. The annual inflation slowed to 18% which is two-year low and the IT exports witnessed 62% remarkable increase, he added.

"CPEC has entered phase two. To transform our vision into reality, we need new ideas, new approaches and new players. When we talk about attracting new investors, we should remember that the current investors' success is the best commercial for Pakistan." Yang added that Chinese companies are growing business in Pakistan whereas 300 projects were being implemented by hundreds of Chinese companies that were hiring some 40,000 Pakistani people under different projects.

The Federal Minister for Planning, Development, and Special Initiatives, Prof. Ahsan Iqbal said that the CPEC is a vision of shared prosperity envisioned by the leadership of China and

Pakistan. He said the second phase of CPEC would bring more prosperity and development not only to the country but to the region as well. On the occasion, Romina Khurshid Alam, Prime Minister's Coordinator for Climate Change and Environmental Coordination said that the CPEC is a strategic manifestation of 'One Belt and Road Initiative (BRI)' whereas the latter has resulted in substantial results ensuring development all over the world.

She highlighted that the Chinese have developed new green financing tools like green bonds, loans, insurance, carbon finance, leasing, transition loans that had great potential for Pakistan to explore green finance opportunities. The Belt and Road forum in 2023 underscored the need to develop green initiatives and the Chinese leading role in green financing through massive increase in green loans, leasing, bonds, and concessional financing are out of the box solutions being created in this regard, she added.

"Public private partnerships and innovative financing instruments will play pivotal role in energy transition efforts. However, Pakistan pursuits of climate diplomacy have been harmonized with sustainable development and environmental sustainability to turn challenges into opportunities," Romina Khurshid said. Chairman CCCPK, Wang Huihua in his opening remarks thanked the partners and contributors to the third sustainable development report launched by CCCPK. He said Chinese

enterprises have devotedly adhered to sustainable development in Pakistan during CPEC development with focus on local communities' development.

Wang noted that the completion of CPEC first phase projects and Gwadar Port development is a testament to the Chinese commitment towards mutually beneficial endeavours.

He also mentioned about various projects developed by the Chinese companies under CPEC including cooperation on Chashma Nuclear Power Plant project, Pakistan National Optic Fiber development project and China Mobile Pakistan's skill trainings and biomedical and healthcare facilities in Sandik.

Energy and Economic Expert from SDPI, Dr Khalid Waleed in his welcome remarks stated that it was a pivotal partnership between CCCPK and SDPI whereas both the organisations were working out strategies to shift from CPEC1.0 to CPEC2.0 as the latter demands more human centric approaches to harness the investment in CPEC's first phase.

He informed that the SDPI is working on more regional connections and had a dedicated China Study Centre and Green CPEC alliance where Pakistan China Institute (PCI), PRIED and others with the help of CCCPK were working on promoting B2B and G2G arrangements under CPEC2.0.

The dignitaries were also presented souvenirs by the Chinese officials at the end of the launching ceremony.

Afghan swimmer secures spot

KABUL (Khaama Press): Abbas Karimi, an Afghan-American para-swimmer, secured a spot in the Paris 2024 Paralympic Games. Qasim Ali Hamidi, president of the Afghan Swimming Federation, highlighted Abbas Karimi's achievement with three gold medals in the 50m butterfly, 50m backstroke, and 50m freestyle events, defeating his competitors. Hamidi emphasized that Abbas Karimi successfully qualified for the Paris 2024 Paralympic Games despite challenges.

Iran departs 1000 migrants

KABUL (Khaama Press): The Ministry of Refugees and Repatriations announced the expulsion of over a thousand Afghan migrants from Iran. According to the ministry's press release on Monday, 1,418 Afghan migrants entered the country via the Nimroz province border crossing up to the 8th of Cancer. The expelled individuals include families and single migrants, some of whom have been referred to aid organizations for assistance.

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

Mujahid at Doha 3 urges enhanced int’l engagement

DOHA (TOLOnews): On the sidelines of the Doha 3 meeting, Zabihullah Mujahid, who leads the Islamic Emirate delegation, met with representatives from several countries to discuss Afghanistan issues.

Mujahid wrote on X that in a meeting with the Indonesian foreign minister, he emphasized strengthening relations between the two countries.

