

**Blome called on Bilawal**  
**F.P. Report**  
KARACHI: Donald Blome, the US Ambassador to Pakistan, called on Chairman Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) Bilawal Bhutto Zardari here on Monday. According to a press release issued by the Media Cell Bilawal House, the discussion between the PPP Chairman and the US Ambassador focused on areas of mutual interest and the promotion of bilateral relations.

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**11 'beggars' offloaded**  
**F.P. Report**  
KARACHI: The Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) has offloaded 11 alleged beggars in the disguise of Umrah pilgrims from Saudi Arabia-bound flight at Karachi airport. According to the FIA, the group, consisting of 11 persons, including 8 women, was initially traveling on Umrah visas on fake return tickets and hotel booking.

# Ex-DG ISI Faiz taken into military custody

**F.P. Report**

RAWALPINDI: The process of Field General Court Martial has been initiated against retired Lt Gen Faiz Hameed, the former spymaster, after military took him into custody.

The Inter-Services Public Relations, in a statement, said: "Complying with the orders of Supreme Court of Pakistan, a detailed court of inquiry was undertaken by Pakistan Army to ascertain correctness of complaints in Top City Case made against Lt Gen Faiz Hameed (Retd)".

Consequently, appropriate disciplinary action has been initiated against him under provisions of the Pakistan Army Act, it added. In addition, multiple instances of violation of the Pakistan Army Act after retirement have also been established.

In April last, the Pakistan Army had constituted a high-level committee, headed by a major general, to probe the allegations that Hameed had misused his authority. The allegations were levelled by the owner of the Top City housing society in a petition filed by him in the Supreme Court of Pakistan in November 2023.

The petitioner had alleged that his Top City office and house were raided at the behest of Faiz Hameed on May 12, 2017 and valuable including gold, diamonds and cash were seized from his house by the officials. He claimed that Gen Faiz Hameed also met him following the raid and assured him of resolving the matter and returning some of the seized items.

The petitioner alleged that 4.67 kilograms of gold and cash weren't returned to him despite assurance. In inquiry commission probing the November 2017 Faizabad sit-in absolved former director general of the Inter-



Services Intelligence (ISI), retired Lt Gen Faiz Hameed, of the charges.

The three-member commission, set up on the order of the Supreme Court, issued its 149-page report. According to sources, the commission cited various loopholes in the handling of the issue and drafted recommendations after evaluating the circumstances related to the Tehreek-e-Labbaik Pakistan's sit-in at Faizabad.

The report highlighted the role of the Islamabad police, the Ministry of Interior, the Punjab government, the ISI and the IB, and contained details of matters related to former law minister Zahid Hamid. The report stated that Faiz Hameed as Maj Gen DG (C) ISI was authorised by the then army chief and the ISI director general to sign the agreement with protesters. Moreover, then prime minister Shahid Khaqan Abbasi and then interior minister Ahsan Iqbal also agreed on retired Gen Faiz Hameed's role as a mediator.

## Clash between Pak - Afghan forces at Torkham

**F.P. Report**

LANDI KOTAL: Arm clash took place at Pak-Afghan sharing border Torkham on Monday evening. Official and local sources informed that arm battle erupted when the Afghan border security attempted to build post on disputed land near Pakistani post, bigbang at the border.

On refusal of the Afghan forces, the Pak troops carried out warning ariel firing that caused full fledged arm fight. The sources informed that one Pakistani soldier sustained injuries during cross firing and was shifted to forces health center for medical treatment.

Torkham border was suspended for all kinds of movement and forces of the both neighboring countries assumed positions at the crossing, sources said. On the other hand arm fighting between the two countries created fear in Bacha Maina village of the border and the residents started evacuating their houses and took refuge somewhere in Landi Kotal.

One resident, Abdullah said forces of the both countries being utilized light and heavy weapons while targeting one another positions. Till filing cross firing at the border was in progress, sources said. It's to be stated here that since long border officials of Pak-Afghan object on one another while erecting new post or new construction near the border.

## 'Fresh polls no solution': Abbasi

**F.P. Report**

KARACHI: Former prime minister and top leader of the newly launched political party Awam Pakistan Shahid Khaqan Abbasi has said that holding polls anew will not solve problems faced by the country and urged the army chief, chief justice of Pakistan (CJP) and politicians to find a way out.

"Even fresh polls won't solve the problems in the country. Army chief, CJP and politicians should sit together and determine a way to run the country," he said while speaking to journalists outside an accountability court on Monday. It may be noted that political rivals of the ruling coalition — Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) and Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) — have time and again called for new elections.

Political parties including Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI), Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam Fazl (JUI-F), Jamat-e-Islami (JI) alleged vote rigging, interference, and manipulation of the poll results in the February 8 elections. Abbasi's statement about the fresh polls came after the National Accountability Bureau (NAB) withdrew a reference against the ex-premier. Referring to the graft reference pertaining to illegal appointments in Pakistan State Oil (PSO), the ex-premier said that the statement of only a single witness was recorded against him in four years.

He said that the reference was not against corruption and was made in misuse of powers by the anti-graft body. Abbasi went on to say that "the sooner NAB is abolished the better it would be for the country". "Such cases are started under political engineering. Today is a day to celebrate as the court exonerated us from the charges," he added.

The former PM and others were accused of illegally appointing a former managing director of PSO, misuse of authority, and causing losses to the national exchequer, in a supplementary reference filed in 2020 with the LNG terminal case. An accountability court in Karachi acquitted Abbasi and others in the LNG case in April this year.



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif distributing awards among young entrepreneurs and high achieves in various fields.

# Welfare of Balochistan's people top priority of govt: PM

**Saqib Mushtaq**

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif Monday held a meeting with a delegation led by President National Party Dr Abdul Malik Baloch and discussed the overall political situation in Balochistan province.

Senator Jan Muhammad Jamali and member National Assembly Pullain Baloch were part of the delegation. During the meeting, the prime minister said welfare and well being of the people of Balochistan was the top priority of the government, adding steps were being taken to provide equal opportunities of employment to youth of Balochistan.

Dr Abdul Malik Baloch thanked the prime minister for solarization of agriculture tubewells in Balochistan. He said the solarization of agriculture tubewells fulfilled a longstanding demand of farmers of Balochistan and such measures were a positive step towards the development and prosperity of Balochistan. Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar, Minister for Law and Justice Azam Nazir Tarar and Advisor to Prime Minister for Political Affairs Rana Sanaullah were present in the meeting.

**Shehbaz pledges support for youth to transform Pakistan into a developed nation:** Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif pledged to allocate ample resources to the nation's youth to help transform the country into a thriving, developed nation.

Speaking at an event marking the International Day of Youth, organized by the Prime Minister's Youth Programme, he recalled his service as Chief Minister of Punjab under the leadership of President Pakistan Muslim League Nawaz Muhammad Nawaz Sharif. He aimed to provide opportunities for the youth to change the country's destiny as prime minister.

"The country's youth have the potential to elevate the nation to new heights, if given access to modern education and resources," he added.

He expressed his vision of equipping talented youth with modern education, Information Technology, and Artificial Intelligence to spark a revolution in the country, similar to the progress seen in China. He highlighted his previous efforts in providing modern facilities to students at Danish Schools.

Shehbaz Sharif also lamented that, despite having abundant resources and 77 years of independence, the country remains heavily burdened by debt. He noted that extreme poverty prevents many from affording basic needs, such as arranging marriages for their daughters, while the country's elite class enjoys significant privileges. He stated that this year, the federal government will provide one million smartphones, tablets, and laptops to top-performing students across the country, including those from Azad Jammu and Kashmir, Gilgit-Baltistan, and remote areas of

Balochistan. Additionally, each province has its separate programs to support students, he added.

Additionally, the prime minister announced that he will personally fund the education of 1,000 agricultural graduates in China, aiming to equip them with modern technology to boost agri production. Huawei has also committed to sending 200,000 youth for IT training and advanced education, he said adding that he will unveil a comprehensive development plan for the country on August 14.

The prime minister stated that nothing was impossible in this world and emphasized the need to progress by learning from past mistakes. He assured that the country's hockey will be revived. Praising javelin thrower Arshad Nadeem, he noted that Nadeem had won a gold medal for the country after a drought of over 40 years. At the beginning of the event, the prime minister officially launched several key initiatives, including the Commonwealth Youth Alliance Secretariat in Islamabad, the Digital Learning Portal, the PM Green Youth Movement, and the AI for Youth Programme, which offers Intel-certified skills to young people. Other initiatives included Smart Youth, Smart Pakistan, and the distribution of one million tablets and mobile phones to high-achieving intermediate students. He also announced the registration of the National Volunteer Corps. Later, the Prime Minister presented awards to successful young entrepreneurs.

# MQM-P threatens to quit coalition govt

**F.P. Report**

KARACHI: Amid the ongoing ambiguity surrounding the future of Sindh Governor Kamran Tessori, the Muttahi Qaumi Movement-Pakistan (MQM-P) has said that it will have no reason to be part of the Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif-led coalition government if any unilateral decision is made regarding the said Constitutional post.

"The Sindh governor belongs to the MQM-P. It was decided [in meetings] with the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) that Tessori would remain the governor," senior MQM-P leader Farooq Sattar said. The Karachi-based party's warning comes as last week sources media that the PML-N-led federal government has come to terms with the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP), which rules Sindh, to replace Tessori with the former's leader and ex-Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) chief Bashir Memon.

However, the rumours didn't sit well with the MQM-P as Tessori doubled down on those spreading such reports and said that

he enjoyed the confidence of PM Shehbaz, President Asif Ali Zardari and his own party and would continue to serve the people till the time he is in office. "I would tell those behind these reports that I am not the one who gets panic [by such reports]," he said.

Meanwhile, Sattar outrightly dismissed the rumours, saying: "No one talked to us nor did any consultation take place." The former Karachi mayor's views were echoed by his colleague Khajawa Izharul Hassan who also dismissed the potential removal of Tessori citing a social contract which provisioned representation of the province's urban areas via the governor when the chief minister belonged to the rural areas.

However, presenting the Centre's point of view on the matter, Foreign Minister and Deputy Prime Minister Ishaq Dar has said that a decision on the issue of the Sindh governor post is expected soon. However, he refuted the reports suggesting the appointment of PML-N's Memon for the said post.

It is to be noted that the MQM-P played a key role in the ousting of the

Pakistan-Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI)-led government after it decided to part ways with the government to support the Pakistan Democratic Movement's (PDM) vote of no-confidence against the then prime minister Imran Khan in April 2022.

The Dr Khalid Maqbool Siddiqui-led party was subsequently a part of the PDM government. It was once again wooed by the PML-N to join them in the Centre following the February 8 polls where no party managed to secure a simple majority in the National Assembly. The MQM-P, which currently has 21 seats in the lower house of parliament — 17 general and four reserved — is a key ally of the PM Shehbaz-led government whose future hangs in a delicate balance owing to the slim majority of the ruling coalition, especially after the July 12 Supreme Court verdict that not only resurrected the PTI in the assemblies but also declared it eligible for reserved seats. Therefore, the loss of the MQM-P's support by the PML-N might have drastic consequences for the incumbent government and the political landscape altogether.

# PTI hints at moving no-trust motion in NA

**F.P. Report**

RAWALPINDI: Senior Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leader Ali Muhammad Khan on Monday hinted to move no-trust motion in National Assembly.

Talking to media outside Adiala Jail, PTI leader said that no-confidence motion may be moved against the prime minister if their mandate isn't restored. He said that the elections were held on the direction of Chief Justice of Pakistan on Feb 8 but the mandate of PTI was stolen that day.

He also demanded a judicial commission to probe the alleged rigging into Feb 8 elections. "We'll not move the no-trust motion on the orders of United States or Ambassador Donald Lu," said Ali Muhammad Khan. He added that the government is standing on Form-47 and there is no democracy in the country these days. According to PTI leader, there will be anarchy in the

country if the verdict of Supreme Court isn't implemented on reserved seats. He also demanded to investigate the May 9 vandalism. He added that PTI is ready to tender an apology if its party workers were involved in the May 9 riots.

Meanwhile, The Imran Khan-founded Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) has called for the issuance of a notification regarding the next chief justice of Pakistan (CJP). "The PTI demands notification regarding the next CJP be issued," Chairman Barrister Gohar Ali Khan said while talking to the media along with other party leaders on Monday.

"We want to make it abundantly clear that the extension [in the term of the incumbent CJP] is entirely inadmissible." The PTI's demand came as Federal Law Minister Azam Nazeer Tarar clarified last month that Chief Justice Qazi Faez Isa was not interested in his extension.

Gohar also expressed reservation over the Supreme Court's ruling that upheld the Election Commission of Pakistan's (ECP) verdict regarding the recount in the National Assembly seats — NA-154, 81 and 79, giving the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) much-needed relief. The country's apex court earlier today overturned the Lahore High Court's (LHC) verdict declaring a recount of votes in the three NA constituencies null where the PML-N's candidates were declared victorious.

"The members of the National Assembly (MNAs) have taken oath and reversing them stands in contradiction to justice," he said, adding that the Supreme Court's verdict on the three seats is against what justice requires. The PTI chief announced that the party would file a review petition against the ruling as the party has reservations over the verdict.

# India blocks Bangladeshis fleeing chaotic regime change

DHAKA (AFP): India has arrested nearly a dozen Bangladeshis attempting to cross the border to escape violence and political tumult following deadly protests that led to the ouster of prime minister Sheikh Hasina, border officials said on Monday.

Hundreds more are waiting along the frontier pleading for permission to cross, India's Border Security Force (BSF) said. Hindus are the largest minority faith in mostly Muslim Bangladesh, and are considered a steadfast support base for Hasina's party, the Awami League.

After Hasina's abrupt resignation and escape to India ended her 15 years of autocratic rule on August 5, there were numerous reports of attacks against Hindu households, temples and businesses. India's BSF said 11 Bangladesh nationals had been arrested since Sunday trying to "sneak" across the frontier into

West Bengal state.

"Several" hundred Bangladeshis nationals are still waiting in no-man's land to cross over the border," BSF deputy inspector general Amit Kumar Tyagi told AFP. Bangladesh is almost entirely encircled by India, with the border stretching for more than 4,000 kilometres, large parts of which are unfenced. Four Bangladeshis were also "repelled" from India's Assam state, chief minister Himanta Biswa Sarma said on social media platform X.

New Delhi has kept a wary eye on the fall of Hasina, who pursued a delicate balancing act of enjoying support from India while maintaining strong relations with China. Hindus account for around 8 per cent of Bangladesh's 170 million people. Over the past week, religious rights groups said they documented more than 200 incidents of attacks on minority communities in

Bangladesh, a figure that also includes Christians and Buddhists.

The security situation has since dramatically improved, and on Monday Bangladesh police resumed patrols of the capital Dhaka, ending a strike that left a law and order vacuum. India's home minister Amit Shah said on Friday a committee had been created to monitor the situation "to ensure the safety and security of Indian nationals, Hindus, and other minority communities living there".

Interim government leader Muhammad Yunus's "council of advisors", the de facto cabinet now administering the country, said it had noted with "grave concern" some attacks on Hindus and other minorities. In its first official statement on Sunday night, the cabinet said it would work to "find ways to resolve such heinous attacks".

# SC orders recounting in NA-79, 81, 154

**F.P. Report**

ISLAMABAD: The Supreme Court (SC) has declared null and void a decision of the Lahore High Court, and reinstated a decision given by the Election Commission of Pakistan after a recount regarding three constituencies of the National Assembly.

A three-member bench

headed by Chief Justice of Pakistan Qazi Faez Isa pronounced a reserved verdict regarding the recount in three constituencies of the National Assembly. The bench also included Justice Naeem Akhtar Afghan and Justice Aqeel Ahmad Abbasi.

The Supreme Court allowed the appeals of PML-N leaders related to a recount of votes from various polling stations

in NA-154, NA-81 and NA-79. The PML-N leaders declared successful in the recount were reinstated.

The Supreme Court passed the decision by a majority of two to one, as CJP Isa and Justice Afghan accepted the PML-N leaders' appeals against the LHC decision, while Justice Aqeel Abbasi disagreed with the decision.

# Bushra Bibi's bail rejected

**F.P. Report**

RAWALPINDI: The Anti-Terrorism Court of Rawalpindi has rejected the interim bail pleas of Bushra Bibi, the wife of former prime minister Imran Khan, in connection with 12 cases related to the May 9, 2023 incidents.

The court, presided over by Judge Malik Ijaz Asif, has ordered the police to complete their investigation of these cases within the next seven days. The hearing, which took place at Adiala Jail, saw Bushra Bibi's interim bail applications dismissed as the court emphasized the necessity of investigating the numerous charges against her.

"When a suspect is arrested in so many cases, an investigation is necessary," the court remarked and adjourned the hearing of all related cases until August 22. The May 9 cases, which involve over 500 suspected individuals, have led to significant legal proceedings. The presence of all 500 suspects was marked. Several high-profile figures, including Imran Khan, Sheikh Rashid, Shibli Faraz, Ghulam Sarwar, Sadakat Abbasi, Shireen Mazari, and Azam Swati, were also present during the hearing at the specially arranged courtroom within Adiala Jail. PTI Founder Imran Khan was also produced in the courtroom set up in Adiala Jail. The cases stem from the tragic events of May 9, which resulted in widespread unrest and led to a series of arrests and legal actions.





## Singh– The Dilemma of Backward class

Murtaza Rafiq Bhutto

Sindh known as the major contributor in the country's GDP and yet! The backward class live in the province at least that is how they are treated by the policy makers, quota reformers, and basic necessity providers. This dilemma is created with deliberate push-back on the name of religion, mother tongue, cast, and creed. With time we have learned to live with it, but we should start worrying because according to the recent census, this a transition period from one generation to another with major population aged 15 to 40.

The politics of division has already created the differentiated situation in the society, which requires a change. A change in the politics, methodology of running the daily businesses, government policies, and to eliminate this dilemma of Backward Class. In past, the ruling party's slogan surrounded with basic necessities like Food, Cloth, and Shelter. In current circumstances, the basic necessities have changed & Youth demands basic facilities such as quality Education, Employment opportunities, and Health care facilities that includes rehabilitation centres to prevent from drug addiction.

Recent demands raised by provincial opposition party on quota system reflects the spark that is required to ignite the quota reform movement in our country. Particularly, in the province of Sindh. Where education system has been compromised, undermined, and failed to provide the quality education to our upcoming generations. Education Minister wrote a letter to the opposition members and invited them to contribute their efforts, suggestions for the betterment of education system, and to adopt the government schools in their respective constituencies.

Unfortunately, I believe they will not come forward wholeheartedly & contribute in the betterment of education. According to the history, Oppositions political moves are based on the differences between urban & rural areas. Acting as the heirs of karachiites, but failed to deliver from time to time. The real MQM which emerged with a purpose to protect the rights of Urdu speaking population has lost their path and power politics has become a motive. Supporters are losing faith in the current MQM leadership.

Let's take an example of Bangladesh's on going quota reform movement led by students protest against quota system. Recently, I saw a picture of founding father of their respective country Sheikh Mujib-ur-Rehman on social media with a caption "Your daughter has failed you & your politics". Afraid of the day when this kind of situation emerges in our country.

There is a need to revamp the education system, the technology have been enhanced and we are still stuck in introducing the same old books in new packaging, the corruption allegations have been raised in the past over different tenders, opposition had played their politics on education, quota system in admissions, and job opportunities which resulted the collision. People who applied for the jobs, gave a test in IBA had no other option but to wait till things are sorted out. This made me raise a question in front of opposition, are you really worried about the people of our country or is it just a political stroke to retain the vote bank in Karachi, Hyderabad, and Sukkur? Because if you are really worried about the people, than those who appeared in tests are also human beings, ain't they?