He added that in a meeting with the deputy and ambassador of the Kazakh Ministry of Foreign Affairs, they discussed expanding trade relations and maintaining diplomatic relations.

The Islamic Emirate delegation also met with the Norwegian representative, and Mujahid said that this country has a “constructive” view on Afghanistan.

Meanwhile, Zabihullah Mujahid, in his speech at



the third Doha meeting, called for Western countries to engage with the Islamic Emirate.

Mujahid said: “Western countries should engage in a realistic and practical manner, just like regional countries.”

Mujahid said that Western countries, like regional countries, can remove obstacles to

expanding relations with the Afghan government and move towards positive engagement.

Zabihullah Mujahid said that discussions on lifting banking sanctions and the cultivation of poppies would be held during the Doha meeting.

He called sanctions on the country's banking system unfair.

Mujahid said that the foreign policy of the Islamic Emirate is economy-focused and concentrates on expanding relations with countries through construction and regional projects.

“In the past two years, we have made good progress in the construction of the TAPI gas pipeline with Turkmenistan. We hope that with the implementation of this project, Afghanistan will play a positive role in the exchange and connection of energy between Central and South Asia,” he said.

The second day of the Doha 3 meeting began Monday in Doha, the capital of Qatar, and discussions are set to take place regarding the prevention of drug cultivation and support for Afghanistan's private sector.

Rice yield in Herat rises by 35%

HERAT (TOLOnews): The Department of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock of Herat says that this year, due to the reduction of drought, rice cultivation in this province has increased by 35 per cent.

Based on the statistics of this department, this year more than three thousand hectares of land in Herat were used for growing rice.

Mohammad Nasim Sahar, head of agricultural affairs of the Herat Department of Agriculture and Irrigation, said: “The rice grown in Herat has given good results. This year, because it is an agricultural year, rice cultivation has increased by 35% compared to last year.”

Several farmers in Herat say that this year, due to the abundant water of Harirod, they have cultivated more land with rice.

Abdul Rahim, who planted eight acres of land in Herat's Guzara district, hopes to harvest more rice than last year.

Abdul Rahim told TOLOnews: “We are very hopeful this year, and the level of underground water has risen a lot. The river also has water, and compared to the past few years, this year is the best.”

According to the farmers, rice cultivation is profitable for them despite its challenges.

Abdul Ghani, a farmer, said: “Last year we harvested about 8400 kg to 8900kg of rice, but this year we will probably harvest 14,000 kg to 16,000 kg of rice. This means we have planted twice as much as last year.”

Another farmer, Abdul Qasim, said: “Last year, I planted two acres of rice, but this year we planted four acres. This year we increased the cultivation of rice, and last year it was two acres, this year we planted four acres. Because there is a lot of water this year.”

According to officials, nearly 2,000 hectares of land in Herat were planted with rice last year.

Rice is cultivated in the neighboring districts of Harirod, such as Guzara, Anjil, and Pashtun Zarghun.

Rice fields need a lot of water, and the roots of rice must be under water from planting to fruiting.

Hanafi encourages Uzbek investors



KABUL (BNA): Deputy Prime Minister for Administrative Affairs, Mawlawi Abdul Salam Hanafi, met with several businessmen and investors from Uzbekistan, including the head of Kunduz's Spin Zar Company, Abdul Hafeez Faryad.

In this meeting, Nader Rustamov, the head of NR Energy Al-Falah Company, provided information about the visit of the delegation of Uzbek businessmen and investors to the Deputy Prime Minister.

He mentioned that the establishment of compre-

hensive security has created numerous opportunities for trade and investment in various sectors, sparking significant interest from foreign investors in Afghanistan.

Rustamov added that Uzbek investors are keen to invest in Afghanistan in sectors such as energy, textiles, oil and mining extraction, and the construction of production factories and infrastructure. He requested cooperation from the Islamic Emirate in this regard.

Meanwhile, Deputy PM, Mawlawi Abdul Salam Hanafi welcomed the

Uzbek businessmen and investors, appreciating their commercial activities in Afghanistan. He emphasized that the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan aims to expand relations with neighboring countries and invites traders and investors, particularly from neighboring nations, to invest in various sectors in Afghanistan.

He further stated that the Islamic Emirate encourages all commercial activities from investors and foreign companies and is committed to providing them with all necessary facilities.

Baradar meets Uzbekistan investors, discusses investment



KABUL (Ariana News): Deputy prime minister for economic affairs Mullah Abdul Ghani Baradar, on Monday met with a delegation of investors from Uzbekistan.

During the meeting, the Uzbek investors expressed their interest in investing in Afghanistan's mining sector, particularly in coal mining and processing, as well as coal-based elec-

tricity production, said Baradar's office in a statement.

They also discussed plans for building a standard oil refinery, establishing a cement factory,

extracting and processing salt, setting up textile factories, and implementing e-governance initiatives.

The Uzbek investors highlighted that Afghanistan has become an attractive destination for investment and emphasized their readiness to invest and share their expertise in these sectors.

Meanwhile, the Baradar expressed his gratitude to the Uzbek investors for their interest and assured them of the IEA's full cooperation to facilitate their investment endeavors in Afghanistan.

Kabir emphasizes strengthening cooperation

KABUL (BNA): In a recent meeting with several tribal elders, Islamic scholars, and officials of the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan, the Deputy Prime Minister for Political Affairs, Mawlawi Abdul Kabir emphasized the importance of strengthening cooperation and coordination between the people and the government.

The meeting was also attended by Nooruddin Azizi, Acting Minister of Industry and Commerce, and Sheikh Shir Ahmad, Governor of Laghman.

The tribal elders and scholars reaffirmed their support for the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan, expressing their desire for stability, the continuation of the Islamic system, economic strengthening, and a prosperous Afghanistan.

They emphasized that these goals are achievable only under the governance of the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan.

For his Part, Mawlawi Abdul Kabir reiterated the Islamic Emirate's strong commitment to the country's development and progress, highlighting that the reconstruction of Afghanistan requires collective effort and cooperation from all.

As the meeting concluded, he emphasized the importance of reinforcing cooperation and coordination between the people and the government, highlighting this as crucial for the nation's development and stability.

Faryab hosts 25,000 tourists in last two weeks: Official

FARYAB (TOLOnews): The Director of Information and Culture of Faryab said that in the last two weeks, about 25,000 domestic tourists have visited the natural attractions and recreational areas of the Gurziwan district of Faryab province.

According to Shamsuddin Mohammadi, the head of this Directorate, efforts are ongoing to provide more facilities for foreign tourists.

The head of information and culture of Faryab added: “25,000 domestic tourists from neighboring provinces came to Faryab province to visit recreational areas and natural attractions.”

Springs, natural waterfalls, and green landscapes in Khwaja Ghar village, Gurziwan district, Faryab province, have attracted thousands of domestic tourists.

Several tourists who have come to this district for entertainment consider security one of the reasons



for their tourism.

They want the authorities to provide more facilities in recreational places.

Abdul Razzaq, a tourist, said: “Afghanistan is a very green country and has many historical places that can be visited and enjoyed. Afghanistan has many recreational places, such as

Gurziwan, where the seven periods of the royal monarchy passed, the period of the Aryans, the period of the Tatars, the period of the Sasanian, the period of the Bactrian, and the period of Islam. Thank goodness there are many recreational places in Afghanistan.”

Seyyed Jalil, another

tourist, said: “It is a natural place. We came from Faryab to have fun with our friends to see closely whether it was Khwaja Ghar or not.”

With security in the country, citizens travel to different provinces to visit natural attractions and historical places.

Saw Dara residents without health services

KABUL (Pajhwok): Residents of Saw Dara area in Alingar district of eastern Laghman province complain they have been struggling with problems due to the absence of health services in their area.

Malak Parwaz, a tribal elder of the Saw Dara area, told Pajhwok Afghan News their area encompassed ten villages inhabited by about 10,000 families.

He said the residents of these villages had long been deprived of all kind health services.

He added: “A mobile health team would provide

services to people in our area for eight hours a day until its contract expired four months ago. Currently we have no access to health services. We want the government to set up a well-equipped health centre for us.”

Malak Khanjan, another resident of the area, said: “We take our patients to Laghman provincial hospital after a two and a half hours drive. Often some patients lose their lives on the way to hospital. We want the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan to establish health centres for us.”

They say they have

shared their problems with the provincial administration a number of times, but received no response.

On the other hand, Public Health Department officials acknowledge Saw Dara area lacks health facilities, but say efforts are underway to address the problem in cooperation with partner institutions.