Furthermore, if they are considered human beings than what is the reason behind sudden quota reform demand? I believe this move is considered on the basis of differences, and there is no better option but to eliminate the quota system except minority, disabled, and women quota. If there is a need of quota reforms than the transgender have the first right & must be considered on priority because of the fact that they are neglected, and unacceptable in our society. The quota politics inside the province & urban or rural areas are completely unacceptable, and condemnable.

Citizen of urban & rural areas must know that there is a provision in constitution, and they have a right to take a legal action & raise their voices against the quota reforms. According to the Article 33 of the constitution of Pakistan states "The State shall discourage parochial, racial, tribal sectarian and provincial prejudices among the citizens" and Article 37 (A, B, and C) that states "The State shall - (a) promote, with special care, the educational and economic interests of backward classes or areas; (b) remove illiteracy and provide free and compulsory secondary education within minimum possible period; (c) make technical and professional education generally available and higher education equally accessible to all on the basis of merit".

However, employment opportunities by the government are very low in graph if we compare it with the requirement of the market. The actions are required to create a comfortable environment in the private sector to enhance job opportunities for our youth. Government has to create a pathway for the youth to flourish in their desired careers, whether it's in the performing arts, education, engineering, finance etc. Government had already introduced programs like Benazir Bhutto Shaheed Youth Development Program (BBBSYP) which provides quality education to the youth and also pays stipend to learn.

The integration is vital to enhance the literacy rate of the province. For instance, if somebody who wants to get an education in the field of arts, and could not afford the fees. Student should know that there is program of Government which can pay the fees for his education, whether as a loan or specific grants on merit basis and Student can return the amount in the future just like Akhuwat foundation's university.

Integration between STEVTA, BBSYDP, College, School funded by the government or on public-private partnership is required and eligibility criteria must be minimalist so that maximum numbers of students can avail the opportunity. Second demand that involves is job opportunities & skill development opportunities to gain experience that is essential for the private sector. The government of Sindh is already working in industrial sector, economic zones, Public-Private partnership programs which needs a human resource, and the government can introduce paid internship-fellowship programs for students that are seeking an experience.

There's a necessity of investments in private sectors & provisions for ease of doing business in the province, and to invite/requests the private sector companies to enhance and expand their respective business further in order to create job opportunities. Third necessity is the health care facility, I would say that the government has set an examples like NICVD, but there are certain differences in the treatment of an individual. The treatment is funded by the government, and also offers the treatment to private patients who can afford the treatment on their own. Both are treated under the same roof, the only difference is of the A/C rooms in it and a little more care, and ease for the private patients.

Another alarming situation for all of us is to tackle the drug abuse in schools, colleges, and universities of Karachi. Specifically, in the south district. Recently, federal and provincial authorities have decided to work together on the eradication of drugs issue. Minister of Narcotics Control has shown seriousness on this particular issue and honestly, the results are visible on the grounds. The drugs usage by the youth will remain in the society, until or unless they are willing to quit it & the parent's, teacher's, administration, and society takes a step forward in order to cooperate with the government agencies.

I wish this necessary step should have taken in the previous government tenure but unfortunately nobody saw the effects of drug abuse in schools, colleges, and universities. Political Differences apart, Memon's vision deserves encouragement by the society, especially by the parents that wants to save their children's future. Recently, I got a call from a friend who requested if I can request somebody in NICVD to accommodate his parent in AC room, as we all know the temperature arises in summers and effects the suffocation inside the rooms.



**KARACHI:** A large crowd selects and purchases national flags, badges, and other items as Independence Day preparations begin in full swing. —INP Photo

## Sindh govt has started free air ambulance service under LGCA

F.P. Report

KARACHI : Provincial Ministers Syed Nasir Hussain Shah and Saeed Ghani have said that the Sindh government has started a free air ambulance service under the Local Government Council Association.

Today is a happy day for us that we are fulfilling the vision of our Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari. The agreement between Sindh Local Council Association and Aircraft Company ASSL for free air ambulance service in Sindh will ensure the provision of facilities to the people of the province. Rumors of change governor Sindh and Sindh cabinet are seen on social media.

The purpose of the meeting with President Asif Ali Zardari in Islamabad was to discuss the opening of a campus of a higher institute in Punjab in Sindh. He expressed these views while speaking and interacting with the media on

the occasion of the Air Ambulance Service agreement between Sindh Local Council Association and ASSL. Minister LG Saeed Ghani said that the Air Ambulance project is important, through which patients from Ghotki-Sukkur Khairpur will be transferred by Karachi Air Ambulance.

Ghani said that there will be an agreement between ASSL Aviation and the three local councils. Bringing patients from cities 6 hours away from Karachi is a problem. Now Air Ambulance service is starting in this regard, this is an achievement, with this project we will be able to save precious lives. Minister Syed Nasir Shah said that today is a day of happiness. Chairman PPP Bilawal Bhutto Zardari had this vision which is being fulfilled. It is important to start air ambulance service in Sindh today.

Nasir Shah said that an agreement for air ambulance service is being

made between Local Councils Sindh and ASSL. Nasir Shah said that journalist Jan Muhammad Maher had to be shifted from Sukkur to Karachi when he was assassinated, but it took time for him to transfer, so he could not move. Nasir Shah said that this air ambulance service will also be extended to Hyderabad-Thar-Nawabshah Larkana Airport.

Nasir Shah said that there is a plan to operate the air ambulance at the airstrips in Badin. Chairman of Local Council Association Sindh Syed Kamil Haider Shah said that Air Ambulance service is being started in Sindh, with this air ambulance, patients can be transported from South Punjab and North Sindh to Karachi and their lives can be saved.

He said that three district councils of Sindh are contracting with ASSL Aviation Company. In which the said company

will operate 5 flights per month free ASSL for Sukkur-Ghotki Khairpur District Councils. CEO Airlift Sales and Services Akbar Jafri said that we are providing air ambulance service across Pakistan. Currently transporting patients from Multan, Rahim Yar Khan, Quetta, Balochistan and other cities, now starting air ambulance service from Sukkur to Karachi.

He said that patients from Sukkur Ghotki and Kashmir can be shifted to Karachi with this service and under the contract with Local Council Association Sindh, we have provided an aircraft full of facilities, which will have stents, ventilators, oxygen, doctors and paramedical staff. Later, an agreement signing ceremony was held.

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**گورنمنٹ پولی ٹیکنیک انسٹیٹیوٹ یکہ غنڈہ ضلع مہمند**

**نوٹس داخلہ برائے تعلیمی سال 2024-25**

گورنمنٹ پولی ٹیکنیک انسٹیٹیوٹ یکہ غنڈہ ضلع مہمند میں تعلیمی سال 2024-25 کے لئے درج ذیل ٹیکنا بوجیز میں تین سالہ ڈیپلومہ DAE کیلئے درخواستیں طلب ہیں۔

1۔ ایکٹر ٹیکنا بوجی 2۔ سول ٹیکنا بوجی 3۔ ٹیلی کمیونیکیشن ٹیکنا بوجی 4۔ مانگب ٹیکنا بوجی

تعلیمی قابلیت:-

1۔ میٹرک سائنس مارکس کم از کم 40 فی صد 2۔ ٹی ای سیس 3۔ II-G دو سالہ سرٹیفکیٹ شیڈول داخلہ:-

داخلہ فارم پراکٹیکل کالج حڈ سے دفتری اوقات میں 12/08/2024 سے ملتے- ملتے 200/- روپے ادا کر کے وصول کیے جاسکتے ہیں۔ فارم جمع کرانے کی آخری تاریخ 29/08/2024 ہے۔ میرٹ لسٹ 02/09/2024 کو کالج نوٹس بورڈ پر لگائی جائے گی۔ انٹرویو 3 تا 5 اگست 2024 کو کالج حڈ میں ہوئے۔

داخلہ کیلئے اہلیت صرف میرٹ کی بنیاد پر ہوگی۔ ضلع مہمند کے امیدواروں کو داخلہ میں ترجیح دی جائے گی۔ باطلی کی سہولت موجود ہے۔

**نوٹ:-**

DIT میں بھی داخلہ جاری ہیں۔ مزید معلومات کیلئے اوارڈ حڈ سے دفتری اوقات میں درج ذیل نمبر پر رابطہ کریں۔

**المشہور:-**  
**پرنسپل صاحب**  
گورنمنٹ پولی ٹیکنیک انسٹیٹیوٹ یکہ غنڈہ ضلع مہمند  
رابطہ نمبر: 0330-9032529 - 0333-9278285

INF(P)2029/24

**TENDER NOTICE**

Quotations / Rates are required from KPPRA registered firms under the KPPRA rules -2014 through single stage single envelope method for the followino items, till 27<sup>th</sup> of August 2024. The rates offered will be applicable for one year. The bid will be opened on 27<sup>th</sup> August 2024 at 11:30 AM (in the presence of Firms representatives if available). Detail can be obtained from the office of the undersigned during duty hours.

S.NO.	TYPE	REQUIREMENTS
1	Laboratory Chemicals	05% CDR
2	Bedding, Clothing, Uniform	05% CDR
3	Dental Material / Items / Chemicals	05% CDR
4	X- Ray Items	05% CDR
5	Homeopathic Medicines	05% CDR
6	OT Items	05% CDR
7	Emergency Medicines	05% CDR + on Flat Discount Rate
8	Sehat Card Pharmacy	
9	Sehat Card Lab./ Diagnostic Service	

**MEDICAL SUPERINTENDENT**  
DHQ Hospital Shangla

INF(P)#2014/24

## CM Maryam meets Imam Masjid-e-Nabawi

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif accorded a warm welcome to the Imam Masjid-e-Nabawi Dr. Salah bin Muhammad Al Budair on his arrival at the Chief Minister's Office here on Monday.

The CM said, "On behalf of people of Punjab, I welcome your highness, Pakistan is your home." She also prayed for the health and long life of the Saudi King, Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques. The CM said the friendship of the Saudi royal family with her father Muhammad Nawaz Sharif is enviable. She added, "I follow Hazrat Umar Farooq's (RA) governance model. Hazrat Umar Farooq (RA) was a beacon of light for the rulers. Our powerhouse is in Madinah. I don't know much about Lahore, but I know about every street in Madinah."

CM Maryam Nawaz noted that the meeting with Saudi Crown Prince Muhammad bin Salman along with Prime Minister Shahbaz Sharif was great. She added, "Crown Prince Muhammad bin Salman wants to serve his people which is my mission as well. Prince Muhammad bin Salman is serving the people of Saudi Arabia with sincerity," she said. The CM said, "After the Qur'an and Sunnah, we take guidance from Imam of Kaaba and Imam of the Prophet's Mosque in Saudi Arabia." She added listening to the recitation of Imam Dr. Salah bin Muhammad Al-Budair, one's grief fades away and one's faith is revitalised. She underscored visiting Imam of Masjid-e-Nabawi is a great honour for every Pakistani.

Imam Masjid-e-Nabawi Dr. Salah bin Muhammad Al-Budair expressed good wishes for the people of Punjab from the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques and the people of Madinah. He thanked Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif for the warm welcome, and said that Pakistan and Saudi Arabia are like two pole stars shining together in the sky. He added Pakistan and Saudi Arabia are strategic friends, they were in the past and will be in the future. He highlighted Muhammad Nawaz Sharif is a friend of Pakistan, his leadership is a source of improvement and prosperity for Pakistan. "Maryam Nawaz Sharif is following in his footsteps as a daughter."

Dr. Salah bin Muhammad Al-Budair said, "I was overjoyed at listening to the speech of Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif, I pray may Allah keep her love for Pakistani people intact." Dr. Salah bin Muhammad Al-Budair was given full hospitality on arrival in Punjab. He called Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif his sister and invited her to visit Madinah Munawara. He also prayed for the development of Pakistan, the prosperity of its people and the blessing of good fortune on them.

Ambassador of Saudi Arabia to Pakistan Nawaf bin Saeed Al-Maliki, DG Ministry of Islamic Affairs Mehtab Muhammad Al-Gadaei, Abdul Rahman Abdul Karim Al Harbi, Director of Protocol Hani Obaidul Ramzani and Public Relations and Protocol Officer Zahid Malik were present in the meeting. Senior Provincial Minister Marriyum Aurangzeb, Chief Secretary Zahid Akhtar Zaman, Principal Secretary to CM Sajid Zafar Dal and other relevant officers were also present.

## No shortage of medicines in market: Minister

LAHORE (APP): Provincial Health Minister Khawaja Imran Nazir chaired a meeting to address concerns about medicine shortages in the market, here on Monday.

The Drug Control Wing gave a comprehensive briefing on the current status of medicine availability and distribution during the meeting. "Under the guidance of the Punjab Chief Minister, the Health Department remains steadfast in ensuring that medicines are readily available in hospitals and the market," stated Provincial Health Minister Khawaja Imran Nazir. He assured, "There is no shortage of medicines in either the market or hospitals, with ample stock available." Khawaja Imran Nazir highlighted, "35.6 million tablets of TB medicine Myrin-P and over 500,000 tablets of Ethambutol are in stock."

**Government College of Technology**  
**Kohat Road Peshawar**  
Phone: +92 91 92 12739, Email: GCT\_Peshawar@pktevtia.gov.pk  
Website: www.gctpesh.edu.pk  
Nationally accredited with NATTC  
Internationally accredited with APAAC

**ADMISSION OPEN**

Applications are invited for to 1st year Diploma of Associate Engineer (DAE) at Government College of Technology, Peshawar for the session 2024-25. Candidates having CNIC / FORM-B of the following Districts / Areas can apply for the Technologies as mentioned against each technology given below;

S#	Technology	Regular Monitoring Shift Program	(Self-Sustained)
1	Electrical, Civil, Mechanical	District Peshawar Only	KPK / Pakistan
2	Electronics	Districts of Peshawar, Kohat, Karak, Nowshera, Bannu, D.I.Khan, Lakki, Marwat,	
3	Chemical, Auto & Diesel	All Khyber Pakhtunkhwa except NMDs	

**Schedule:**

	Issuance & Submission of Prospectus/Form	Morning Shift 12 <sup>th</sup> August 2024 to 26 <sup>th</sup> August 2024	2nd Shift 12 <sup>th</sup> August 2024 to 26 <sup>th</sup> August 2024	Venue Student Clerk \ Admission Office
1	Hiif Test	26 <sup>th</sup> August 2024	26 <sup>th</sup> August 2024	Admission Office
2	Sports	26 <sup>th</sup> August 2024	-----	College Ground
3	Provisional Merit	28 <sup>th</sup> August 2024	28 <sup>th</sup> August 2024	Notice Board
4	Final Merit List	29 <sup>th</sup> August 2024	29 <sup>th</sup> August 2024	Notice Board
5	Interview	30 <sup>th</sup> & 31 <sup>st</sup> August 2024	2 <sup>nd</sup> & 3 <sup>rd</sup> September 2024	College MainHall

**Eligibility:**

- SSC in Science subjects or TSC with at least 40% marks. Incomplete applications will be rejected.
- Age limit is 16-25 years (with normal fee) on last date of form submission.
- 20 marks shall be added with SSC marks for Hafiz-e-Quran after qualifying Hiif test.
- Last date for admission on reserved quota including Newly Merged Districts is 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2024, after that no application will be entertained for admission.
- The candidates among the merit list, who fail to appear before the admission committee for interview on their respective date & time, will be considered absent and the seat will be filled by next candidate from the merit list.
- Full admission fee must be deposited at the time of admission / interview otherwise candidate's right of admission will be considered cancelled and his seat will be filled by the next candidate from merit list.

**Note:**

- Prospectus/Form is available at Student Clerk Office/Admission Office @ Rs 200/- during office timing.
- Classes of 1<sup>st</sup> year classes shall be commenced w.e.f 4<sup>th</sup> September 2024.
- Candidates shall apply for morning and second shift separately.

INF(P)#2001/24 **ENGR. FAZAL-E-ELAHI**  
Director Admissions, Ph: 091-7086256





PESHAWAR: Deputy Commissioner Peshawar listening to the complaints of people from minorities during specially organized open kacheri.

## KP govt to launch Taleem Card: Saif

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Advisor to the Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa for Information and Public Relations, Barrister Dr Saif has said that after the success of the Sehat card, the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government is all set to launch the "Taleem Card" to enable students from backward areas to access quality education from

reputable institutions.

Barrister Dr. Saif stated that following the vision of Imran Khan the KP government is on the right track of development, and people in the province are getting free treatment and medicine in the hospitals.

He said that Chief Minister Ali Amin Gandapur would provide free solar panels to one hundred thousand deserv-

ing families in the province.

He stated that the KP government is launching welfare and development schemes while on the other side the form 47, federal and Punjab governments are busy making TikTok videos. Instead of welfare and development projects, they are wasting time on the transfers and posting of patwaries, and jail superintendents.

## CS chairs meeting to review preparations

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Chief Secretary of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Nadeem Aslam Chaudhary, presided over a meeting held in Peshawar on Monday regarding preparations for the 77th Independence Day celebrations. Additional Chief Secretary Home and Tribal Affairs Department, Abid Majeed, relevant administrative secretaries, and other officials were present at the meeting, while commissioners and deputy commissioners participated via video link.

The meeting received a detailed briefing from Secretary Administration, Muhammad Israr, about the activities planned for Independence Day. Commissioners and deputy commissioners informed the meeting about the programs planned in their respective districts. On this occasion, the Chief Secretary stated that, as in previous years, this year's Independence Day would be celebrated with great enthusiasm and zeal. He instructed that national flags be hoisted on all government buildings and that they be illuminated with decorative lights.

Flag hoisting ceremonies, rallies, and special walks should be organized at divisional headquarters and districts. Similarly, educational institutions should organize events in connection with Independence Day, including awareness speeches and sports competitions.

He further emphasized that Independence Day activities should be highlighted in newspapers, television, and social media. Additionally, he mentioned that August 14th is a day to renew our commitment to making Pakistan an exemplary welfare state, a goal that we all must continue to work towards diligently.



PESHAWAR: Renowned business leader and former president of the SCCI, Abdul Hameed Gorwara, is meeting with JUI-F chief Maulana Fazlur Rehman.

## Population Dept arranges seminar on national narrative for growth

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Special Assistant to the Chief Minister for Population Welfare Department, Malik Liaqat Ali Khan, said that the provision of basic facilities to the people depends directly on population welfare and family planning. Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Sardar Ali Amin Gandapur, is paying special attention to population welfare as providing relief to the people is a key part of the public agenda.

Speaking as a special guest at a one-day seminar on "Sensitization on National Narrative for Population Welfare Growth (TAWAZUN)" for District Population Welfare Officers, Malik Liaqat Ali Khan said that we need to work together with sincerity and honesty to achieve Pakistan's development goals.

The seminar was attend-



ed by Secretary Population Welfare Department, Imad Ali Lohani, Director General Population Welfare, Ayesha Ashan, and District Population Welfare Officers. The department provided a detailed briefing on its one-year performance during the seminar.

Addressing the seminar, Malik Liaqat Ali Khan said that we need to keep pace with the world, otherwise, we will be left behind in this modern era. He emphasized the need to create

awareness about population welfare and family planning among people for a better life.

He said that with the increasing population, it becomes difficult to provide food, water, health facilities, and other resources. Family planning improves the health of mothers and children and reduces complications during pregnancy.

We will make rural centers more active to ensure the provision of the best

reproductive health facilities to people at their doorstep. Malik Liaqat Ali Khan said that small families can make better financial plans and provide good education and upbringing to their children, which helps reduce issues like unemployment, poverty, and homelessness. He said that by promoting family planning and population welfare policies, social and economic stability can be achieved, which can guarantee a developed society.