Dr. Samiullah Abid, director of the department, said they had shared the problem with the provincial administration.

He added a mobile health team would provide services to the residents of the area last year, but its contract had ended now.

Supporting local business growth: Paktia constructs 90 stalls for artisans



KABUL (BNA): Officials from the Gardez Municipality have announced the construction of 90 stalls for handicraft sellers in the city's center. This project, costing \$49,000 USD, aims to support local artisans and boost the city's economy.

Gardez Mayor Mawlawi Habib Rahman Mansoor reported to BNA that the purpose of these stalls is to create urban

order, provide secure and better facilities for handicraft sellers, create job opportunities, and prevent unauthorized street vendors from operating on the main and side streets and pedestrian paths.

According to the Gardez Municipality officials, these stalls will be provided free of charge to those who previously sold goods on handcarts along the sidewalks.

On the other hand, Gardez residents and handicraft sellers have welcomed this initiative by the municipality, stating that these stalls will be beneficial for their business and economic growth.

Municipal officials also assured citizens that similar important steps will be taken in the future to improve urban order and facilities.

DOHA (Ariana News): United Nations Under-Secretary General for Political and Peacebuilding Affairs, Rosemary DiCarlo has welcomed the “fruitful start” to the third meeting of special envoys on Afghanistan in the Qatari capital Doha.

Dicarlo noted on X that it is the first time “such a cross section of the inter-

national community and the Taliban (Islamic Emirate) meet.”

“Look forward to principled engagement to help the people of Afghanistan in many areas. And we thank Qatar for its support,” she said.

Meanwhile, Minister of State for Foreign Affairs of Qatar Mohammed bin Abdulaziz bin Saleh Al Khulaifi said at the open-

ing session of the meeting that the participation of the IEA in the meeting provides an important opportunity to conduct a meaningful dialogue regarding collective efforts to address the current challenges facing Afghanistan.

He said that the ultimate goal is to support the Afghan people and achieve peace and prosperity in Afghanistan so

that it contributes positively to regional and global stability.

Meanwhile, Suhail Shaheen, head of the political office of the Islamic Emirate in Qatar, told Ariana News that the expectation of the Islamic Emirate from the third meeting in Doha is that the world should understand the realities of Afghanistan and abandon the policy of

pressure and confrontation.

Representatives of 25 countries including the United States, European countries, Russia, Pakistan, Iran, Saudi Arabia and India have attended the third Doha meeting on Afghanistan. Representatives of some international organizations have also participated in the meeting.



ISLAMABAD: Outgoing Ambassador of Belgium to Pakistan, Mr. Charles Delogne, called on President Asif Ali Zardari, at Aiwan-e-Sadr.

Israel orders Palestinians to flee Khan Younis

GAZA (AP): The Israeli army ordered a mass evacuation of Palestinians from much of Khan Younis on Monday, a sign that troops are likely to launch a new ground assault in the Gaza Strip's second largest city. The order suggested Khan Younis will be the latest of Israel's repeated raids into parts of Gaza it has already invaded over the past eight months, pursuing Hamas militants as they regroup.

Much of Khan Younis was already destroyed in a long assault earlier this year, but large numbers of Palestinians have since moved back in to escape another Israeli offensive in Gaza's southern-most city, Rafah. The evacuation call covered the entire eastern half of Khan Younis and surrounding areas. Last week, the military ordered a similar evacuation from the north Gaza district of Shujaiya, where there has been intensive fighting since. The order came as Israel released the director of Gaza's main hospital after holding him for seven months without charge or trial over allegations the facility had been used as a Hamas command center. He said he and other detainees were held under harsh conditions and tortured.

The decision to release Mohammed Abu Selmia raised questions over Israel's claims surrounding Shifa Hospital, which Israeli

forces have raided twice since the start of the nearly nine-month war with Hamas. Abu Selmia and other Palestinian health officials have denied the accusations. His release triggered an uproar across Israel's political spectrum. Government ministers and opposition leaders expressed outrage and insisted Abu Salmia played a role in Hamas' alleged use of the hospital — though Israeli security services rarely unilaterally free prisoners if they have a suspicion of militant links.

The decision appeared to have been taken to free up space in overcrowded detention centers. Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu ordered an inquiry, his office said, though it added that security officials independently determine whom to release "based on their professional considerations." Abu Selmia was released back into Gaza along with 54 other Palestinian detainees, many of whom also alleged abuse. The allegations could not be independently confirmed but matched other accounts of Palestinians who have been held in Israeli custody.

"Our detainees have been subjected to all kinds of torture behind bars," Abu Selmia said at a news conference after his release. "There was almost daily torture." He said guards broke his finger

and caused his head to bleed during beatings, in which they used batons and dogs. He said the medical staff at different facilities where he was held had also taken part in the abuse "in violation of all laws." He said some detainees had limbs amputated because of poor medical care.

There was no immediate response from the prison service, which has previously denied similar accusations. Israeli forces raided Shifa Hospital in November, alleging that Hamas had created an elaborate command and control center inside the facility. Abu Selmia and other staff denied the allegations and accused Israel of recklessly endangering thousands of patients and displaced people who were sheltering there.

The military uncovered a tunnel beneath Shifa Hospital leading to a few rooms, as well as other evidence that militants had been present inside the medical center, but the evidence fell short of what it had claimed before the raid. Abu Selmia was detained on Nov. 22 while escorting a UN-led evacuation of patients from the hospital. He said his detention was "politically motivated," adding that he had been brought to court at least three times but was never charged or allowed to meet with lawyers.

Bilawal flays targeting of journalists in KP

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Chairman Pakistan People's Party (PPP) Bilawal Bhutto Zardari has voiced his grave concern over the diminishing space for independent journalism in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

In a press release issued by the Media Cell Bilawal House, he highlighted the alarming rise in violent incidents targeting journalists in the province, deeming it intolerable. He emphasized that many affected journalists are holding the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister and the ruling provincial party accountable for these brutalities.

He condemned the suppression of journalism through violence, attributing these acts to fascist elements. "The PTI is evidently fearful of independent journalism and has lost the trust of the people," he said. "Their consistent reliance on undemocratic tactics and conspiracies to cling to power is disgraceful."

Reaffirming PPP's unwavering support for the journalist community, he declared, "We believe in press freedom and will not allow anyone to stifle the press." He called upon relevant institutions and parliament to take decisive action to safeguard journalists and uphold press freedom in KP.

140 PTI's workers acquitted

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Judicial Magistrate Peshawar Salman Nadir acquitted 140 workers of PTI including Additional General Secretary Irfan Saleem in a case related to blocking roads during a protest. The verdict declared that no evidence found against the accused and ruled that they were peaceful protesters.

The court's decision stated that the police had failed to present any evidence against the accused, despite naming over 140 PTI leaders and workers in the FIR. The police had alleged that the protesters had blocked roads on January 28, causing difficulties for the public. However, the court found that the police had not recorded any statements from affected citizens, which was a legal requirement. Moreover, the accused were released on bail earlier, and the court's decision has now acquitted them of all charges.

ASJ convicts murderer: Additional Sessions Judge (ASJ) Peshawar Liaquat Ali convicted the nephew of a member of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Bar Council and senior lawyer Raza Ullah Khan, to death and imposed fine of Rs 500,000 for his murder, on Monday.

Accusations against ZAB by MQM shameful: Memon

F.P. Report

KARACHI: Senior Minister of Sindh, Sharjeel Inam Memon, has called the accusations against Shaheed Zulfikar Ali Bhutto by Muttahida Qaumi Movement leader Khalid Maqbool Siddiqui shameful and has bluntly demanded an apology from MQM as well as the resignation of the Governor Sindh.

Senior Minister Sharjeel Inam Memon, while addressing a press conference along with Provincial Minister Syed Nasir Hussain Shah, said that the leadership of the Muttahida Qaumi Movement has once again become fond of sensational politics, resorting to accusations. This kind of politics has cost MQM dearly, causing it to shrink from influence in three to four cities to the level of a union council.

He said that the poisonous conversation against Shaheed Zulfikar Ali Bhutto is unbecoming of anyone. Shaheed Bhutto played an important role for the country. Khalid Maqbool Siddiqui has spoken venomously against our leader, Shaheed Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, who made significant sacrifices for the nation. If our leadership is removed from the political history of Pakistan, then nothing remains.