## Governor visits Khyber Eye Foundation Hospital, reviews facilities

PESHAWAR (APP): Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Governor, Faisal Karim Kundi, visited the Khyber Eye Foundation Hospital here on Monday and reviewed the facilities in the operation theaters, wards, and the treatments provided for eye diseases.

Chairman of Khyber Eye Foundation, Adnan Jallil, briefed the Governor Faisal Karim Kundi on the objectives and medical services of the hospital.

The briefing revealed that since its inception, the hospital has treated nearly one million patients. Additionally, around 32,000 free pairs of glasses have been distributed, and approximately 7,000 surgeries have been performed.

Governor Faisal Karim Kundi commended the Khyber Eye Foundation for its commendable work



in providing free treatment for eye diseases to the underprivileged.

He extended his congratulations to the hospital's administration and medical staff for their efforts.

He emphasized that institutions providing free

medical care to marginalized communities hold a special place in his heart and assured the Khyber Eye Foundation of his full support.

Governor Kundi praised the organization's well-organized team and network as evidence of its

success and expressed his willingness to contribute in any way he could to support the institution.

He also assured that the federal government and international charitable organizations would provide the necessary facilities for the hospital.

## Inclusive Business Development Park unveiled in Peshawar

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Economic Zones Development and Management Company (KPEZDMC), in collaboration with the Khyber Pass Economic Corridor (KPEC), launched Inclusive Business Development Park (IBDP), a pioneering initiative aimed at empowering entrepreneurs from diverse backgrounds, including men, women, persons with disabilities, and transgender individuals.

The park was formally inaugurated by the Special Assistant to the Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa for Industries, Commerce, and Technical Education, Abdul Karim Tordher here on Monday. The same project is funded by the World Bank through the KPEC, demonstrating a strong commitment to foster inclusive economic growth in the region.

The Inclusive Business Development Park, initially established in Peshawar Economic Zone, is a strategic effort to nurture small business ventures, enabling them to scale up and

achieve long-term sustainability.

The IBDP will serve as a model for future replication in other feasible locations across Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, aiming to create a robust network of inclusive business ecosystems throughout the province.

The IBDP project is being executed by a consortium, including World Bank, Khyber Pass Economic Corridor (KPEC) and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Economic Zones Development and Management Company (KPEZDMC).

The project is valued at PKR 71 million, with substantial contributions from both KPEZDMC and KPEC.

The primary financial support is provided by the World Bank, supplemented by additional funding from KPEZDMC and KPEC.

These organizations are committed to provide a comprehensive range of services to support resident startups, including those operating from homes and other scattered clusters. KPEZDMC will offer direct support to businesses housed within the IBDP,

facilitating their ability to manage, trade, and exhibit their products effectively.

The park will also provide essential civic amenities and a dedicated training facility to enhance the capacity of entrepreneurs and their workforce.

The IBDP offers an extensive array of services designed to support small-scale manufacturers and entrepreneurs. It will facilitate the buying and selling of products for small-scale manufacturers, providing a crucial platform for market access. Unlike traditional business incubation centers, the IBDP will feature a production house also, allowing small-scale businesses to manufacture their products on-site.

The park will function as an expo center and a hub for B2B matchmaking, creating opportunities for small-scale entrepreneurs to connect with potential business partners.

Entrepreneurs at the IBDP will benefit from Peshawar Economic Zone, drawing inspiration and encouragement from established industrial units operating in a full-fledged business environment. Ready-to-use office facilities

based on plug and play model will be available, enabling entrepreneurs to quickly set up and start their operations.

The IBDP is currently home to 17 innovative startups, primarily focused on engineering, design, and services. Among them are an electric bike manufacturer, a 3D printing startup, and a perfume maker, each contributing unique products and expertise to the vibrant entrepreneurial ecosystem.

These ventures will benefit from the extensive support and resources offered by the park, positioning them for growth and success in a competitive marketplace.

During the inaugural ceremony the SACM Abdul Karim Tordher highlighted the Provincial Government's commitment, stating, "The Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa is dedicated to creating an inclusive and thriving business environment. He said that the launch of the IBDP is a testament to our commitment to empower entrepreneurs across all sectors, ensuring sustainable economic growth and prosperity for the entire region."

## Zu Peshawar marks 4th anniversary

Celebrates transformative journey

PESHAWAR (APP): Zu Peshawar marks its 4th anniversary celebrating a transformative journey that has revolutionized the public transport system in Peshawar, said a press release issued here on Monday.

Initiated to replace the outdated and unsafe traditional transport methods, Zu Peshawar has introduced a modern, efficient, and safe Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) system that serves millions of passengers, offering an inclusive travel experience for all, especially the vulnerable segments of society including women, persons with disabilities and transgender.

The year 2023-24 has been particularly remarkable for Zu Peshawar. During this period, the system was utilized approximately 85 million times, bringing the total number of journeys since its inception to over 265.2 million.

The daily commuters have soared to 346,000 with women accounting for nearly 30% of these commuters. This significant increase in female ridership reflects the system's commitment to providing a safe and reliable transportation option for all.

This year, Zu Peshawar launched four new routes including an express route ER-16, from Gulbahar to

Nawab Market, and three Feeder Routes DR-11 (Mall of Hayatabad to Phase 6 Terminal)

DR-4B, (Chamkani to Malik Saad via Ring Road) and DR-14 (Islamia College to Professor's Town via Regi Model Town) further expanding its network and accessibility.

The system's excellence was recognized on an international level when it received an honourable mention at the Sustainable Transport Awards for the second time, specifically for the Bus Industry Restructuring Program. Overall, Zu Peshawar has been honoured with five international awards to date. Additionally, the Institute for Transportation and Development Policy (ITDP) has commended Zu Peshawar as a model transit system in its BRT Standards report.

Approximately 217,000 Zu Cards were sold this year, bringing the total number of issued cards to nearly 1.9 million. The Zu Bicycle Sharing System also saw substantial growth with 1,386 new registrations, increasing the total to 6,160, including 30 women. The bicycle-sharing system was used for around 208,000 trips this year, with the total number of trips reaching 580,000. To streamline the registra-

tion process, integration with NADRA has been completed, allowing users to register at BRT stations instead of visiting NADRA facilitation centers.

The Zu mobile app has been enhanced to support recharging through Jazz Cash, EasyPaisa, and OmniShop. Additionally, users can now recharge their Zu Cards directly via the mobile app. In collaboration with the Alkhidmat Foundation, 130 wheel-chairs have been provided at various stations to assist passengers with mobility needs.

Customer service remains a top priority, with the helpline resolving 1,048 complaints and social media platforms providing guidance to over 2,700 passengers. To further enhance passenger convenience, tuck shops have been established at 19 stations. Efforts to beautify the city included the completion of paint works on the Tehkal Bridge, Tatara Bridge, and Phase 3 areas. Public service messages have been displayed on buses and stations in collaboration with 16 government agencies.

As Zu Peshawar looks to the future, it remains committed to delivering exceptional services to the people of Peshawar, ensuring a world-class, affordable, and reliable transport system.



## Pakistan's Independence day: The pinnacle of Muslims' struggle

PESHAWAR (APP): The failure in the 1857 war marked a profound negative turning point for the Muslims who had once ruled over a unified India for nearly 800 years.

This unsuccessful pivotal uprising, which sought to challenge the illegal grabbing of power by the colonial rulers under the guise of East India Company (EIC), led to the complete loss of liberties and rights besides introductions of numerous restrictions and discriminatory policies for the Muslim populace.

They faced not only political and economic oppression but also a decline in intellectual and educational opportunities as the colonial administration's policies

mostly tilted towards the socio-economic and educational advancement of Hindus, further marginalizing the Muslims and deepening their socio-economic woes. The British rulers, perceiving Muslims as their primary rivals due to the historic dominance they had previously held, systematically undermined their position in the Indian society. The shift in power dynamics, coupled with deliberate educational, economic and political neglect, set the stage for a prolonged struggle for their recognition and rights.

During that dark era, the Muslims were given a new hope and direction by the great educationist and social reformer, Sir Syed Ahmed Khan, who instilled a new vigour into them after an

inspired teachings of the renowned religious leaders, Mojadad Alf Sani and Shah Waliullah.

"Sir Syed had brought about an intellectual revolution among Muslims through his educational, political and social reforms besides nullifying the malicious propaganda of the colonial rulers, Hindus and pessimist forces during that era of ominous, discrimination and oppression," said Professor Dr A.H. Hilali, former Chairman, Political Science Department, University of Peshawar.

Taking cognizance of the socioeconomic and educational decay of the oppressed Muslims, Sir Syed had founded All India Muhammadan Educational

Conference (AIMEC) Aligarh in 1886, which carried forward his vision regarding modern education, socio-economic empowerment and political unity of Muslims to regain past glory.

"The network of educational institutions and political unity organized under AIMEC enabled millions of Muslims to compete with other communities including Hindus and provided a launching pad for Muslims to initiate a political and democratic struggle for a separate homeland in the subcontinent" said Dr Hilali.

He said Sir Syed's reforms excelled Muslims in education, social, economic and political sciences, resultantly their voices have strongly been heard by

British rulers.

Under the flag of All India Muslim League (AIML) founded on December 30, 1906 at Dhaka, the Muslims got united politically that gave new impetus to the independence movement.

The freedom struggle accelerated after Qaid-e Azam spearheaded independence movement after formally joining AIML in 1913 and later outlining of an independent state for Muslims' majority provinces in North Western India by the great poet philosopher Dr. Allama Muhammad Iqbal during historic Allahabad address in 1930.

Thus, Dr. Allama Iqbal became the first politician to articulate about the two nation-theory that Muslims were a dis-

tinct nation and deserved political independence from other regions and communities of the united India. "Allahabad address had set a clear direction to the great Quaid, who united millions of Muslims at Iqbal Park Lahore on March 23, 1940 where the historic Pakistan's Resolution was passed" he said.

Following adoption of the Pakistan Resolution, Qaid-e Azam had reorganized AIML on modern lines and made repeated visits to all Muslims majority provinces including KP (earlier called NWFP) to mobilize masses for the creation of Pakistan.

"The legendary Quaid had received a historic welcome when he visited Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Islamia

College Peshawar (ICP) in 1945 where a sea of people from KP and Merged Areas (erstwhile Fata) arrived to see his few glimpses," said Dr Hilali.

He said it was the love of the people of KP with Qaid-e Azam that AIML secured maximum seats in the province during 1946 elections and after that historic victory, nobody could stop the independence movement from KP.

As a result of the strong commitment and dedicated political struggle by the Muslims under leadership of Qaid-e Azam, Pakistan came into being on August 14, 1947 within seven years after adoption of the historic Pakistan Resolution on March 23, 1940.





## In brief

### Police raids PTI leader residence F.P. Report

TOBA TEK SINGH: Police raided the residence of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf vice president Chaudhry Kamran Ahmad Nusrat. No arrest has been made yet. Talking to the media, PTI Workers said that the preparations for celebrating the Independence Day are at full speed in the country, but on the other hand, the police are raiding and arresting PTI workers in their houses, which is condemnable. The government is delusional which is conducting raids to arrest PTI workers without reason. Raid markers can never lower our morale, but our morale keeps increasing.

### Awareness session held F.P. Report

SWABI: A significant awareness session on safe and legal migration was organized in the Swabi district by the Labor Education Organization Mardan in collaboration with the Migrant Resource Center (MRC) Islamabad. The primary objective of the session was to provide citizens with accurate information regarding migration for employment, education, or residency abroad while highlighting the dangers associated with illegal migration. Tahseen Ullah from the MRC and Hasan Hassas from the Labor Education Organization emphasized the importance of opting for legal migration to ensure the safety of life and property. They pointed out that most people choose migration to seek a better future, but the lack of proper information often leads to illegal migration. Many believe that illegal migration is a quicker and cheaper way to reach their desired destination, but the reality is quite the opposite. Participants found the session extremely informative and appreciated the efforts of the MRC in raising awareness about this crucial issue. This initiative is part of a broader effort to educate the public on the benefits of legal migration and the severe risks associated with the illegal practices.

### Two killed in Pasrur mishap

PASRUR (INP): A least two persons lost their lives when the motorcycle they were riding on was hit by a car in Pasrur on Sunday night. According to details, the accident occurred at the Daska Road near Kala Chak in the jurisdiction of Sadar Police Station, where a car hit a motorcycle, killing two persons, including a woman, on the spot. Police and rescue teams reached the spot after being informed and shifted the dead bodies to Tehsil Headquarters (THQ) Hospital. Police sources said that the car driver managed to escape from the scene after the accident.

### Clash in Dadu claims three lives

DADU (INP): A violent clash erupted between two rival groups in Dadu, resulting in the deaths of three people including a woman and leaving several others injured. According to media reports, confrontation took place in the limits of Mondar Police Station, where ongoing gunfire has created an atmosphere of fear and panic in the area. The channel reported that among the deceased are Mazhar Shahani, Sabir Shahani, and Izzat Khatoon. As per the report, the violence also led to the deaths of 12 domesticated animals caught in the crossfire. The channel reported that the area has become a no-go zone for the police, who have reportedly retreated from the scene.

# Traders, transporters condemn TAD at Torkham border

## F.P. Report

JAMRUD: The business communities suspended export and transit movement to Afghanistan on Monday against the implementation of Temporary Admission Document (TAD) at Torkham border. It is to be mentioned here that the Pak-Afghan government has imposed a TAD policy at the sharing borders aimed to regularize cargo carrying vehicles at the crossings.

The transporters, clearing agents and exporters sit-in protest camp in the export terminal that suspended export and transit movement to Afghanistan however import from across the border was in progress. They set tyres on fire and chanted slogans in protest against the placing of TAD at the border.

They regretted that the newly imposed TAD policy multiplied their miseries.

President Clearing Agents Association, Torkham Aimal Khan Shinwari said that till availing of TAD, the export and import loaded vehicles should be allowed to cross-in and out the border as per previous system. He added that initiatives should be adopted to facilitate the transport community at the border.

Implementation of the TAD system in haste will suffer the Pak-Afghan bilateral trade that has already reduced to millions from billions dollars annually, Shinwari opined. Muhammad Yousaf Afridi, a truck, trailer union chief, said that the TAD policy was formulated without taking the transporters onboard. Whatever promises were made with them regarding imposing TAD were not honored by the government, he remarked. He went on that instead of a complicated

and costly procedure (TAD) a simple system should be adopted at the border to facilitate the transporters.

When a custom official in Torkham was asked for his version on the matter he said that on the direction of the Federal Government, TAD policy had been obligatory since 01, August, 2024 on the border to regularize the vehicles movement at the crossing. He maintained that although Pak-Afghan governments had signed the policy in May, 2024 and they repeatedly asked the transporters to get the TAD but they turned dead ears towards it, therefore both the government decided to make it effective in the month August, 2024. On the other hand, thousands of export and import loaded trucks stuck at the both sides of the border due to lack of TAD.

# International Youth Day celebrated with enthusiasm

## Anees Takar

MARDAN: The International Youth Day was observed in Mardan like the rest of the world with great enthusiasm. A program was organized by the National Commission for Human Development, District Youth, district administration and Dosti at the Reading Club Mardan. The event was addressed by Additional Assistant Commissioner Mardan Shagufta Sarwar, Deputy Director NCHD Lal Muhammad Toru, Assistant Director Abid Hoti, Muhammad Ayaz Khan,

Saeed Khan, District Youth Officer Usman and civil society representatives Fiaz ul Islam, Muhammad Arif, and Ejaz Khan.

The speakers emphasized that youth are the future of any nation and Pakistan is no exception. They highlighted that half of Pakistan's population consists of young people. International Youth Day is observed globally on August 12 every year and this year's theme focused on empowering youth.

The speakers stressed the need to address the challenges faced by young people including education,

health, and employment. They urged the need to engage youth in positive activities and provide them with access to education, healthcare, and nutritious food.

The program concluded with the distribution of awards and certificates to outstanding performers by the guest of honor, Additional Assistant Commissioner Shagufta Sarwar. The event aimed to recognize the importance of youth in shaping the future of Pakistan and to encourage them to play an active role in the country's development.

# Tribesmen sit-in protest continue in Jamrud

## F.P. Report

JAMRUD: The sit-in protest arranged by tribesmen continues on 8th day for the dignified return and rehabilitation of the affected people of Kokikhel entered.

The protest was attended by Member National Assembly Haji Iqbal Afridi, former Member Provincial Assembly Haji Shafiq Sher Afridi, Malik Naseer Ahmed Kokikhel, Haji Iqtdar Afridi, Sana Ullah Afridi, Tehsil Chairman Azmat Afridi, and officials

of the Bara Political Alliance including President Sherin Afridi, Razzaq Afridi, Hashim Afridi, and Chairman Tehsil Bara Mufti Kafeel Afridi, Khan Wali Afridi, and Attaulah Afridi among others.

Meanwhile, negotiations took place between the district administration and the protesters, which have so far been inconclusive. However, a second round of negotiations is underway in Shah Kas, involving military officials, protesters, and the administration.

The negotiations are

being attended by Additional Deputy Commissioner Nauman Khan, Assistant Commissioner Jamrud Aamir Zeb, SDPO Muhammad Nawaz Afridi, and Malik Akbar Afridi, as well as Hazrat Wali Afridi.

Haji Shafiq Sher Afridi announced a donation of one hundred thousand rupees for the sit-in expenses, while Fayaz Khatikhel announced a donation of fifty thousand rupees. Haji Iqbal Afridi also provided solar panels and fans to alleviate the heat for the protesters.



QUETTA: People buying national flags and stuff in connection with Independence Day celebrations.

# Independence Day preparations continue

## F.P. Report

HAFIZABAD: In order to celebrate Independence Day on 14, August with enthusiasm and fever, preparation in full swings in the district Hafizabad. Special stalls have been setup to sale National Flags, bunting, colourful clothing with pictures of national heroes and other decorative items. Children, women, young and old people are busy in purchasing different items to decorate their shops, homes and vehicles.

While addressing a meeting held to review

arrangements for celebrating Independence Day, Deputy Commissioner Sundas Irshad directed the officers of all government departments to finalised their programmes well in time whereas central flag hoisting function would be held at district complex while all department would also be arranged flag hoisting and cake cutting events at district level.

She said that all government building would be decorated with bunting and other attractive items besides building would be illuminated with colourful lights at night. She said that

sapling would also be planted on Independence Day in connection with tree plantation campaign in the district.

She said that sports department would be arranged sports competitions connection with Independence Day. She said that speech competitions would be held in educational institution throughout the district on the day. She also directed the offices to take on board social workers, civil society and common people to celebrate the day with traditional pump and show.



LANDI KOTAL: Protesters block road for acceptance of their demands. - F.P. photo

## ANP observes Babarha Martyrs' Day F.P. Report

BUNER: Awami National Party (ANP) observed Babarha martyrs' day with full devotion and respect on Monday. In this connection a ceremony was held in Bacha Khan Markaz to commemorate the Babarha Martyrs Day.

ANP district leaders, party workers and PSF youths participated in large numbers. The participants prayed for the high place of the souls of the martyrs of Babarha. In a media briefing, Haji Rauf Khan, Qaisar Wali Khan, Afsar Khan, Farooq Khan, Wali Rehman said that ANP commemorates the martyrs of Babarha Day every year on August 12 because on that day, the workers of the Khudai Khidmatgar Tehreek were killed by the imperialist forces. They recalled when the imperialist forces were straight shoot hundreds of Khudai Khidmatgar and they were embraced martyrdom in this tragedy.

In response to a question, the ANP secretary general said that the party will start a series of protests against the exorbitant inflation to stand with the poor people in this difficult time.

## Angoor Ada sit-in continue F.P. Report

WANA: The 303-day-long sit-in at the Pak-Afghan border in Angoorada has reached a boiling point, with protesters announcing a massive public gathering on August 13 to press for their unmet demands. Despite repeated talks with authorities, the 18-point charter of demands remains unfulfilled.

The protest at the zero point saw fiery speeches by Maulana Taseebullah, Muhammad Rasool, and Imran Mukhlis, among others. The leaders warned of a "strict plan of action" if their demands are not met soon. They emphasized that their demands are constitutional and legal, and it's the state's responsibility to grant them rights equal to other citizens.

The protesters are seeking a special counter at the Angoorada Gate for passport-free movement, facilities akin to other border crossings, promotion of trade activities, and removal of obstacles at the gate. With no breakthrough in sight, the protesters have vowed to intensify their agitation.

A negotiating committee has been formed, which has engaged with officials in Peshawar and Islamabad, but to no avail. The protesters have made it clear that they will not tolerate further oppression and are prepared to face hardships to achieve their goals. The August 13 gathering is expected to be a turning point in the protest.

## Man booked MUZAFFARGARH (INP): The case was registered against citizen over filing wrong complaint at police helpline number.

According to FIR, Shahid Farooq, son of Mohammed Ashraf, caste Araein resident of mouza 169/TDA was booked under telegraph act 1885 section 29. Official of Peer Juggi Police Station warned that anybody who would be involved in wrong practice or cheating the public institution would be trialled under the said act.

# Public servants demand arrest of killers

## F.P. Report

LOWER DIR: The Government Class IV employees and public health engineering association demanded the Lower Dir administration to arrest the killer of a school watchman who was shot dead at his school last night. The demand was made during a meeting held at Timergara with Sher Bahadar Khan in the chair. The class IV employees from various departments attended the meeting.

Speaking on the occasion Sher Bahadar, general secretary Hanifullah, Noor Zada and others condemned the killing of Qadeem Khan, a school watchman and demanded the concerned authorities to arrest the killers. The watchman of the government higher secondary school Saddo, Qadeem Khan was gunned down by unidentified accused at the school in the jurisdiction of Timergara police station here last night. The watchman was found dead when teachers and students reached the school on Friday morning.

The deceased was the brother of prominent poet

Muslim Khan Wasal who told police the family had no enmity with anyone. The Timergara police collected circumstantial evidence and sent it to the laboratory for forensic examination. Motive behind the crime could not be ascertained at the moment. Principal of the school Alam Zeb Khan told this reporter that the accused had also taken away the CCTV cameras and the DVR along with them.

**Principal appointment demanded:** The Dir Quami Pasoon (DQP), a civic body working for peace and development, on Saturday threatened to bring political and social workers onto the roads if the Principal was not appointed at the Timergara Medical College (TMC) within the next ten days.

The warning was given by the DQP chief Malik Jehan Alam, district president Malik Shah Naseem, chairman youth assembly Qazi Hanifullah, members core committee Ameer Azam and Mirajul Haq while addressing a news conference at the Timergara

press club. They said that Rs 2.6 billion had been spent on the TMC establishment since 2026 when the project was jointly inaugurated by the PTI chief Imran Khan and the then chief minister Perviz Khattak. They said that hundreds of the TMC employees including technical staff, professors, associate professors and assistant professors had been drawing salaries from the national kitty without performing any duty at the college.

They alleged that bureaucracy in the health department was involved in infilling the Principal post. The DQP leaders said that local lawmakers, young doctors and civil society, all were on the same page regarding the classes at the medical college.

They demanded the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa chief minister Ali Ameen Gandapur, minister for health and director general health to immediately appoint an eligible person as Principal at the college so that further necessary actions could be taken on time.

# Kitchen gardening training for women ends

## F.P. Report

MINGORA: United National Development Program (UNDP) Pakistan's Glacial Lake Outburst Floods (GLOFs) Risk Reduction Project rolled out a three-day kitchen gardening training for women community members of Mankiyal, Matiltan, and Utror valleys in District Swat.

This initiative aimed to enhance alternative livelihood opportunities and improve financial resilience against Glacial Lake Outburst Floods (GLOFs) and other climate change-induced risks. From August 9th to 11th 2024, UNDP GLOF-II Project in collaboration with the Climate Change, Forestry Environment & Wildlife Department delivered the training. Facilitated by Non-Timber Forest Products, the session

focused on equipping 60 women with essential kitchen gardening skills. Participants also received gardening tools, seeds, pesticides and fertilizers to support their skills.

"Although we have been growing vegetables for years, we used traditional methods that limited our yields. After this training, I'm confident we can produce more vegetables which will not only meet our families' needs but also allow us to sell the surplus in the market," shared Shamim Bibi - a participant from Matiltan valley, District Swat.

Alia Naz, a participant from Mankiyal valley said, "We grow vegetables every year but GLOF events and floods wash them away. Sometimes, due to scarcity of water, we often don't get the required yield. But through this training, we

have learned that practices such as crop rotation, sustainable water management, and using organic fertilizers can help mitigate the economic impact of unpredictable GLOFs and water shortages."

UNDP's GLOF-II project works in 16 valleys of Gilgit Baltistan and 8 valleys in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. It empowers communities to identify and manage risks associated with GLOFs and related impacts of climate change, strengthens public services to lower the risk of disasters related to GLOFs, and improves community preparedness and disaster response. The project also supports the development of sustainable livelihood options in project areas, with a particular focus on the participation of women in ensuring food security and livelihoods.

# Commissioner inspects DHQ hospital Kohat

## Sahibzada Afridi

KOHAT: Commissioner Kohat Syed Mutasim Billah Shah paid a surprise visit to the divisional Headquarters Hospital KDA Kohat on Sunday evening. On this occasion, he inspected the emergency, X-ray, different wards, canteen and different parts of the hospital and inquired about the patients and their families for medical treatment.

He also asked regarding the provision of health facilities. MS KDA

Hospital Dr. Tahir Ali Shah and DMS Saud Ahmed of the hospital gave a detailed briefing to the commissioner about the medical and other facilities in the hospital. Commissioner Kohat Division expressed satisfaction over the cleanliness situation and found the food items to be of standard quality, however, for satisfaction, he directed the officials of the Food Department present on the spot to conduct proper tests of the food items.

The commissioner also spoke on the important issue of referral to Peshawar, including the long-standing problems of necessary equipments with MS in the hospital, and strictly directed that referral of normal cases to Peshawar should be discouraged except for very important cases. Commissioner Kohat assured to make all possible efforts to solve all the problems of the hospital, especially the current problems related to health on priority basis.

# Woman strangled to death for honour

BUREWALA (INP): A woman was brutally tortured and strangled to death by her father and brother for honour here on Monday, police said.

According to details, the incident took place in village 457/EB of Burewala where a woman

entered in marriage of choice against desires of family. The woman was brought back to home through panchayat.

Father and brother brutally tortured the woman for her decision of marriage of choice and later strangled her to death.

The culprits escaped the scene after committing the murder. The body with torture marks on face and body were shifted to hospital for post-mortem. The police registered a case into the incident and started raids to arrest the culprits.





## Rwandan president sworn in after 99% election win

ABUJA (BBC): Paul Kagame has been sworn in for a fourth term as Rwanda's president after winning 99% of the vote in last month's election. While some hail Mr Kagame for bringing peace and stability to his country after the 1994 genocide, others accuse him of running a repressive regime in a country where ordinary people are afraid to openly criticise him.

Rights groups say the margin of his electoral victory is proof of the lack of democracy in Rwanda. Only two candidates were allowed to stand against Mr Kagame in the 15 July election. In his four presidential elections, he has always gained at least 93% of the vote. Several African heads of states were among the many thousands who attended the ceremony in the packed 45,000 capacity Amahoro National Stadium in the capital, Kigali. In his oath of office, Mr Kagame vowed to preserve peace and national sovereignty, and to consolidate national unity. He also pledged to

"never use the powers conferred upon me for personal interests". "Should I fail to honour this oath, may I be subjected to the rigours of the law," he said. Mr Kagame has been the real power in Rwanda since his then rebel forces came to power at the end of the genocide in which some 800,000 ethnic Tutsis and moderate Hutus were slaughtered, ousting the genocidal regime. Since then, Rwanda has been relatively stable, with Mr Kagame seeking to turn the country into the "Singapore of Africa". The capital is one of Africa's cleanest cities and is home to the African Basketball League, which is a partnership with the NBA.

It hosted the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in 2022 and international stars like Kendrick Lamar have played concerts there. Mr Kagame often criticises the West, yet he has also sought to build alliances, for example with the UK over the now scrapped policy of deporting asylum seekers to

Rwanda, agreed with the former Conservative government.

While life has improved in Rwanda, Mr Kagame is accused of destabilising the neighbouring Democratic Republic of Congo. Just days before the July election, a UN report said there were some 4,000 Rwandan troops in DR Congo, where they are accused of backing the M23 rebel group, fuelling a bitter row between the two countries. Under Mr Kagame, Rwandan troops have twice invaded DR Congo, saying they were pursuing Hutu militias linked to the 1994 genocide.

Congolese President FélixTshisekedi was not among the African leaders at the inauguration.

In his speech, Mr Kagame appeared to criticise Mr Tshisekedi for failing to help defeat Rwandan rebels based in DR Congo. Unless that changes, he said mediation efforts wouldn't work. He didn't sound like a man ready to give into any pressure and stop backing the M23 rebels.

## Landslide at Uganda rubbish dump kills 17

KAMPALA (AFP, BBC): At least 17 people are now known to have died after a landslide at a massive rubbish dump in the Ugandan capital, Kampala. Rescuers are continuing to dig through the waste in the hope of finding more survivors after the landslide, which followed weeks of torrential rain.

The 36-acre (14-hectare) Kiteezi landfill is the only one serving the whole of Kampala, a city home to an estimated four million people. Kampala Mayor Erias Lukwago told the AFP news agency it was "a disaster [that] was bound to happen", and that "many, many more could be still buried". The city authorities have reportedly been trying to find a new site for many years. A huge hill formed by the build-up of rubbish collapsed, burying houses on the edge of the site while residents were asleep, reports the Reuters news agency. President Yoweri Museveni has ordered an investigation into how people had been allowed to live so close to the "potentially hazardous and dangerous heap", and ordered the removal of those in what he called the "danger zone".

The death toll was given as eight, including two children. Kampala police spokesman Patrick Onyango told AFP that more bodies had since been retrieved, while 14 people had been rescued. "The rescue operation is still ongoing until we are sure no-one is trapped," he said.

Mr Onyango said that some 1,000 people had been forced to leave their homes because of the landslide. He did not specify how many had been living on the site, or whether they were living nearby. Many people earn their living by trawling through the piles of rubbish looking for anything that can be resold. The Uganda Red Cross has been providing tents to those in need of temporary shelter.

## Ukrainian troops now up to 30km inside Russia: Moscow

MOSCOW (AFP, BBC): Ukrainian troops have advanced up to 30km inside Russia, in what has become the deepest and most significant incursion since Moscow began its full-scale invasion of Ukraine in February 2022.

Russia's defence ministry said its forces had engaged Ukrainian troops near the villages of Tolpino and Obshchy Kolodez, as the offensive in the Kursk region entered a sixth day. Foreign ministry spokesperson Maria Zakharova accused Kyiv of "intimidating the peaceful population of Russia".

President Volodymyr Zelensky, who directly acknowledged the attack for the first time in an address last night, said 2,000 cross-border attacks had been launched by Russia from Kursk this summer. "Artillery, mortars, drones. We also record missile strikes, and each such strike deserves a fair response," Mr Zelensky told the country in his nightly address from Kyiv. A senior Ukrainian official told the AFP news agency that thousands of troops were engaged in the operation, far more than the small incursion initially reported by Russian border guards.

While Ukrainian-backed sabotage groups have launched intermittent cross-border incursions, the Kursk offensive marks the biggest co-ordinated attack on Russian territory by Kyiv's conventional forces. "We are on the offensive. The aim is to stretch the positions of the enemy, to inflict maximum losses and to destabilise the situation in Russia as they are unable to protect their own border," the official said. Russia's defence ministry said that its forces had "foiled attempts by enemy mobile groups with armoured vehicles to break through deep into Russian territory". But in an apparent admission that Kyiv's forces have now advanced deep into the Kursk border region, the defence ministry reported engaging Ukrainian troops near the villages of Tolpino and Obshchy Kolodez - which are about 25km and 30km from the Russia-Ukraine border.

Footage circulating online and verified by the BBC also appeared to show a Russian strike near the village of Levshinka, around 25km from the border. Ukrainian troops have claimed to have captured a number of settlements in the Kursk region. In Guevo, a village about 3km inside Russia, soldiers filmed themselves removing the Russian flag from an administrative building. Clips have also emerged of Ukrainian troops seizing administrative buildings in Sverdlikovo and Poroz, while intense fighting has been reported in Sudzha



- a town of about 5,000 people. Ukrainian troops have already filmed themselves outside Sudzha at a major gas facility involved in the transit of natural gas from Russia to the EU via Ukraine, which has continued despite the war. In Sumy region, which borders the Kursk region, BBC reporters witnessed a steady stream of armoured personnel carriers and tanks moving towards Russia. The armoured convoys are sporting white triangular insignias, seemingly to distinguish them from hardware used within Ukraine itself. Meanwhile, aerial photos have appeared to show Ukrainian tanks engaged in combat inside Russia. Photos analysed by BBC Verify also appeared to show Russia constructing new defensive lines near the Kursk nuclear power plant. Ukrainian forces engaged at Obshchy Kolodez were within 50km (31 miles) of the facility. Contrasting satellite imagery of the same location captured yesterday with imagery from a few days earlier, images show several newly constructed trench lines in the vicinity, with the nearest roughly 8km (5 miles) from the plant.

Russia says 76,000 people have been evacuated from border areas in the Kursk region, where a state of emergency has been declared by local authorities. Acting regional governor Aleksei Smirnov also said 15 people were injured when the wreckage of a downed Ukrainian missile fell on a multi-storey building in Kursk's regional capital, Kursk. Oleksiy Goncharenko - a Ukrainian MP - hailed the operation and said it was "taking us much closer to peace than one hundred peace summits".

"When Russia needs to fight back on their own territory, when Russian people are running, when people care, that's the only way to show them stop this war," he told the BBC. The Kursk offensive comes after weeks of Russian advances in the east, where a succession of villages have been captured by the Kremlin's forces. Some analysts have suggested that the

Kursk attack is part of an effort to force Russia to redeploy forces away from eastern Ukraine and relieve pressure on the beleaguered Ukrainian defences. But the Ukrainian official told AFP there had been little let-up to date in Russian operations in the east. Earlier this week, Russian President Vladimir Putin said the offensive was a "major provocation". Meanwhile, emergency services in the Kyiv region said a man and his four-year-old son were killed in a missile strike near the capital overnight.

Air defences also destroyed 53 out of 57 attack drones launched by Russia during its overnight airstrikes, air force officials said. Four North Korean-manufactured missiles were also fired as part of the barrage, they said. Russia has been forced to turn to the isolated Asian state to re-stock its munitions, with the US alleging that vast amounts of military hardware have been shipped by Pyongyang. Elsewhere, Russian officials in the occupied Zaporizhzhia Oblast said a fire broke out at the region's nuclear power plant.

Yevgeny Balitsky, the Kremlin-installed governor of Zaporizhzhia, claimed the fire erupted after shelling by Ukrainian forces. He said there had been no radiation spike around the plant. Russia's state Tass news agency reported that the main fire at the plant was extinguished in the early hours of Monday. In a statement posted to X, the UN's nuclear watchdog - the International Atomic Energy Agency - said its on-site inspectors had witnessed "strong dark smoke" coming from the north of the facility, but emphasised that there was "no impact reported" for nuclear safety. President Zelensky said in a post to social media that Russian forces had started a fire on the territory of the plant. The site has been under the control of Russian troops and officials since 2022. It has not produced power in more than two years and all six reactors have been in cold shutdown since April.

## Iranian president names female ministers as he unveils cabinet

TEHRAN: Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian has nominated a moderate diplomat as foreign minister and a female official as urban development minister as he presented his new cabinet. Parliament Speaker Mohammad Bagher Ghalibaf announced the names of the 19-member cabinet presented by the president during an assembly session broadcast live on state television.

The nominations appear in line with the hopes that the election of Pezeshkian last month, to replace the hardline Ebrahim Raisi, who died in a helicopter crash in May, could lead to a thaw in Iran's relations with the West. However, the parliament, which is dominated by hardliners, will begin a review of the nominees starting on Monday, and then vote whether or not to confirm the lineup.

For foreign minister, Pezeshkian picked Abbas Araghchi, a 61-year-old career diplomat. Araghchi, who has

extolled open, yet critical, talks with the West, served as the chief negotiator in nuclear talks between Tehran and world powers from 2013 to 2021. He also served as Iran's ambassador to Japan and Finland, and as a deputy of then-Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif, who was instrumental in reaching the 2015 Iran nuclear deal. Farzaneh Sadegh was nominated as roads and urban development minister. If confirmed, the 48-year-old would become only the second Iranian woman to hold a ministerial post since the Islamic Republic was established in 1979, after Marzieh Vahid Dastjerdi became health minister in 2009.

However, many lawmakers voiced their opposition when her name was read out by the speaker during session. The appointment of the new cabinet comes as the world awaits Iran's next move in response to the assassination of Hamas leader Ismail Haniyeh in Tehran. Iran has angrily blamed Israel

for the killing and vowed harsh retaliation. Western leaders have pleaded for restraint, saying that military action by Iran would threaten to tip the war in Gaza into a full-blown regional conflict. Pezeshkian came to power with promises to improve ties with the world and ease social restrictions at home. It is thought that he worries that a major military confrontation with Israel would jeopardise his priorities. General Aziz Nasirzadeh, a former commander of the Iranian Air Force, has been put forward to take the helm at the defence ministry.

The president named General Eskandar Momeni, a 60-year-old police commander and relatively-moderate former member of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC), as interior minister. Mohsen Paknezhad, a 58-year-old executive director with a long career in the country's energy industry has been tapped as oil minister. — Aljazeera

## Two migrants die trying to cross English Channel

PARIS (BBC): Two migrants have died attempting to cross the English Channel in a small boat. The incident happened offshore between Calais and Dunkirk, in France, a French maritime official told the BBC. More than 50 migrants were rescued from the same small boat and the operation is ongoing.

French officials said 25 migrants have died attempting to cross the world's busiest shipping lane this year. The British Coastguard confirmed it had provided support to the French Coastguard after sending a search and rescue unit and a UK Border Force vessel to assist. Several boats carrying migrants launched from beaches in northern France

after a period of windy conditions. Fine weather in the morning prompted several groups to take to the water.

Jacques Billant, prefect of the Pas-de-Calais region, said during a press conference that authorities launched a large rescue operation when a vessel got into difficulty.

The Gris-Nez Regional Operational Surveillance and Rescue Centre (CROSS) located the boat in an area where visibility had been reduced by fog. A British Coastguard vessel and several vessels from the French authorities picked up the people onboard the boat. There were 56 migrants on the boat. Two people were unconscious when crews arrived at the scene and later died, while 54 were safely brought

back to port in Calais, Mr Billant said. A UK government spokesperson confirmed the "tragic incident" had taken place and said it "underlines the terrible dangers of small boat crossings". "We continue to do everything we can to prevent callous criminals exploiting vulnerable people. Our thoughts are with those affected," they said. Meanwhile, the family of Dina Al Shammari - a 21-year-old woman who died trying to cross the channel on 28 July - said they had "no option" but to attempt the journey again themselves. She was travelling with her three younger siblings, aged 13 to 19, and parents, when she was crushed in an overcrowded boat off the coast of Calais.