Senior Minister Sharjeel Inam Memon said that the quota system was implemented in the country after careful consideration to protect the people of backward areas. This system is being criticized based on the inappropriate comments of Khalid Maqbool Siddiqui. He said that MQM is responsible for many problems in Sindh. Educated youth in the province have been waiting for employment, but MQM banned jobs through a stay order. Because of MQM's actions, the hands of many departments were tied.

Sharjeel Inam Memon said that the entire leadership of Muttahida, including Khalid Maqbool, used to respect Altaf Hussain. However, it is the same leadership that abandoned Altaf and ran away. Today, they are not ready to accept Altaf Hussain as their leader. Khalid Maqbool Siddiqui and his followers, who once considered Altaf Hussain their leader, are now unwilling to acknowledge him.

He said that Muttahida always accused the People's Party, while Shaheed Bhutto strengthened the OIC, which is recognized by the entire Islamic world. Speaking against Shaheed Zulfikar Ali Bhutto is disgraceful. Senior Minister Sharjeel Inam Memon said that



MQM recruited its workers into local bodies. In the past, all the target killers were employees of the Water Board and KMC. More than half of the Rabita Committee members are government employees, working in various government institutions through local bodies.

He demanded that MQM should close the chapter of politics based on lies. He stated that they will not respond to insults with insults, but MQM should apologize for speaking against Shaheed Zulfikar Ali Bhutto. He added that everyone has seen the fate of those who engage in the politics of hatred. Senior Minister Sharjeel Inam Memon said that the Governor of Sindh is also a representative of MQM. He emphasized that the Governor of Sindh should resign immediately, as he has not been appointed by the people of Sindh nor does he have any mandate. He asserted that such politics in the province will not be tolerated.

He said that there was a time when these people did not utter a word about what Altaf Hussain did against Pakistan. But now, when Altaf Hussain has been banned, these same people are engaging in the same old politics under the guise of Muttahida Pakistan. Sharjeel Inam Memon emphasized that Khalid Maqbool Siddiqui holds no status; his influence is zero plus zero plus zero. Senior Minister Sharjeel Inam Memon said that MQM destroyed the young generation by arming them and causing daily strikes in Karachi. He emphasized that now the mischief caused by MQM has come to an end.

In response to a question, Senior Minister Sharjeel Inam Memon said

that MQM has always pursued politics of hatred, they abandoned municipal elections overnight and fled. He challenged MQM, stating that it is a party known for spreading hatred and division. He urged MQM to participate in elections democratically and compete with their party in the ballot. He said that 50,000 vacancies in the education department have been filled transparently through the IBA test. He pointed out that even family members of many ministers have failed in this test, highlighting the transparency of the process.

Senior Minister Sharjeel Inam Memon said that MQM wielded significant power during Pervez Musharraf's regime, with hundreds of people being killed daily. He pointed out that MQM even targeted police officers involved in operations. He questioned why MQM did not oppose the quota system at that time, emphasizing that MQM never officially opposed the quota system in any official meeting. He said that if they make false accusations against the martyr, we also have to respond. We were not afraid when MQM had guns, so what would we fear now? However, they present one thing in public and talk about something else behind closed doors.

Addressing the press conference, Provincial Minister Nasir Hussain Shah said that we had hoped MQM-Pakistan would abandon the politics of hatred and hypocrisy, but unfortunately, we were wrong. He added metaphorically, "The tail was crooked." He said that Shaheed Zulfikar Ali Bhutto has done favors for everyone. During the operation, MQM was employing criminals in government jobs.

PHC wouldn't tolerate police attitude: CJ

Humayun Khan

PESHAWAR: Chief Justice Peshawar High Court (PHC) Justice Ishtiaq Ibrahim has expressed his annoyance and disappointment over the non-compliance of police officers with court orders. He made it clear that the court will no longer tolerate any disregard of its orders by police officials. He remarked that if a Station House Officer (SHO) thinks they are above the law and do not appear in court, then they will be treated accordingly.

The Chief Justice made these remarks during the hearing of a case related to the disappearance of a citizen, Misbah ul Haq, from the Matni area of Peshawar in 2019. PHC had summoned the SHO Matni, but

he didn't appear before court, despite being served with a court summons. The Chief Justice expressed his displeasure and directed the Capital City Police Officer to appear before court for subordinate attitude towards judiciary.

CCPO Muhammad Qasim appeared before Chief Justice and informed that he had taken charge of his office two weeks ago and was unaware of the case details. He assured the court that he would personally look into the matter and ensured implementation of PHC's orders.

The Chief Justice warned that if the police continue to disregard court orders, it will not be tolerated. He added that the court's purpose is to provide justice to the people,

and it will not be deterred by the police's non-cooperation. He remarked that if the police can disregard the orders of the high court, then they will also disregard the orders of the district and session courts, which will lead to a breakdown in the rule of law.

PHC directed CCPO to submit a report on the matter before 22nd July. The petition was filed by the father of the missing person, Misbah ul Haq, who alleged that his son was abducted by two individuals from Matni, Hasan Khel and Habibullah, in 2019. The petitioner alleged that his son was taken away by the accused, who were known to the police, and that the police had failed to take any action to recover his son.



LAHORE: A view of flooded road after heavy rains received by the provincial capital.

Inflation up at 12.6% year-on-year in June: PBS

ISLAMABAD (Reuters): Picking up the pace at the outset of the new fiscal year, headline inflation came in at 12.6% year-on-year (YoY) in June compared to 11.8% in May, according to data released by the country's federal statistics agency on Monday. This increase aligns with market and government expectations.

According to the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS), the Consumer Prices Index (CPI) based inflation increased by 0.5% on a month-on-month basis in June. The CPI-based inflation in May rose 11.8% from a year earlier, the lowest reading in 30 months and below the finance ministry's projections.

The country has been beset by inflation above 20% since May 2022. Last year in May, inflation jumped as high as 38% as the country navigated reforms as part of an International Monetary Fund (IMF) bailout programme. However, inflation has since slowed down. Brokerage firm Topline Securities noted that the reading matched their projections, so it did not surprise them.

This CPI reading brings

the average inflation for fiscal year 2023-24 to 23.4%, compared to 29.2% in fiscal year 2022-23. The Ministry of Finance, in its Monthly Economic Update and Outlook report, had forecast a marginally higher inflation rate for June 2024 compared to the previous month but noted it was still lower than the same period last year. The ministry attributed the hike to higher prices of perishable items driven by Eid ul Adha and added that the government is working to manage supply and demand to bring about price stability, reduce market volatility, and improve the inflation outlook.

JS Global Research, another brokerage firm, had projected CPI inflation to hover around 12.5% YoY, with the FY24 average at 23.8%, continuing the slowdown that started in May (11.8%). This compares to 17.3% in April and a significant drop from 29.4% in June 2023. "June is expected to see a 37 basis points month-on-month decrease in food inflation, following an 8% month-on-month drop in April. This translates to a year-on-year food inflation rate of just 0.5% in June, a significant improvement from 39% in

Jun-2023," JS Global said in its report.

AKD Securities Limited, another brokerage house, estimated that inflation would register a 12.55% year-on-year increase, up from 11.76% in the previous month. "On a monthly basis, it is likely to ascend by 0.45%, following a slight rebound in vegetable prices due to ongoing festivities during the current month," the AKD report said.

As per the AKD report, with both food and fuel indices slowing down in May, "we anticipate near-term CPI readings to remain highly susceptible to the upcoming inflationary hikes announced in the federal budget".

"Additionally, any further rebounds in essential commodity prices driven by a pullback in crude oil in the wake of global monetary easing, alongside moderate weakness in the domestic currency, if any, may keep disinflationary prospects in check," according to the AKD report. The parliament on Friday, June 28, passed the government's tax-heavy finance bill for the current fiscal year amid an annual inflation projection of up to 13.5% for June 2024.

Trump has immunity for official acts, US Supreme Court rules

WASHINGTON (Reuters): The US Supreme Court found on Monday that Donald Trump cannot be prosecuted for any actions that were within his constitutional powers as president, but can for private acts, in a landmark ruling recognizing for the first time any form of presidential immunity from prosecution.

The justices, in a 6-3 ruling written by Chief Justice John Roberts, threw out a lower court's decision that had rejected Trump's claim of immunity from federal criminal charges involving his efforts to undo his 2020 election loss to Joe Biden. The six conservative justices were in the majority. Its three liberals dissented. Trump is the Republican candidate challenging Biden, a Democrat, in the Nov. 5 US election in a 2020 rematch. The Supreme Court's slow handling of the case, coupled with its

decision to return key questions about the scope of Trump's immunity to the lower courts to resolve, make it improbable he will be tried on the election subversion charges brought by Special Counsel Jack Smith charges before the election.