## New Bangladesh govt says working to 'resolve' attacks on minorities

DHAKA: Bangladesh's new interim government says it is working to resolve attacks on Hindus and other religious minorities reported after the ouster of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina. Hindus are the largest minority faith in mostly Muslim Bangladesh, and many are supporters of Hasina's party, the Awami League.

Since Hasina's abrupt resignation and flight abroad on Monday brought an end to her 15 years in power, there have been numerous reports of attacks against Hindu households, temples and businesses. "The attacks on religious minorities in some places have been noted with grave concern," the interim cabinet said in its first official statement since its members were sworn in. The cabinet

said it would "immediately sit with the representative bodies and other concerned groups to find ways to resolve such heinous attacks". Thousands of people participated in protests calling for an end to violence against Hindu communities, the Dhaka Tribune reported.

Protesters objected to the "destruction of homes, encroachment on temple land, arson, looting, and other forms of violence", the report said. "We are appalled by the attacks on Hindus, the torture and the vandalism of temples. It is the government's responsibility to ensure our safety.

We are citizens of this country and deserve to live securely," the Dhaka Tribune quoted a Hindu speaker as saying at a rally in the city of Bogra. The statement from

the interim government, also known as the council of advisers, listed numerous urgent priorities. The government, led by Nobel Peace Prize laureate Muhammad Yunus, ordered "support" for the families of protesters who were killed in the weeks of demonstrations culminating in Hasina's departure.

It directed public funds to pay for those injured in the unrest, which began in July and killed more than 300 people. The council, tasked with steering democratic reforms in the South Asian nation of 170 million people, also said it would reopen the metro system in the capital, Dhaka, by the end of the week and soon appoint a new central bank governor, replacing a Hasina loyalist forced to resign. — Aljazeera

## How the Americas' first free town took its independence back

COLOMBIA: Overlooking the usually sleepy, languid town of San Basilio de Palenque is a statue of Benkos Bioho, runaway slave, town founder, and symbol of the town's heritage and unique nature. "Africa is everything to me, it's everything to us Palenqueros," says Nuno Bembele, education adviser of the San Basilio de Palenque community council, who is sitting in the shade of the town square, wearing a bright green polo shirt emblazoned with the image of Bioho.

Nestled away in Colombia's rumbling, green hills, the town is hot and lush, and quiet murmurs of pedestrian activity pepper the humble town square. It's a quiet and the town is still following a brief downturn. People amble around the two parallel streets that frame the square - the only two paved streets in town - seemingly looking for something to do. Most others pass the time simply sitting on their stoops, or clustered around a large speaker blaring traditional valenato and sipping on cold beers or sharing lukewarm rum to whittle away the hours. A smattering of elderly men sit around a plastic table and play dominoes by the side of the road, while - behind them - a group of schoolchildren play football barefoot, their sliders and flip-flops strewn in a pile by the side of their makeshift pitch, with stones filling in as goal-posts. But this afternoon, this quintessentially Colombian scene is suddenly interrupted by the rhythmic beat of distant drums. "Viva Palenque!", someone chants. San Basilio is known as the first free town, established by former slaves, in the Americas and

lies 50km (31 miles) from the popular port city of Cartagena. After breaking his chains and freeing himself from slavery at the hands of the Spanish colonial rulers, Bioho - originally from modern-day Guinea Bissau - established the small town in the 17th century as a safe haven for former slaves like himself. He successfully planned and led the escape of 30 fellow slaves from Cartagena in 1619, and fought off attempts from the Spanish to recapture them. Bioho - "King Benkos" as he came to be known - and the slaves set up modern-day San Basilio as an enclave of liberation for emancipated slaves. They successfully fought to free many fellow slaves from Cartagena in 1619, and fought off attempts from the Spanish to recapture them. Bioho - "King Benkos" as he came to be known - and the slaves set up modern-day San Basilio as an enclave of liberation for emancipated slaves. 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## Battlefront stakes change for Russia and Ukraine

**T**HE Ukrainian incursion into Russia in the Kursk region is seen as a fresh and intensive offensive after months of inconclusive battles. It has even been described as a Ukrainian invasion because it is the first time that the Ukrainian forces have been inside Russia, though it is only about 10 to 20 km across the border.

This has been seen as a renewed energised battle by a flagging Ukraine even as Russia had been keeping the more than two-year-old war going. The Russians too have acknowledged the Ukrainian incursion into Russia, and the Chief of the General Staff of the Russian Armed Forces, Army General Valery Gerasimov, had told President Vladimir Putin that his forces would defeat the Ukrainian units and free the border.

Meanwhile, Russian National Security Council Deputy Chairman Dmitry Medvedev said that the Ukrainian offensive was to showcase Kiev's military prowess to get more aid from the West. On the other hand, the spin that is being given to the Ukrainian thrust into Kursk is that when peace talks happen between Russia and Ukraine, and it is expected that the talks will become inevitable if Donald Trump wins the November presidential elections because Trump is not keen to support Ukraine's war effort, then Ukraine would be in a better position to bargain with a strong position on the battlefield.

The Ukrainian interpretation of the Kursk incursion is that the West's military supplies have increased, and the Ukrainian forces, better equipped, are able to fight much more vigorously. This has indeed been the theme song of Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky that Ukraine needs urgent military aid from the West and Ukraine can fight Russia.

Meanwhile, Russian news agency TASS has reported that the Russian Battlegroup North has attacked the 'foreign legion' of mercenaries in the Ukrainian army in the Kharkov region, and that the Russian forces had killed hundreds of Ukrainian mercenaries. What is happening in this long-drawn war is that both sides are looking to weak spots across the border where they can strike at each other.

It does not seem to be the case that there is as yet an attempt to win the war across the battlefield. There is a stalemate and both sides recognise this. Russia appears to be willing to drag on the war because there is a feeling in the Russian side that Moscow can sustain the war for a long time without collapsing. The Ukrainians appear to be at a disadvantage because they know that the West will not continue the military and financial aid endlessly. Ukraine has been making attempts to initiate peace talks after the failed one in Switzerland. Ukraine wants to pressurise Russia through world opinion. But it became clear from the aborted peace moves in Switzerland that peace talks cannot be on the terms of one side, and in this instance that of Ukraine.

Neither Ukraine's Western allies nor Russia's friends seem to have any idea as to what should be the terms of negotiation. The general demand is that Russia should withdraw its forces from Ukraine. But Russia is willing to withdraw only on the condition that Ukraine is not admitted as a member of NATO. The West would not want to yield on that point. So the deadlock persists. The possible breakthrough is the West not giving an explicit assurance that Ukraine would not be admitted to NATO, and Putin has to accept the tacit assurance of the Western powers, and Russian troops would quietly withdraw and Putin would close the Ukrainian operation.

But these are going to be difficult decisions for both the sides because of the aggressive initial stances they had adopted since the war. It is also no more the case that Trump is a sure winner in the American presidential election, and Kamala Harris will continue Joe Biden's policy of support for Ukraine.

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## In Gaza, education is resistance

Eman Alhaj Ali

**W**HEN on July 29, the Palestinian Ministry of Education and Higher Education announced the results of the tawjihi high school general matriculation exam, Sara wept. The 18-year-old saw on social media the joyous celebrations of other students in the occupied West Bank who were reveling in their achievements.

"I was supposed to be happy at this time, celebrating the completion of my high school," she told me with tearful eyes when I visited her in her family tent in Gaza. "I dreamed of being among the top students and having interviews to celebrate my success."

Sara was studying at Zahrat Al-Madain Secondary School in Gaza City and aspired to become a doctor. The matriculation exam, for which she would have studied hard for months, would have allowed her to apply to study in a medical faculty. The score of the exam is the main criterion for admission to Palestinian universities. Instead, Sara spends her time despairing – her home and dreams of a better future destroyed by Israeli bombardment.

She is one of 39,000 Palestinian students in Gaza who were supposed to take the matriculation exam this year but could not.

But Sara is one of the "lucky" ones. Of those students who were supposed to finish high school, at least 450 have been killed, according to the Palestinian Education Ministry. More than 5,000 others of various grades have also died in Israel's genocidal aggression on Gaza along with more than 260 teachers.

Scores of these high school seniors have probably been killed in schools, which have been turned into shelters for displaced Palestinians since the Gaza war began. There is a dark irony here that the places of learning and enlightenment in Gaza have been turned into places of death.

Since July, Israel has bombed schools 21 times

with massive casualty numbers. In the latest attack, al-Tabin school in Gaza City became the graveyard of more than 100 people, the majority of them women and children. Horrific reports described parents looking for their children in vain, as the bombs had ripped them into small pieces.

According to the United Nations, 93 percent of Gaza's 560 schools have been either destroyed or damaged since October 7. About 340 have been directly bombed by the Israeli army. They include government and private schools as well as those run by the UN itself. By now it is clear that Israel is systematically targeting Gaza's schools and there is a reason for it.

For Palestinians, educational spaces have historically served as vital hubs for learning, revolutionary activism, cultural conservation and the preservation of relations between Palestinian lands cut off from each other by Israeli colonisation. Schools have always played a crucial role in the empowerment and movement for liberation of the Palestinian people.

In other words, education has been a form of Palestinian resistance to Israeli attempts to erase the Palestinian people since the Nakba of 1948. When Jewish militia forces ethnically cleansed and expelled about 750,000 Palestinians from their homeland, one of the first things they did when they settled down in refugee camps was to open schools for their children. Education was elevated to a national value. This drove the development of the Palestinian education sector to the point where it delivered some of the highest literacy rates in the world.

It is not a coincidence that an impoverished, besieged and regularly bombed Gaza has traditionally been the home of some of the top scorers on the tawjihi exam. Tales abound of Gaza students receiving some of the highest scores

after studying by the light of oil lamps or mobile phones during regular blackouts or refusing to stop even while Israel bombed the enclave. Excelling in one's studies despite all odds has been a form of resistance – whether young people in Gaza have been aware of it or not.

What Israel is doing now is trying to destroy this form of Palestinian resistance by committing scholasticide. It is dismantling educational and cultural institutions to eradicate the avenues through which the Palestinians can preserve and share their culture, knowledge, history, identity and values across generations. Scholasticide is a critical aspect of genocide.

For the students on the receiving end of this genocidal campaign, the destruction of the education sector has had a devastating impact. Education, for many, also gave hope that life could get better for them, that they could pull their families out of poverty through hard work.

I thought of the spread of hopelessness among Gaza's children and youth when I saw 18-year-old Ihsan selling handmade desserts under the scorching sun on a dusty street in Deir el-Balah. I asked him why he was out in the heat.

He told me he spends his days selling handmade desserts to earn a small amount of money to help his family survive.

"I have lost my dreams. I dreamed of becoming an engineer, opening my own business, working in a company, but all of my dreams now have been turned into ashes," he said in despair.

Like Sara, Ihsan too would have taken the tawjihi exam by now and looked forward to studying at a university.

I see in Gaza so many bright young people like Sara and Ihsan who were meant to celebrate their high school achievements and are now mourning the dreams that have been violently snatched away from

them. Those who could have been future doctors and engineers of Gaza now spend their days struggling to find food and water to barely survive as they are surrounded by death and despair.

But the resistance is not all dead. The yearning for education among Palestinians in destroyed Gaza has not disappeared. I was reminded of that when I visited six-year-old Masa and her family in their tent in Deir el-Balah. While I was speaking to her mother, who was telling me how her heart ached every time her daughter cried because she could not go to school, Masa kept pleading:

"Mom, I want to go to school. Let's go to the market and buy me a bag and a school uniform." Masa would have started first grade in September. This month would have been the time to shop for all the school supplies, a uniform and a schoolbag, which would have brought her immense joy.

While today Palestinian children's pleas to go to school are leaving many parents heartbroken, this thirst for education will drive the rebuilding of Gaza's education sector tomorrow when this genocidal hell is over.

In a recent open letter, hundreds of scholars and university staff from Gaza emphasised that "the rebuilding of Gaza's academic institutions is not just a matter of education; it is a testament to our resilience, determination, and unwavering commitment to securing a future for generations to come."

Indeed, many Palestinians aspire to reconstruct the educational institutions essential for their communal life and liberation, embodying the principles of sumud, or steadfastness. To paraphrase the concluding sentence of that letter: Many schools in Gaza, especially in its refugee camps, were built from tents, and Palestinians – with the support of their friends – will rebuild them from tents again.

## Gaza highlights the threat to civilians in times of conflict

Kerry Boyd Anderson

**A**N Israeli strike on a school and mosque in Gaza that housed displaced people killed more than 90 Palestinians, most of them civilians, on Saturday. The strike highlights the importance and difficulty of protecting civilians during war.

The intensity of the destruction in the crowded territory of Gaza has highlighted the threats to civilians in times of conflict. Sadly, Gaza is not alone. Civilians are also dying in Ukraine, Sudan, Myanmar, Yemen, and other parts of the world.

Throughout history, civilians have suffered from the direct and indirect effects of war. At times, people tried to develop norms designed to mitigate the harm to civilians. After the Second World War, the core of international law on this issue came from the Geneva Conventions and their additional protocols. The conventions and other relevant edicts make up international humanitarian law, or IHL, which provides rules for the conduct of war. IHL does not determine whether a war started for legitimate reasons, which is governed under other international laws. Regardless of the legitimacy of a war, all parties should abide by international humanitarian law. Put simply, civilians are not combatants. Civilians include children, older people who are unable to fight, and women and men who are not part of a military or armed group.

Under international humanitarian law, also known as the law of war, parties to a conflict must not target civilians. Targeting civilians is a war crime. This includes intentionally killing or assaulting civilians. Parties to the conflict also must not intentionally destroy resources that are necessary for civilians' survival; examples could include burning crops, and diverting or poisoning water sources. Civilians also have a right to access aid, including food and medical treatment, during war. International humanitarian law also includes protections for those who were engaged in hostilities, but are no longer able to fight – primarily combatants taken prisoner or who are injured or sick.

These principles defy the worst of human nature. Human beings have a strong tendency to view their own group as the superior party in a conflict. Whether the group is defined by nationality, religion, race, ethnicity, or another marker of identity, people tend to believe that their group is the just party in a conflict, and that the adversarial group is morally inferior and responsible for starting the war. From that position, it is easy to dehumanize all members of the other group – to not only see soldiers and fighters as legitimate targets, but also to view the killing or targeting of civilians as acceptable.

International humanitarian law, however, calls on the better aspects of humanity. It transcends our tendency to dehumanize the "other" and, instead,

posits principles that should apply to everyone.

This is hard. International humanitarian law demands that people, even in times of greatest stress and hostility, implement principles and practices that run counter to many natural instincts.

The law of war can sound good, but is harder to accept when people have to apply it to an adversarial group. Another complication is that a group can be a victim and perpetrator at the same time. For example, Palestinians have the right to resist Israeli occupation, and Hamas' Oct. 7 attack violated the laws of war when its fighters intentionally killed, abused, and took hostage civilians. Israel has a right to defend itself, and the deaths of 1,200 Israelis on Oct. 7 do not justify killing almost 40,000 Palestinians in Gaza, many of them civilians – nor does Israel have the right to target civilian infrastructure or to block aid. Accordingly, in May, the International Criminal Court found that specific leaders of Hamas and Israel were responsible for war crimes.

The Israeli-Palestinian conflict is far from an isolated example. For example, Russia violated the law of war by intentionally attacking Syrian and, later, Ukrainian civilians and civilian infrastructure. Even in complex civil wars, such as in Sudan, militias commit war crimes when they target civilians or otherwise abuse them.

Even when people embrace international humanitarian law, implementation is still challenging. For example, international humanitarian law acknowledges that some civilians will suffer harm during times of war. Before an attack, a party to the conflict is obligated to assess whether the potential collateral damage would be excessive when compared with the expected military advantage. This leaves a lot of room, however, for different interpretations and abuse.

Some global trends complicate implementation, while also reinforcing the importance of international humanitarian law. Wars increasingly are fought in urban areas, making it more difficult to distinguish between combatants and civilians. New weapons and technologies might further complicate how armed groups distinguish between fighters and civilians. The UN Security Council is hamstrung by states that prioritize their own interests and apply double standards to enforcing international humanitarian law. UN humanitarian agencies play a crucial role in assisting civilians in times of war, but the UN as a political body struggles to ensure their protection.

None of these are reasons to give up. Every civilian life protected matters. Furthermore, killing and abusing civilians deepens the moral injury that many fighters and societies suffer from conflict, and insisting on humanity's better nature by protecting civilians helps everyone have a better chance of recovery and peace when fighting stops.

## No power can destroy the Chinese dream

Jasna Plevnik

**L**EADERS in Europe and the United States, multinational corporations and international institutions are studying the resolution of the third plenary session of the 20th Central Committee of the Communist Party of China to get an idea about China's new reform path, because it will influence the global economy.

The third plenary session, which concluded on July 18, ushered in a new period of reform, opening-up and socialist modernization. "It marked the start of a new journey of comprehensively deepening reform in the new era with systematic and holistic plans" to advance Chinese modernization and realize national rejuvenation, as well as achieve high-quality development and improve people's livelihoods.

The effects of this phase of Chinese modernization will also spill over to the Belt and Road Initiative, Global Development Initiative, Global Security Initiative and the Global Civilization Initiative. Despite some economists and other experts claiming that China's economic growth has already peaked and may not grow further, the Chinese economy has continued to grow since the third plenary session of the 11th CPC Central Committee in 1978 which

signaled the launch of reform and opening-up. China's economic growth would not have continued for so long if its development model was not upgraded to adapt to the changing domestic and global situations.

How does the world react to China's new transformative path toward building an innovative, green and smart society through further advancement of its forces in green technologies, AI, and semiconductors which are crucial for every country's growth and favourable positioning in the global economy?

China's investments in Hungary can be seen as part of China's "shared development" praxis in high-quality manufacturing. At the end of last year, BYD announced it would build an electric vehicle (EV) manufacturing factory in Hungary to consolidate its presence in the European Union and ensure its EVs conform to the EU's standards. In July, BYD signed an agreement with Turkiye to establish an EV plant there to realize the same goal.

Recently, Italy and China, which already are comprehensive strategic partners, signed a three-year action plan to deepen cooperation in sectors such as technology, infrastructure and green energy, bucking the trends of "de-

globalization", "decoupling" and protectionism.

Italy sees China's breakthroughs in high-tech as an opportunity for Italian industries and enterprises to upgrade their technologies and engage in high-quality economic cooperation with their Chinese counterparts. Perhaps the same thinking prompted Stellantis, a multinational automobile manufacturing corporation formed in 2021 through the merger of Italian-American conglomerate Fiat Chrysler Automobiles and the French PSA Group, to enter into a joint venture with Leapmotor, a Hangzhou-based company specializing in developing EVs, three months ago.

By deepening bilateral and multinational cooperation with other economies in green technologies and products, Italy can set an example for other EU member states that plan to accelerate their green transition.

Equally important, according to official data, Germany's investment in China grew by 18.1 percent in the first six months of this year, indicating confidence that the Chinese economy will continue to grow. In fact, more and more foreign direct investment is flowing into China's hi-tech manufac-

turing sector, which will help China realize reform goals.

European countries' deepening cooperation with China to develop high-quality products and services is in total contrast to some other Western countries resorting to protectionism, imposing sanctions, engaging in geopolitical competition and announcing plans and initiatives similar to those that China has already launched to play zero-sum games.

Strengthening cooperation with China in high-quality products and services requires a new way of thinking and being open to new forms of cooperation like those that China has already presented, described and implemented "shared development" in its global initiatives.

The EU may face more severe development problems than it has in the past five years if it continues to serve the US' strategic and economic interests, especially by increasing NATO's budget and intensifying its geopolitical activities, because the allocation of more funds to NATO will increase its financial problems. According to NATO data, the defense budgets of NATO members in Europe, and Canada, increased by nearly 18 percent this year alone, the highest in decades.

The US has spent the past seven years spreading falsehoods

about China's growth, projecting it as a threat to the West, which unfortunately have influenced the EU's leadership. The whole world will suffer if the US continues to curb China's rise.

However, the Joe Biden administration has made clear its intention of further curbing China's rise and isolating it from the international trade by restricting the export of some high-tech products, especially advanced semiconductors, to China. In fact, the US has taken many more measures, including imposing sanctions on Chinese entities, to suppress China globally.

But Chinese companies are already designing advanced chips to offset the impacts of the Biden administration's decision, while the Chinese government is advancing the country's global initiatives to promote shared development and uphold multipolarism. And countries around the world, whether they be US allies or not, admire China for its resilience and progress.

Moreover, the US tried to persuade and/or coerce many countries to not join the Belt and Road Initiative, but it didn't succeed in its design. This reminds me of what former Croatian president Stjepan Mesić likes to say: no one has the power to destroy the Chinese dream.



# A grand ceasefire deal in Gaza is as plausible – or unlikely – as a full-scale war

A ceasefire in Gaza is still being negotiated. As efforts continue to buy time to reach a deal, both Israel and Iran, along with Iran-backed proxies, are using this period to gauge each other's military strategies and strengthen their preparations for potential scenarios.

A nerve-racking tension grips the region, leaving the world on edge between escalating rhetoric and the fear of its consequences.

Incremental solutions and battles have replaced the sprint towards either a grand deal or a large-scale war – but both outcomes are simultaneously plausible and unlikely. The Biden administration is hedging its bets on both fronts, advocating for a ceasefire and a gradual, transitional approach to the Gaza conflict, while simultaneously working towards a broader goal: reshaping the Middle East through a grand bargain.

At the same time, the administration maintains a deterrent stance, bolstering its military presence in the region to emphasise its readiness to support its key ally Israel if a regional war erupts between Israel and Iran and its proxies, particularly Hezbollah in Lebanon.

Critics may argue that the US appears duplicitous, acting as both mediator and participant in the conflict. Indeed, the Biden administration publicly criticises the policies of Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu while providing nearly unlimited military support for Israel's war against Hamas in Gaza. The rhetoric may be humanitarian, but the actions are not.

Those well-versed in international policy understand the nature of strategic alliances. The US-Israeli relationship is a deep, qualitative alliance, and it would be a mistake to assume any American president would abandon Israel in a regional war, especially during the final months of a US presidential election. This principle is shared by both Republicans and Democrats and has long been established.

The American public, by and large, does not want the US drawn into another war, particularly with Iran. While some Americans are wary of Israel's attempts to drag the US into conflict with Iran, this sentiment will not fracture US-Israeli relations. The shift in American sympathy towards Palestinians reflects disapproval of the bloodshed in Israel's war on Palestinian civilians, but it does not translate into support for Hamas, its leaders, or Iran and the resistance axis it leads. This sentiment is not likely to evolve into a strategy, nor will it cause progressives in America to dismantle the enduring relationship with Israel.

All this intersects at what is currently happening between Iranian leaders and Mr Biden's team in the

White House. Here lies the potential for transitioning to a grand Middle East deal that many believe involves normalisation between Gulf Arab states, particularly Saudi Arabia and Israel. This is certainly a significant aspect of the deal, but the Islamic Republic of Iran is not excluded; rather, it is a silent participant.

True, American officials have warned Iran of "severe" consequences if it decides to attack Israel. These consequences may involve a nuclear dimension, as Israel could drag the US into targeting Iran's nuclear facilities, which are

Raghida Dergham

and non-state actors in sovereign Arab countries – giving Tehran the upper hand in determining the fate of Palestine, Lebanon, Syria, Iraq and Yemen – is an unforgivable strategic sin.

Joined @POTUS to meet with @IsraeliPM Netanyahu at the White House. The President emphasized the need to close the remaining gaps on the ceasefire and hostage release deal as soon as possible to bring the hostages come home and alleviate the suffering of Palestinians in Gaza.

.....  
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https://t.co/K7d52Cfxec — Secretary Antony Blinken (@SecBlinken) July 26, 2024

Some may argue that Mr Biden's success in containing the Gaza conflict, preventing it from escalating into a regional war, deserves recognition. This success, however, is directly tied to the US policy towards Iran originally adopted by Mr Obama and advanced by Mr Biden – and the above is its price.

While Mr Biden's team is co-ordinating with several Arab countries, including Egypt, Qatar, Oman, Jordan, and Saudi Arabia, to find a resolution to Israel's war on Gaza and achieve a ceasefire, the deeper conversation is with Tehran. The Biden team has empowered Iran to negotiate the nature, scope and "legitimacy" of its

regional roles, including its encroachments on the sovereignty of Arab states, with Lebanon at the forefront.

This is why Hezbollah secretary general Hassan Nasrallah exudes confidence, even as he trembles at the prospect of a direct war with Israel that would sacrifice Lebanon for Iran's greater interest. He balances on a tightrope between the dictates of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps, the internal divisions in Iran, the hijacking of Lebanon, its people, and its sovereignty; risking their fate and that

inviting Palestinian and extremist militias, including ISIS copycats, into the fray.

Experts close to intelligence agencies in various countries suggest that upcoming developments will involve "massive" strikes, but that the battle will be short-lived, not escalating into a full-scale war between Iran and Israel. There seems to be a predetermined script for a war with clear boundaries and a limited timeframe. American supervision appears to be guiding this scenario, ensuring the containment of "necessary" retaliatory strikes by both Iran and its allies, as well as Israel.

Revenge is one of the acceptable elements in central containment strategy. Perhaps this fits into realpolitik, but the colossal error lies in the tactic of incrementalism adopted by Mr Biden's team from the start in its de-escalation efforts. Thus, it became hostage to compromises that should never have been accepted. Now, it finds itself compelled to negotiate directly and indirectly with Hamas's new political leader, Yahya Sinwar, who the US and Israel accuse of masterminding the events of October 7 and classify as a "terrorist."

Mr Netanyahu sees himself as the eventual victor as US Defence Secretary Lloyd Austin publicly affirms that the US will stand by Israel if Iran opens a direct war against it. As for the war on Lebanon, it has its own different rules. It is true that Nasrallah is a direct enemy of Mr Netanyahu on the Lebanese-Israeli border and that the cost will be high for both, as well as for Lebanon and Israel. However, it is also true that Mr Biden's team has effectively conceded Lebanon's fate to Iran, which controls Nasrallah.

Where do we stand now? We are on the brink, between the potential destruction of Lebanon if Iran and Israel go to war, and a deal that Washington hopes to broker, factoring in mutual revenge, and leading to a ceasefire in Gaza, followed by a grand deal.

Tehran's rulers are ready to engage with Mr Biden's team because they do not want Donald Trump to return to the White House and lose the billions that Mr Biden's administration allows Iran to cash in, either through the release of assets in third countries or through oil sales. Mr Trump's return to the White House would mean pushing Iran back into bankruptcy due to the re-imposition of severe sanctions.

The big mistake remains the reliance of Mr Biden's team on incremental tactics in both negotiations and the battles they sanction. Everything is transitional and phased in this team's calculations, which still dreams of that grand deal that they hope will follow this war of nerves.

## How ‘thuggery’ became part of the British political lexicon

Arnab Neil Sengupta

**WHEN the British prime minister denounced the riots that erupted around the UK a fortnight ago as “far-right thuggery,” the irony of the use of the word “thug” by a Brit against fellow Brits was not lost on English language mavens with an interest in the history of colonial India. In a speech on Aug. 4, Keir Starmer vowed that the authorities would “do whatever it takes to bring these thugs to justice,” referring to the anti-immigration demonstrators blamed for a week of disturbances following a mass stabbing in the northwestern English seaside town of Southport.**

A similar tough-on-crime approach was adopted by Lord William Bentinck, the first British governor-general of India, in the 1820s when he announced his intention to eradicate the menace of the thuggee cult in central India. Bandits who operated with impunity for almost five centuries, the original thugs — Indian males of diverse faiths — specialized in intermingling with long-distance travelers, earning their confidence before waylaying them and looting their valuables.

Almost two centuries after Maj. Gen. William Henry Sleeman, with the backing of Bentinck, captured the last of the thugs (cheats), executing or imprisoning them, the only thing that remains of the organized Indian gangs of professional robbers and murderers is an entry in English-language dictionaries that means “a tough and violent man, especially a criminal.” Although movie buffs will additionally point to the centrality of thuggee suppression in the plots of two enduringly popular Hollywood adventure films, “Gunga Din” and “Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom.”

Mercifully, the modern-day British approximation of a thug, no matter how despicable his behavior, bears no similarity to the homicidal Indian version of yore.

And although there was surely no sinister reason Starmer plumped for the word “thug” in the context of the anti-immigration riots, the demographic trends that some suspect contributed to the online disinformation-fueled outbreak of violence have a purely coincidental connection to the subcontinent. In 2022, India replaced Romania as the most common country of birth for non-UK-born mothers, and Pakistan as the most common country of birth for non-UK born fathers. But that is another story for another day.

Starmer's immediate predecessor, of course, was the embodiment of immigration's positive impact on Britain. Rishi Sunak was born in 1980 to East African-born parents of Indian Punjabi descent who themselves were born in former British colonies: his father in Kenya, his mother in Tanganyika (modern-day Tanzania).

For years, the British encouraged migration from India through the establishment of indentured labor schemes and the hiring of

Indian nationals for positions in the civil service in numerous African nations. But as “Africanization” policies began to be adopted by newly independent African nations in the 1960s and '70s, members of the religiously diverse and enterprising Indian community living in Africa under British colonial rule, such as the Sunaks, migrated to the UK.

Among the other significant upsides of the British Empire's legacy is the long list of English words — of which “thuggery” is just one — that originated in the languages of foreign colonies. On the one hand, the expansion of the empire unwittingly facilitated the borrowing of words related to food, culture, administration and more from Hindi, Tamil, Arabic, Malay and African languages. On the other hand, trade routes and

pace of globalization, driven by the internet, mass media and global travel. Instead of former British colonies, the geographical sources of new words have been as varied as Japan (karaoke, sushi, karate, bonsai), Germany (schadenfreude, weltanschauung), and French (déjà vu, chichi, avant-garde), particularly in the realms of culture, food, technology and science. The rise of global pop culture, social media and fusion cuisine has done its bit as well to introduce slang and terms from various languages into English, notably K-pop and kimchi from Korean, and anime and emoji from Japanese. If the state of the English language was a reliable indicator of the health of the British, or American, society, there would be little or no cause for concern. Instead of protests, marches and riots by the politically

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interactions with diverse cultures brought new vocabulary into English in such areas of strategic importance to the empire as commerce, navigation and goods.

Life is a lot easier for present-day English speakers and writers because of the availability for use of pundit, guru, juggernaut, jungle, chutney, shampoo, pajamas and avatar. These are among the 70 words that underline the strong influence India — the jewel in the crown — has had on English, although the total number of words of Indian origin that are part of the Oxford English Dictionary is much greater — about 900.

That said, the sources and contexts of words that find their way into mainstream English lexicon have changed since decolonization and the collapse of the British Empire on which, at its peak, the sun supposedly never set. The shift has little to do with the fact that net migration has exceeded the UK's natural population change for most of the past two decades, accounting for 60 percent of population growth between 2004 and 2022.

In Pax Americana, as opposed to Pax Britannica, the introduction of foreign words into the English vocabulary has been influenced heavily by the rapid

disaffected, places such as Southport, Sunderland, Hartlepool and Rotherham would have seen spontaneous multiracial gatherings of people singing “God Save the King.” But the hard truth, according to the latest British Social Attitudes survey, released just before the July 4 election, is that faith in the effectiveness and integrity of the country's wider political system has plummeted. “All in all, it appears that people's trust in governments and politicians, and confidence in their systems of government, is as low now as it has ever been over the last 50 years, if not lower,” the survey said.

Amid the scenes of civil disorder and the heated debates in the UK last week over whether the riots were a cause or a symptom, it was somewhat heartening to note that an Indian word that entered the English lexicon in the 19th century in a law-and-order context came in handy for a British prime minister in the 21st century to get his tough message across.

It would be even more heartening to see steps swiftly taken to bring the UK's fractured communities together and heal the wounds of racial distrust so that the need for Downing Street to use a scary word like “thuggery” does not arise again.

## Nearly 2 million Palestinians face death daily

Michael Jansen

**THE threat of an Israeli war on Iran, Lebanon, Syria, and Yemen could recede if serious movement towards a Gaza ceasefire is achieved this week when Israeli and Hamas negotiators resume talks on a Gaza ceasefire. The pretext for this war would be Iranian retaliation for Israel's July 31st assassination of Hamas politburo chief Ismail Haniyeh in Tehran. For more than a decade Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has called for pre-emptive war on Iran, which he accuses of planning to build nuclear weapons.**

The cancellation of a major Iranian strike on Israel in exchange for a Gaza ceasefire became an option last week during the emergency meeting of the 57-member Organisation of Islamic Cooperation in Jeddah. Convened at the request of Iran and Palestine, the foreign ministers condemned Israel's killing of Haniyeh but did not back Iranian retaliation. Pakistani Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar called for sticking to the diplomatic route. “We must not fulfil Netanyahu's plan for a

wider war.” According to Jordanian Foreign Minister Ayman Safadi, the trade-off of retaliation for ceasefire was proposed. Subsequently, there have been indications that Iran is "recalibrating" its response to Israel's attack on Tehran.

This may have encouraged Egyptian President Abdel Fattah al-Sisi, Qatari Emir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani and US President Joe Biden to put pressure on both sides “to close remaining gaps” in the deal and “commerce implementation... without further delay.” While Egypt and Qatar have spent months mediating so far unsuccessful negotiations, Biden's belated input could convince Netanyahu to deliver. Since Netanyahu gives priority to eliminating Hamas militarily and administratively, he does not want a ceasefire even though continuation of the Gaza war threatens the lives of the 70-odd live hostages held by Hamas. Netanyahu's negotiators have complained that he has systematically scuppered nearly finalized deals by introducing last minute conditions certain to be rejected by Hamas. Since Netanyahu's manoeuvres have been made public to

Israelis, he has faced demands from captives' families and the general populace to ceasefire and bring the captives home. He has been motivated

by threats to bring down his coalition by extremist ministers Bezalel Smotrich and Itamar Ben Gvir. If the government falls, Netanyahu will have to defend himself in court from charges of fraud, bribery, and breach of trust. His testimony in his ongoing trial has been postponed until next year due to the war.

For a change, the Biden administration has taken a tough verbal line with Netanyahu by saying it will not allow “extremists” to derail Gaza ceasefire talks. However, Biden has not backed up tough talk with

coercive action. He has not suspended \$3.5 billion to fund the purchase of guidance systems and lethal

fighters to stop fighting. Sinwar is under pressure from 1.9 million displaced, starving Palestinians who face death daily. Haniyeh's deputy Doha-based Khalil al-Haya is expected to join the negotiations.

In a bid to finish off ceasefire talks, Israel has stoked anger in the region by stepping up its bombing campaign in Gaza, killing 25 Palestinians on Friday and more than 100 on Saturday. On the home front, Israel is using the threat of Iranian retaliation as a means to convince Israelis that they must stand firm and tall in the face of attack. During a visit to an army recruitment centre Netanyahu told soldiers

that Israel must be "prepared for defence, as well as offense." Hospitals in northern Israel have been put on alert and even set up underground care units and

blood banks have opened for donations. Search and rescue teams have been deployed to major cities and tent camps set up in southern Israel to receive residents of the north in case of an Hizbollah attack. Israelis have hoarded supplies and bought oil lamps and candles in case of electricity outages. While civilian movements have not been curtailed, these preparations have been reported by international media, boosting the belief that Israel is beleaguered and at risk. This is fiction. Israel has the region's most pow-

erful military. It has a US-guaranteed “edge,” the advantage, against all regional antagonists combined. To exploit tensions for propaganda purposes, the Biden administration has sent warplanes to the region and redeploying naval carrier groups to offer protection Israel does not need.

The framework for a ceasefire deal has been on the table for months so there is no excuse for amendment or delay, a Western diplomatic source said, “Washington has made great progress in bridging the gaps in the issue of the agreement over a ceasefire in Gaza, which would represent the gateway for preventing war in the region.” The first stage of the three-stage deal mandates a 42-day temporary ceasefire, withdrawal of Israeli forces from densely populated areas to an area along the border between Gaza and Israel. Displaced Gazans would return to their places of residence and enjoy freedom of movement. Half Israel's civilian captives and female soldiers would be released. In exchange for female Israeli soldier, Israel would free Palestinian prisoners.

Six hundred lorry-loads of humanitarian aid, including 60 of fuel, would enter the Strip. Rehabilitation would begin of roads, electricity, water, sewage, and communications and this would continue through the period covered by the agreement.

Hamas has demanded the US, the UN and the international community guarantee that Netanyahu cannot halt implementation at the end of this stage as he wants to resume fighting.

During the second 42-day stage, there will be a permanent ceasefire, all Israeli men would be returned in exchange for the release of an agreed-upon number of Palestinian prisoners and detainees. Israeli forces would withdraw completely. During the third 42-day stage, remains of the dead would be exchanged and a three-to-five-year reconstruction plan would begin. All those affected would be compensated for their losses. While Egypt, Qatar and the US are guarantors, the US cannot be trusted due to its "Ironclad commitment to Israel" and the coming change in administration in Washington in January 2025 following the presidential and Congressional elections.





**PESHAWAR:** President Sarhad Chamber of Commerce & Industry Fuad Ishaq addressing during a 'Tajir Convention'. Businessman Forum leader Ilyas Ahmed Bilour also present on occasion.

## SC upholds CCP's order and maintains penalty

### F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: The Supreme Court of Pakistan upheld the Competition Appellate Tribunal's (CAT) order imposing a penalty of PKR 6 million on a local restaurant chain for deceiving consumers by fraudulently using "STARBUCKS" branding for selling its coffee.

STARBUCKS, a globally recognized chain of coffeehouses registered in the State of Washington, filed a formal complaint that the Lahore-based restaurant, Options International, was selling "Starbucks Coffee" while fraudulently using "STARBUCKS MARKS" in its branding.

The Supreme Court ruled that the appellant, "Options International," put itself forward by selling its products under the international brand name Starbucks and by using its logo, which must have had the effect of distorting competition within Pakistan because a local vendor selling similar products, as those being sold by the appellant, would be at a serious disadvantage and not be able to compete therewith since the understanding public would believe, understand, or perceive the same to be the genuine products of Starbucks.

The CCP's enquiry concluded that Options International had prima facie deceived its consumers and harmed the business interests of their competitor by disseminating false and misleading information. During the

enquiry, Options admitted to the violation. In its order, CCP's bench noted that although Options had stopped using STARBUCKS MARKS and committed to complying with the Commission's directions, the unauthorized use of STARBUCKS MARKS spanned a substantial period.

The CCP bench, besides barring M/s Options International from using STARBUCKS MARKS, imposed a penalty of PKR 5 million on M/s Options International. Additionally, the bench directed Options International to inform the general public through newspaper advertisements for three consecutive days about its fraudulent use of STARBUCKS MARKS.

Options International filed an appeal against the CCP's order before CAT, which dismissed the appeal and increased the penalty amount from PKR 5 million to PKR 6 million and modified the daily penalty. Subsequently, M/s Options International has filed an appeal to the Supreme Court of Pakistan against the CAT's order, which the court dismissed.