"We conclude that under our constitutional structure of separated powers, the nature of presidential power requires that a former president have some immunity from criminal prosecution for official acts during his tenure in office," Roberts wrote. Immunity for former presidents is "absolute" with respect to their "core constitutional powers," Roberts wrote, and a former president has "at least a presumptive immunity" for "acts within the outer perimeter of his official responsibility," meaning that prosecutors face a high legal bar to overcome that presumption.

Roberts cited the need for presidents to "execute the duties of his office fearlessly and fairly" without the threat of prosecution. "As for a president's official acts," Roberts added, "there is no immunity." Trump hailed the ruling in a social media post, writing: "big win for our constitution and democracy. Proud to be an American!"

The court analyzed four categories of conduct contained in Trump's indictment. They are: his discussions with Justice Department officials following the 2020 election; his alleged pressure on then-Vice President Mike Pence to block congressional certification of Biden's election win; his alleged role in assembling fake pro-Trump electors to be used in the certification process; and his conduct related to the Jan. 6, 2021, attack on the US Capitol by his supporters. The court found Trump was

absolutely immune for conversations with Justice Department officials. Trump is also "presumptively immune" regarding his interactions with Pence, it decided, but returned that and the two other categories to lower courts to determine whether Trump has immunity.

The ruling marked the first time since the nation's 18th century founding that the Supreme Court has declared that former presidents may be shielded from criminal charges in any instance. The court's conservative majority includes three justices Trump appointed. The court decided the case on the last day of its term. Trump, 78, is the first former US president to be criminally prosecuted as well as the first former president convicted of a crime. Smith's election subversion charges embody one of the four criminal cases Trump has faced.

The Biden campaign said in a state-

ment that the "ruling doesn't change the facts, so let's be very clear about what happened on Jan. 6: Donald Trump snapped after he lost the 2020 election and encouraged a mob to overthrow the results of a free and fair election." Justice Sonia Sotomayor, joined by fellow liberal Justices Elena Kagan and Ketanji Brown Jackson, delivered a sharply worded dissent, saying the ruling "makes a mockery of the principle, foundational to our Constitution and system of government, that no man is above the law."

Sotomayor added: "Relying on little more than its own misguided wisdom about the need for bold and unhesitating action by the president, the court gives former President Trump all the immunity he asked for and more." Sotomayor said the ruling "reshapes the institution of the presidency."

N Korea fires two ballistic missiles

SEOUL: North Korea has fired two ballistic missiles and the second may have failed and blown up, possibly raining debris inland, South Korea's military said. Monday's launches came a day after Pyongyang promised "offensive and overwhelming" responses to new military drills staged by the United States, South Korea and Japan.

South Korea's Joint Chiefs of Staff said in a statement that the missiles were launched 10 minutes apart in a northeasterly direction from the town of Jangyong in south-eastern North Korea. The military said the first missile flew 600km (370 miles) and the second for 120km (75 miles), but did not say where they landed. North Korea typically test-fires missiles towards its eastern waters, but the second missile's flight distance was too short to reach that far.

Joint Chiefs of Staff spokesperson Lee Sung-joon later told a briefing there appeared to have been problems with the second missile and that if it exploded, its debris would probably have scattered on the ground. South Korean media, citing unidentified South Korean military sources, said it was highly likely the second missile crashed in an inland area of North Korea, while the first one landed in the waters off the country's eastern city of Chongjin.

Monday's launches were the first from North Korea in five days and came as the US, South Korea and Japan ended their "Freedom Edge" drills, new multi-domain trilateral military exercises. Pyongyang typically frames such drills as rehearsals for an invasion or proof of the countries' hostility. "In both North Korean politics and military policy, the best defense is often a good offense," Leif-Eric Easley, professor of international studies at the Ewha Womans University in Seoul, said in emailed comments. "Pyongyang is also determined not to appear weak while South Korea conducts defense exercises with Japan and the United States." Last Wednesday, North Korea launched what it called a multiwarhead missile in the first known test of a developmental, advanced weapon meant to defeat US and South Korean missile defenses, although South Korea disputed the claim. — Aljazeera