Using distorted or misleading information and trademarks for marketing of products violate competition laws as it can influence consumer decisions and may prevent them from considering alternative products. The CCP is committed to safeguarding consumers and businesses from deceptive marketing practices through spreading awareness and strict enforcement of competition laws.

## PSX witnesses bearish trend, loses 589 points

ISLAMABAD (APP): The 100-index of the Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) witnessed bearish trend on Monday, losing 589.30 points, a negative change of 0.75 percent, closing at 77,980.29 points against 78,569.59 points on the last working day.

A total of 415,170,050 shares were traded during the day as compared to 420,405,980 shares the previous day, whereas the price of shares stood at Rs 22.242 billion against Rs 20.720 billion on the last trading day.

As many as 444 companies transacted their shares in the stock market, 122 of them recorded gains and 278 sustained losses, whereas the share price of 44 companies remained unchanged.

The three top trading companies were Yousuf Weaving with 38,066,194 shares at Rs 5.34 per share, WorldCall Telecom with 19,215,805 shares at Rs 1.17 per share and Kohinoor Spinning with 13,346,390 shares at Rs 7.64 per share.

Mari Petroleum Company Limited witnessed a maximum increase of Rs 122.16 per share price, closing at Rs 3,266.80, whereas the runner-up was Services Industries Limited with a Rs 48.95 rise in its per share price to Rs 967.30.

Rafhan Maize Products Company Limited witnessed a maximum decrease of Rs 125.59 per share closing at Rs 7,403.98 followed by Nestle Pakistan Limited with a Rs 98.00 decline to close at Rs 6,802.00.

# SCCI demands forensic audit and cancellation of IPPs contracts

### F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Sarhad Chamber of Commerce and Industry president Fuad Ishaq continued the campaign against IPPs agreements and once again demanded conduct of forensic audit of IPPs contracts and immediately their cancellation.

Speaking during a 'Tajir Convention', organized by Jamiate Business Forum, Fuad Ishaq said KP has first right to fully exploit natural gas under article 158 of the constitution while the province is receiving royalty on net-hydel power generation under article 161 (2) of the constitution.

Therefore, he asked the government to ensure all constitutional rights to the province.

Expressing grave concern over less than one percent lending ratio against 16 percent deposits of the commercial banks in KP, he said commercial banks have put this province in the red zone, which was completely unjust and urged government and SBP

to issue directives to commercial banks to increase lending ratio in K-P.

Rejecting the Tajir Dost Scheme, and opposing imposition of taxes in federal fiscal budget 2024-25, the SCCI chief suggested budget making in joint consultation with FPCCI, all prime chambers of the country, Institute of Chartered Accountants of Pakistan and Economic Wing of Pakistan Army.

Fuad Ishaq stressed the need for implementation of SCCI proposals to improve mutual trade volume between Pakistan and Afghanistan.

He demanded pragmatic steps to control increasing deforestation and reduction of the water table.

Maulana Fazlur Rehman, head of the Jamiat e Ulema Islam (JUI-F) was chief guest of the event.

Businessman Forum leader former senator Ilyas Ahmed Bilour, former president of SCCI Haji Muhammad Afzal, the chamber SVP Sanaullah Khan, former SVP Shahid

Hussain, Organizers of Jamiat Business Forum and ex-VP of the chamber Haji Abdul Jilil Jan, Parvez Khan Khattak and senior members of the SCCI, Saddar Gul, Faiz Rasool, Fazal e Wahid, Nadeem Rauf, Ghazanfar Ali Sawal, Gul Rasool, Fazal Muqem, Rashid Iqbal Siddiqui, Waqar Ahmed, Haji Naseer, Khalid Ayub, Secretary of the SCCI Sohail Anjum and other members also present during the convention.

Calling IPPs as detrimental for the economy, the SCCI chief said the government had paid Rs2200billion on head of capacity charges to IPPs in last year.

In the fiscal year 2024-25, he said Rs2800billion would be paid to IPPs on head of capacity charges.

He added that contracts with 12 new IPPs were made, which need to be halted. He said SCCI has played a front foot role against IPPs contracts.

Fuad Ishaq talked about increasing power tariff, stating that KP is producing cheap and surplus electricity

against its actual demand.

From 4500megawatt to 6000megawatt is total electricity production in KP, in which 2800MW were consumed in summer and 1300MW in winter and additional electricity was exported to the national grid, the SCCI chief explained.

He added despite the fact that the price of electricity has been made Rs55 per unit, which is completely unjust with this province which is producing additional electricity and gas.

The SCCI chief said Pakhtunkhwa Power Development Organisation (PEDO) had made schemes on the run of rivers but progress on these schemes was at snail pace.

Similarly, he said KP is producing 31000 barrel oil/day which is 42 percent of the total production of the country, but, he regretted no oil refinery was set up in KP.

Likewise, he said total KP has total gas production is 550mmcfds against its

consumption of 200mmcfds while the province's LPG production is 850 metric ton/day.

Furthermore, he explained natural gas Rs2700 per mmbtu are being charged from industry whereas Rs4000 mmbtu are being charged from commercial and domestic consumers.

Despite the surplus gas production, he said KP was put into the RLNG basket which was totally unfair and unacceptable, which was a complete negation of article 158 of the constitution.

Fuad suggested the conversion of the Benazir Income Support Programme into Benazir Development Fund to establish industries and provide employment opportunities to people in KP and the rest of the country.

The SCCI chief gave a proposal for bringing tariffs of 212 items to duties of Afghanistan and allow imports of these items to traders and then re-export so that smuggling would be eliminated.

## Cars' sale increase 58%

ISLAMABAD (APP): The sale of cars during the first month of the current financial year 2024-25 has increased by 58.21 percent as compared to the same month of last year, a recent data released by Pakistan Automobile Manufacturing Association (PAMA) said.

According to the data, as many as 5,857 cars were sold during the month under review as opposed to 3,702 units in the same month of last year.

The breakup figures showed that 790 units of Honda Civic and City were sold during the corresponding month of the year 2024-25 as compared to the sale of 208 units last year.

Toyota Corolla and Yaris cars sales also increased by 3.65 percent as it went up to 1,106 units from 1,067 units in July of the previous year.

Suzuki Swift's sales also surged by 101.60 percent as its sale increased to 502 units from 249 units last

year.

Sale of Suzuki Cultus decreased to 96 units during the first month of the current year, whereas during the same month last year, the sale was recorded at 177 units while the sale of Suzuki WagonR also decreased to 139 units from 245 units last year.

Suzuki Alto's sales also witnessed an increase of 99.23 percent from 1,440 units to 2,869 units during the current year, whereas the sale of Suzuki Bolan rose to 288 units as opposed to sales of 146 units in the same month of last year.

## DTI focuses on skills for livelihood

### F.P. Report

LAHORE: Descon Technical Institute (DTI), a project of the Bilquis Abdul Razak Dawood (BARD) Foundation, provides free technical skills training to underprivileged youth, helping them secure employment. Since 1998, DTI has trained over 35,000 individuals, many of whom have found jobs abroad.

DTI offers 60+ courses and focuses on inclusivity and women's empowerment, with specialized programs in trades like welding and electrical work. General Manager Murtaza Ali highlighted DTI's vision to equip youth to meet international standards and secure local and international jobs.

DTI's slogan, "Skills for Livelihood," reflects its commitment to practical and marketable skills. Besides technical skills, DTI emphasizes soft skills such as health, safety, and communication. DTI also provides corporate training for companies like Coca-Cola Pakistan, OGDCL and Engro.

With campuses in Lahore and Sadiqabad, DTI boasts state-of-the-art facilities and experienced instructors. Certified by bodies like IOSH and NEBOSH (holding Gold Status), DTI has facilitated job opportunities for around 1000 graduates overseas.

## Gold rates remain unchanged

ISLAMABAD (APP): The per tola price of 24 karat gold witnessed no change on Monday and was traded at Rs 256,500 in local market.

The price of 10 grams of 24 karat also remained stagnant at Rs.219,907 while there was no change in prices of 10 gram 22 karat gold which was traded at Rs.201,582, All Sindh Sarafa Jewellers Association reported.

The price of per tola and ten gram silver remained unchanged at Rs.2,850 and Rs.2,443.41 respectively.

Prices of gold in the international market increased by \$9 to \$2,439 as compared to the previous day rates of \$2,430, the Association reported.

## Shipping activity at Port Qasim

KARACHI (APP): Shipping activity was reported at the port where eight ships namely, Maersk Durban, MSC Elsa 3, Korous Queen, Rhine, Golden Denise, Lusail, Jag Padma and Chang Han Run Hai scheduled to load/offload Containers, Cement, Palm oil, Chemicals, LNG, Mogas and Coal, berthed at Qasim Container Terminal, Multi-Purpose Terminals, Liquid Terminal, Engro Terminal, Elengy Terminal, Oil Terminal and Bulk Terminal respectively during last 24 hours.

Meanwhile another edible oil carrier Silver Orla also arrived at Outer Anchorage of Port Qasim during the same period.

A total of ten ships were engaged at PQA berths during the last 24 hours, out of them a container vessel MSC Elsa-3 left the port on Monday morning, while two more ships, Golden Denise and Bateleur are expected to sail on today afternoon.

A cargo volume of 121,954 tonnes exclusive imports, including containerized cargo carried in 982 Containers (TEUs) was handled at the port during last 24 hours.

## Production from Tight Gas Project commenced

### F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Oil and Gas Development Company Limited (OGDCL) on Monday announced the successful commencement of early commercial production of Tight Gas from Pakistan's first-ever Tight Gas project, Nur West Well-1 at the Nur Development & Production Lease (D&PL), located in the Sujawal district of Sindh.

The Nur West Well-1 is currently producing 1.5 Million Standard Cubic Feet per Day (MMSCFD) of gas with a wellhead flowing pressure of 1050 PSI. The gas is sourced from the Lower Guru formation ('A' Sand) and has been seamlessly integrated into the Sui Southern Gas Company Limited (SSGCL) network. This integration will strengthen the national gas supply infrastructure and contribute to the stability of Pakistan's energy supply.

During drilling, initial conventional testing methods did not provide favorable results, consequently, the hydraulic fracturing technique was employed to achieve production viability. This innovative approach underscores OGDCL's commitment to exploring and developing advanced techniques to maximize resource potential.

OGDCL has formulated a comprehensive Tight Gas exploration and development roadmap, which is currently under implementation. This roadmap reaffirms the company's commitment to expanding energy resources, securing national energy requirements, and promoting sustainable development across Pakistan.



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## TCB-1 and SSRL receive environment awards

### F.P. Report

KARACHI: Thar Coal Block-1 Power Generation Company Private Limited (TCB-1) and Sino Sindh Resources Private Limited (SSRL), subsidiaries of Shanghai Electric currently working on a CPEC priority project, have been honoured with Environment Excellence Awards by the National Forum of Environment and Health (NFEH).

Meng Donghai, Chairman of TCB-1 and SSRL, expressed his pleasure over the awards and stressed that the two companies will continue to give utmost importance to environment protection and stick to the principle of sustainable development.

TCB-1 and SSRL, who are jointly executing the 1320MW Thar Block-1 Integrated Energy Project, were both given awards at



the 21st Environment Excellence Award 2024 by National Forum of Environment and Health (NFEH) on August 07, 2024. The Awards ceremony was held alongside a conference on

the nexus of climate change and food security which was attended by leading experts of the field.

"We are delighted to receive the awards which are a testimony of our com-

mitment towards the environment," commented Meng Donghai. "This is the fourth year in a row that we have been given these awards, a fact that gives us great pleasure and satisfaction. I must say that we will continue to go the extra mile in our efforts to protect the environment."

He stressed that both SSRL and TCB-1 will keep working on various projects for the greater benefit of the community and will continue to make sure that the companies make lives better for the people of the area.

He pointed out that the Thar Block-1 Integrated Energy Project has provided more than 20,000 direct employment opportunities for the locals, with a cumulative tax payment of US\$170 million and CSR expenditure of over US\$2 million, focused on improving the lives of the local community.

## Sammer becomes first Pakistani woman to join Champions of Change Coalition

### F.P. Report

KARACHI: Shan Foods co-chairwoman, Sammer Sultan has become the first woman from Pakistan to join the Champions of Change Coalition, a Sydney-based, members-only program that connects over 250 C-suite professionals worldwide.

"I am humbled by the enormity of this membership. Being the first woman from Pakistan to join the Coalition, I feel it is my foremost responsibility to live up to this role by furthering my initiatives and creating more female leaders within the workspaces in Pakistan" said Sammer Sultan while sharing her thoughts on her latest achievement.

A staunch advocate of gender equality and inclusivity, Sammer has often



been at the forefront of several CSR initiatives aimed at sustainable approaches towards women empowerment. From equal access to education and healthcare to

environmental justice, her efforts and partnerships at personal and organizational levels have helped several factions of women across the society, gaining her a

place at the table at one of the world's most prestigious coalitions working towards bringing positive change for women in the workplace.

"Sammer's addition to the Champions' list marks a well-deserved milestone on behalf of the women workforce of Pakistan, and signifies the beginning of a new era of workplace inclusion for women in the country" said Fiza Farhan, Convener at the Coalition.

Formerly known as the Male Champions of Change Coalition, the Champions of Change Coalition provides leadership platforms to debate, discuss, and resolve modern-day issues faced by marginalized communities, and helps members in bringing about positive top-down change across the global corporate landscape.

## Pakistan restarts tractor export to Africa

LAHORE (APP): Federal Minister for Industry and Production Rana Tanveer Hussain cut the ribbon at a ceremony arranged on the occasion of restart of the tractors export to Africa here at Millat Tractor Company on Monday.

The company's Chief Executive Raheel Asghar and other top management of the company as well as the foreign guests were also present.

Addressing the ceremony, the Federal Minister said, "The process of exporting Pakistani tractors to different African countries has started again. I hope it will revive the sinking tractor manufacturing industry." He said that the decision to export tractors to African countries would expedite the process of the tractor manufacturing industry and also ensure speedy agricultural development, thus setting the country's economy on strong footing.

Rana Tanveer Hussain said that everyone knows that the biggest challenge facing Pakistan is the economy, however, the coun-

try's economy will recover soon only through agricultural development. The present government has managed to save the country from default and 'our goal is to revive the economy,' he said, citing that from 2013 to 2017, Pakistan had been developing fast and afterwards, every sector had started declining due to the incompetent government that took over in 2018.

The Federal Minister mentioned that though the present government has taken difficult decisions, these would prove beneficial for the nation and the country, and everything will be fine in a year. "Agriculture will play an important role in the recovery of the economy and the government has given many incentives to the stakeholders of the agricultural sector, while the exports of rice and sesame have doubled. We have to find new markets because Pakistan's agricultural products are in high demand at global level," he maintained.

He said that there will be further improvements in

tractor manufacturing and export of tractors to Africa will prove to be an important step, asserting that 90 percent local parts are being installed in the tractors as 400 companies are manufacturing tractor parts, and these companies should cluster here to manufacture parts. He disclosed that export of cars is also going to start and at first, cars will be exported to Bangladesh.

On this occasion, Raheel Asghar said that they want to export 10 percent of tractor production, adding that Pakistan has two major tractor manufacturing plants which use more than 90 percent locally manufactured components. He added that sellers are not able to deliver tractors due to tax refund stoppage, asserting that tractor manufacturing industry is suffering due to non-refund of sales tax by FBR (Federal Board of Revenue) should solve problems of the tractor manufacturing industry on priority basis. The government should also take more effective steps to solve the tractor industry's problems, he added.

## Stocks mostly rise as focus turns to US inflation data

LONDON (AFP/APP): European and Asian stock markets mostly rose Monday as investors tried to move on from last week's upheaval fuelled by US recession worries, with focus shifting to the week's release of key data, notably American inflation.

After a painful collapse for equities a week ago,

fuelled by a big miss on US jobs creation, equities managed to bounce back over the following days and ended Friday on a healthy note.

The gains were helped by a report showing fewer people than expected claimed US unemployment benefits, soothing fears that the world's top economy was contracting.

The recovery extended into the new week, while the dollar was mixed against main rivals. "The stabilisation of sentiment is continuing, following the sell off a week ago, as concerns about an American recession ease off a little," noted Susannah Streeter, head of money and markets at Hargreaves Lansdown.





In brief

Pakistan squad's net session held

RAWALPINDI (APP): Pakistan test squad's first net session was held at the Pindi Stadium on Monday. According to details, the players participated in three hours of batting, bowling and fielding sessions under the supervision of coaches. The players also took part in the fielding session on Sunday. The players included in the Test squad will participate in the training session from Tuesday 10am.

Daley announces retirement

LONDON (Agencies): Five-time Olympic medallist Tom Daley has confirmed his retirement from diving. The 30-year-old won silver alongside Noah Williams in the men's synchronised 10m platform in Paris to complete his set of medals, now with one of every colour. Daley, who first competed in the 2008 Games at the age of 14, won bronze in London 2012 and in Tokyo in 2021 in the 10m platform, as well as bronze in the men's synchronised 10m platform in Rio 2016. He won gold in the synchronised 10m platform with Matty Lee in Tokyo and had effectively retired after those Games, before deciding to return for Paris in order to compete in front of his two children. "I'm really happy with how everything's gone," an emotional Daley told the BBC's Meghan Owen as Team GB arrived back in London from Paris. "It's always hard when you say goodbye to your sport. Lots of things to process, but I think it's the right time. This year felt like such a bonus and I got to compete in front of my family, my kids. I got to be flagbearer. So yeah, bucket list ticked off on every occasion." Asked what he has in store for retirement, Daley said: "I want to be with my family. I'm really excited to be able to spend some time with them and just be able to feel a bit normal for a couple of days."

Atletico sign Alvarez

MADRID (AFP): Atletico Madrid signed striker Julian Alvarez from Manchester City on Monday in a deal reported to be worth up to 85 million euros (\$93 million). "The club has reached an agreement with Manchester City for the transfer of the Argentine forward, who has signed a contract for the next six seasons," said Atletico in a statement. Spanish reports say Atletico will pay 75 million euros for the forward, with potentially 10 million more in bonuses. The 24-year-old arrived at City for just £14 million (16 million euros) in January 2022 from River Plate, winning two Premier League trophies and the Champions League among other silverware. Alvarez also helped Argentina lift the World Cup trophy in December 2022 and the Copa America in 2021 and 2024. "Today I say goodbye to this amazing club, with a lot of emotion," Alvarez told City's club website. "These have been two very special years. During this time, I have grown and learnt a lot -- both as a player and as a person." Alvarez scored 36 goals for City in 103 appearances across all competitions. "He's incredibly loved by the team for his behaviour but like I said many times for many players, he wants to leave and have a new challenge," said Manchester City coach Pep Guardiola last week. Diego Simeone's Atletico have also signed Robin Le Normand and Alexander Sorloth as they reinforce heavily to compete with Real Madrid and Barcelona, following a disappointing fourth-place La Liga finish last season. Atletico begin the new campaign with a visit to face Villarreal on August 19.



DHAKA: The Bangladesh players make their way to Pakistan for the Test series.

## Islamabad, Sindh victorious in Basketball Championships

ISLAMABAD (APP): Islamabad-B, Sindh in Women's and Islamabad-B & A in Men's outclassed their opponents in second day pool matches of Independence Day Inter-Provincial Basketball Championships being organised by Pakistan Basketball Federation here at Liaquat Gymnasium of Pakistan Sports Complex.

Islamabad-B thrashed Balochistan Basketball Women team with score of 35 points as Islamabad-B won the match with 45-10 points. Shanzezy scored 16 points, Shahbano Ikram scored 11 points for winning side while Faiza Khan and Laib Khan scored 06 and 02 points respectively from Balochistan Women team. In

second match Sindh Women team defeated Islamabad-A by 59/39 score. Aisha Ijlal-25, Hareem Zahid-7 points scored for Sindh while Amani Khan -16 and Mahrukh Alvi scored 07 points for losing side Islamabad-A Women Basketball team.

In men category Islamabad-B defeated Sindh Basketball team by 74-64 score. Haroon Rashid-18 Ahmed Insaan scored 14 points for Islamabad-B while Mohsin Riaz scored 13 and Muhammad Azhar scored 12 points for losing side.

In second match in men category Islamabad-A defeated Balochistan by 83-44 points. Ali Hamza Kazmi-19 and Jabran Asif Khan scored 18 points respectively from

Islamabad-A. While Jamal Khan 27 and Ahmed Nawaz scored 12 points for losing side Balochistan Basketball Men team.

All matches were supervised by Gul Jamal, Saadat Jehangir, Moazzam Navid Rao, Naveed Ahmed Beeda, Adeel S Raza, Muhammad Praim Shahzad and Muhammad Mudassar.

The event is one of the series for the promotion of basketball in the country being organised under the supervision of Federal Basketball Association. It is pertinent to add here that teams from Punjab, Sindh, KPK, Balochistan and Islamabad Men & Women are participating for five days Championships.

## Qamar Zaman calls for unity, sacrifice on Independence Day

ISLAMABAD (APP): As Pakistan prepares to celebrate its 77th Independence Day, former World Squash Champion Qamar Zaman has urged citizens to come together and work collectively to take the country forward.

In an interview with APP, he expressed his deep love for Pakistan and emphasized the need for collective effort to ensure the country's safety, survival, and security.

Zaman, who reached the semifinals of the British Amateur Championship at the United Kingdom in 1973, said, "This country has given us so much, and now it's our turn to give back. We must celebrate Independence Day with a renewed resolve to make sacrifices for Pakistan's dignity and identity."

He recalled an incident in Great Britain where an Englishman waved the Pakistani flag after his title win, saying, "That moment was a testament

to the pride and recognition that comes with representing Pakistan abroad."

Zaman credited Pakistan for his achievements, saying that representing the country at the global level has been a matter of pride.

"I am where I am today because of this country. Pakistan has given me so much, and I feel honored to have had the opportunity to represent it on the world stage," he said.

Zaman said it is the duty of everyone to protect and uphold the country's dignity and identity. "Pakistan is abound with talent, boasting a plethora of skilled individuals across various fields, including sports, medicine, and engineering etc. All these talented individuals should channel their skills with dedication and passion towards the betterment of the country.

By doing so, they can harness their potential to make a meaningful impact and contribute to Pakistan's

progress and prosperity," he said.

Zaman, who in the 1975 British Open, stunned and beat the defending-champion Geoff Hunt of Australia in the quarterfinals, and went on to win the title, urged political leaders to work together, tapping into the abundant talent in Pakistan, and guiding the youth to contribute positively to the nation.

As Pakistan celebrates its Independence Day on August 14, Zaman's message echoes the sentiment of many, urging to put aside differences and work together for the country's prosperity and progress.

It may be mentioned that, Zaman has reached the British Open final on four occasions. He was runner-up to Hunt in 1978, 1979 and 1980, and to Jahangir Khan in 1984. He was also runner-up at the World Open four times, losing to Hunt in the finals of 1976, 1979 and 1980, and to Jahangir in 1984.

## KP Table Tennis Association elects new leadership for four years

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Table Tennis Association has successfully conducted its elections, resulting in the formation of a new cabinet that will serve for the next four years. Sartajuddin has been elected as President, while Ahmed Nawaz Malizai has been appointed Secretary General, and Shahzad Islam will serve as Finance Secretary.

The General Council meeting of the Provincial Table Tennis Association took place yesterday in the conference room of the PSB Coaching Center in Peshawar, attracting a large number of officials from various district associations across the province. During the meeting, the performance of the outgoing cabinet was reviewed and deemed satisfactory, with many congratulating them for their efforts in promoting table tennis in the

province.

The election of new officials for the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Table Tennis Association was carried out with overwhelming support. Muhammad Asim was elected as Chairman, Sartajuddin as President, and Kifayatullah Khan as Senior Vice President. Among the Vice Presidents are Samiullah Marwat from Nowshera, Azhar Ahmad from Swat, and Kamran from Peshawar, Kiran Musharraf. Additionally, Ahmed Nawaz Malizai from DI Khan were elected as Secretary General, while Shahid Mughal from Abbottabad will serve as Senior Associate Secretary. Other officials include Lady Associate Secretary Amna Mehmood from Peshawar, Lady Associate Secretary Saira, Associate Secretary Bashir Ahmed, and Finance Secretary Shahzad Islam from Swabi. Muhammad Salman Khan has been appointed as the

Public Relations Officer. Dr. Chaudhry Javed Aslam will serve as the Chairman of the Executive Committee, with members including Ayub Bangash, Engineer Zahid, Jamal Shah, and Darnayab from the merged tribal districts.

Notably, during the elections, officials from all districts in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa voted in favor of the new cabinet, with only the representatives from Kohat and Mardan opposing the decision. The representative from District Swat was disqualified due to his position as President of the Swat Division Tag Ball Association.

Among the distinguished attendees were Masood Ali, representing the Pakistan Table Tennis Association, Amina Mehmood from the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Sports Directorate, and Khalid Noor, the Senior Vice President of the Provincial Karate

## PCB reveals ticket prices for Pak-Bangladesh Tests

LAHORE (Monitoring Desk): The Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) on Monday announced that the tickets for the two-match Test series between Pakistan and Bangladesh will go on sale online from 13 August.

The fans can acquire the tickets online at PCB.tcs.com.pk from 1700 PST, while the physical tickets will be available to purchase from different TCS outlets from 16 August after 09.00 am.

The series between Pakistan and Bangladesh is a part of the ICC World Test Championship 2023-25, with the first Test commencing at the Rawalpindi Cricket Stadium from 21-25 August. The second Test match will be played at the National Bank Stadium in Karachi from 30 August to 3 September.

The tickets for both Test matches have been kept at an affordable rate. The minimum rate starts at PKR 50 (General enclosure/ Wasim Bari enclosure in Karachi) and goes up to PKR 250,000 (full hospitality box) at the NBS in Karachi.

Also, box offices outside match venues (RCS and NBS) will be operational two days prior to the Test match. Additionally, a sea-

sonal pass has been introduced to facilitate fans, allowing them a 15 per cent discount if they buy a five-day pass for the Test match.

In case of an early conclusion of the five-day game, tickets for the remaining days will be refunded to the fans.

The tickets for the premium enclosures (Miran Baksh, Sohail Tanvir and Yasir Arafat) at the Rawalpindi Cricket Stadium will be available to the fans at PKR 200.

VIP enclosures (Imran Khan and Javed Miandad) on weekdays will be available at PKR 500, while on weekends, they will be available for PKR 600.

At the RCS, the Gallery pass, which includes lunch and tea, will be available at PKR 2,800, while the Platinum box, also including lunch and tea, will be available at PKR 12,500. The fans can get the full hospitality box for PKR 200,000 each.

In Karachi, first-class enclosures (Asif Iqbal, Majid Khan, Waqar Hasan Das and Zaheer Abbas) will be available at PKR 100.

Fans will have to pay PKR 200 for premium enclosures (Imran Khan, Quaid and Wasim Akram),

while VIP enclosures (Fazal Mahmood, Hanif Mohammad and Javed Miandad) will be available at PKR 400 on weekdays and PKR 500 on weekends.

Each hospitality box seat (including lunch and tea) in Karachi will be charged at PKR 12,500, while a platinum shared box at the Rawalpindi Cricket Stadium will be available at the same price.

**Squads Pakistan:** Shan Masood (c), Saud Shakeel (vc), Aamir Jamal (subject to Fitness), Abdullah Shafique, Abrar Ahmed, Babar Azam, Kamran Ghulam, Khurram Shahzad, Mir Hamza, Mohammad Ali, Mohammad Hurraira, Mohammad Rizwan (wicket-keeper), Naseem Shah, Saim Ayub, Salman Ali Agha, Sarfaraz Ahmed (wicket-keeper) and Shaheen Shah Afridi

**Bangladesh :** Najmul Hossain Shanto (c), Mahmudul Hasan Joy, Zakir Hasan, Shadman Islam, Mominul Haque, Mushfiqur Rahim, Shakib Al Hasan, Litton Kumer Das, Mehidy Hasan Miraz, Taijul Islam, Nayeem Hasan, Nahid Rana, Shoriful Islam, Hasan Mahmud, Taskin Ahmed, Syed Khaled Ahmed.

## Former cricketer Thorpe took his own life: family



LONDON (AFP): Graham Thorpe's wife Amanda has revealed the former England cricketer took his own life after battling depression and anxiety for several years, with police confirming Monday he had died following an incident on a railway line near his home.

Aged just 55, Thorpe's death earlier this month plunged the cricket world into mourning for the popular star. He enjoyed an impressive England career as an elegant batsman from 1993 to 2005, before spending 12 years in various coaching roles.

But Thorpe was hospitalised in May 2022 and declared "seriously ill". Amanda Thorpe has now disclosed, in an interview with The Times, that the former Surrey batsman attempted suicide two years ago before taking his own life.

"Despite having a wife

and two daughters whom he loved and who loved him, he did not get better. He was so unwell in recent times and he really did believe that we would be better off without him and we are devastated that he acted on that and took his own life," Amanda Thorpe told The Times.

"For the past couple of years, Graham had been suffering from major depression and anxiety. This led him to make a serious attempt on his life in May 2022, which resulted in a prolonged stay in an intensive care unit."

Inquest

An inquest into Thorpe's death is due to open at Surrey Coroner's Court in Woking, southwest of London, on Tuesday, with the coroner having received a referral from the British Transport Police. The force said: "Officers were called to Esher railway station at

8.26 am (0726 GMT) on 4 August to reports of a casualty on the tracks.

"Paramedics also attended, however sadly a person was pronounced dead at the scene. The incident is not being treated as suspicious." A spokesperson for Surrey Coroner's Office said: "We can confirm that the Coroner has received a referral for a Mr Graham Thorpe from the British Transport Police.

"A post mortem examination has been undertaken and Mr Thorpe's body released to his family."

The left-hander featured in 100 Test matches and 82 one-day internationals for England, scoring over 9,000 runs for his country, including 16 Test hundreds.

But he was unable to overcome his mental health battle despite the support of his family and doctors.

"Despite glimpses of hope and of the old Graham, he continued to suffer from depression and anxiety, which at times got very severe," Amanda Thorpe said. "We supported him as a family and he tried many, many treatments but unfortunately none of them really seemed to work.

"Graham was renowned as someone who was very mentally strong on the field and he was in good physical health. But mental illness is a real disease and can affect anyone."

## Pak Shaheens, Bangladesh A series trophy unveiled



ISLAMABAD (Monitoring Desk): The glittering trophy for the two-match red-ball series between Pakistan Shaheens and Bangladesh A was unveiled at the Islamabad Club here on Monday.

Pakistan Shaheens will face Bangladesh 'A' in the first four-day match at the Islamabad Club from 13-16 August. The second four-day match will be played at the same venue from 20-23 August. The two sides had most recently played a two-match series in Darwin, Australia, which ended in 1-1.

Both Pakistan Shaheens and Bangladesh 'A' have packed their sides with players who will feature in the ICC World Test

Championship fixtures, to be played in Rawalpindi and Karachi on 21-25 August and 30 August-3 September, respectively.

This is due to the fact that both Pakistan and Bangladesh have not played a Test since January and March, respectively.

Pakistan's last Test was against Australia in Sydney, while Bangladesh previous appearance in the current ICC World Test Championship cycle was against Sri Lanka at home in March.

Test probables in the Pakistan Shaheens are Saud Shakeel (captain), Kamran Ghulam, Mir Hamza, Mohammad Ali, Mohammad Hurraira, Naseem Shah, Saim Ayub

and Sarfaraz Ahmed, while Hasan Mahmud, Mahmudul Hasan Joy, Mominul Haque, Mushfiqur Rahim, Nayeem Hasan and Zakir Hasan are Bangladesh 'A' players who will join the Test side following the four-day match.

Saud Shakeel, who was recently named Pakistan Test vice-captain and has previously led Pakistan Shaheens red-ball side against Sri Lanka 'A' in October-November 2021, will captain the home side in the first four-day match.

Anamul Haque, who has represented Bangladesh in 74 international matches to date, will captain Bangladesh 'A'.

In the past three years, the Shaheens have played six four-dayers – winning three, losing one and drawing two. The Shaheens began their preparations for the red-ball series on 7 August at the Islamabad Club under the supervision of head coach Umar Gul, while Bangladesh 'A' arrived in Islamabad on 10 August.

Sameen Gul has been withdrawn from Pakistan Shaheens squad as a precautionary measure. A replacement will be announced in due course.





## In brief

### Flag march on Independence Day

ISLAMABAD (APP): Contingents from the Police, Dolphin Squad, Traffic Police, and other law enforcement agencies conducted a flag march across the city on Monday to maintain peace and tranquility throughout the 77th Independence Day. According to a police spokesman the flag march under the command of the Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Operations Mohammad Aarsalan Shahzeb started from sports complex and passed through various routes of the city and ended back at the sports complex. "The purpose of the flag march was to express the determination of the Islamabad police to establish peace and order and promote unity on Independence Day", he added. Deputy Inspector General (DIG) Syed Ali Raza said that Police Special monitoring is also being done on social media, legal action will be taken against those who spread religious and communal hatred. No one will be allowed to take the law into their hands, the law will act upon violation, DIG Islamabad, Islamabad's peace-loving citizens are expected to cooperate fully with the police and administration in ensuring peace and order, DIG Islamabad.

### IESCO issues power shutdown programme

ISLAMABAD (APP): Islamabad Electric Supply Company (IESCO) on Monday issued power suspension programme for Tuesday for various areas of its region due to necessary maintenance and routine development work. According to IESCO Spokesperson, the power supply of different feeders and grid stations would remain suspended for the period for Islamabad Circle, 08:00 AM to 12:00 Noon, Upper Topa, Patriata, TDCP, I-10/1, I-10/2, New Exchange, Dhalla Feeders, from 06:00 AM to 11:00 AM, Rawalpindi City Circle, Ghosia Colony, Chakra Feeders, Rawalpindi Cantt Circle, New Kaliyam, Old Kaliyam, Jhatta Hathial, Bisali, Industrial, Bhal, Gumti, Jarar Camp, Swan Garden-I, PAF, MES, Gracie Line, Rahimabad, VVIP Feeders, Chakwal Circle, Deara Muslim, Lillia, Tuba, Rawal, GPO Chowk, Main Bazar, Murat, Tala Gang City Feeders, Jhelum Circle, Abbaspura, Ajmal, Shaheed, Pakhwal, Jakhar F-7 katchary, F-9 Chuck Dulat feeders and surrounding areas.

### RWMC kicks off cleanliness drive

RAWALPINDI (APP): Rawalpindi Waste Management Company (RWMC) has kicked off its special cleanliness campaign for the country's 77th Independence Day celebrations besides deploying additional sanitary workers. According to the RWMC spokesman, the company had decorated the RWMC head office with electric lanterns which presented a beautiful scene at night while RWMC will also hold a flag hoisting and cake-cutting ceremony to mark the day. He said that a comprehensive plan had been devised on the eve of Independence Day. Under the special cleanliness program, the area around the educational institutions and celebration event places was being cleaned, and the waste containers were also being emptied. The construction material or debris was also being removed while white powder lining would also be ensured on city roads on Independence Day. He urged the residents to cooperate with the RWMC staff and not throw waste and other materials in drains and the open.

# Pakistan's Parliament championed critical legislation on gender violence, women empowerment: Speaker

ISLAMABAD (APP): Speaker National Assembly, Sardar Ayaz Sadiq on Monday said the path to sustainable and inclusive development sans women empowerment and gender equality was elusive whereas the Parliament of Pakistan had championed critical legislation barring gender violence and supporting women empowerment in the country.

In his keynote address at the inaugural session of the two-day meeting of the Asian Forum of Parliamentarians on Population and Development (AFPPD) on 'Gender Empowerment and Green Economy', the Speaker underscored that the presence of high-level dignitaries depicted great leadership and partnership of regional parliamentarians in achieving gender equality and women empowerment goals.

As many as 15 Asian countries' parliamentarians and others from Pakistan, diplomatic community, high level political figures, government officials, international non-governmental organisations (INGOs), members of international donor organisations, and academia participated the event.

Speaker National Assembly, Sardar Ayaz Sadiq lauded PM's aide Romina Khurshid Alam for her tireless efforts in organizing the international meeting with a very timely and pertinent agenda synchronized with the national

sustainable development goals.

The parliament of Pakistan has played a crucial role in ensuring well guided legislation on gender equality, reproductive health, and established women caucus, youth parliamentarians committee, and other parliamentary forums for inclusive engagement of all stakeholders in policy making initiatives, he added.

"The Parliament of Pakistan became the first public building for securing net metering license to promote green economy and renewables. The Speaker National Assembly's residence and the Parliament building were first converted over solar energy when there was no public building with solar power in the country," he mentioned.

Pakistan, he said, had prepared billions of rupees project for solarization of Balochistan that would not only help reduce power leakages, but also ensure renewable energy rollout in the biggest province of the country by territory. "Climate Change is a present reality affecting our day-to-day life. We are disproportionately affected due to increased intensity of disasters and violence against gender in the aftermath of climate catastrophes. The 2022 floods alone rendered \$30billion in infrastructure losses and numerous precious lives lost in the devastation deluge," Speaker Ayaz Sadiq said.

He underlined that women lack equal access to resources and the main driver of sustainable development. We will have to move towards more equitable and sustainable society," she added. Romina Khurshid highlighted that Pakistan has developed a new reformed agenda under its green vision with out of the box initiatives like Living Indus Initiative and Recharge Pakistan.

Recharge Pakistan, she said, involved women through training and employing for managing wetlands. "Pakistan is working on managing GLOFs, integrated resource management, climate smart agriculture that are generating millions of jobs particularly for women in the rural areas," she added.

The legacy of late Prime Minister, Benazir Bhutto for the AFPPD forum held in Cairo 1994 served as a proactive policy for Pakistan, she added. "When women are empowered then communities are more resilient. It's our duty to legislate and ensure opportunities for women in green economy. Our government is working to provide education for women to benefit green economy. Pakistan is committed to play active role in this regional dialogue," she said. Secretary General, AFPPD, Dr Jetn Siranthranont and Member of the Parliament, Thailand in his special remarks

Green development, she said was a transformation which was not possible without addressing societal inequalities mainly gender imbalance and women discrimination.

"It's imperative to recognize

women's dual role as the most impacted due to climate change and the main driver of sustainable development. We will have to move towards more equitable and sustainable society," she added. Romina Khurshid highlighted that Pakistan has developed a new reformed agenda under its green vision with out of the box initiatives like Living Indus Initiative and Recharge Pakistan.

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"It's imperative to recognize

## Pakistan, South Korea can achieve great success together: Envoy

ISLAMABAD (APP): South Korean ambassador to Pakistan, Park Kijun, on Monday, said that there was innumerable potential for Pakistan and South Korea to work together on major projects.

In an interview with Radio Pakistan, he stated that he believes that by collaborating, both countries can significantly benefit their people. The ambassador praised Pakistan's skilled workforce and noted that South Korean IT companies

were eager to invest in Pakistan, taking advantage of the country's young talent.

He suggested that both nations could expand cooperation in areas like energy and infrastructure. He also emphasized the need to increase trade, as last year's trade volume of \$1.2 billion is far below the potential both countries have.

The ambassador said that Pakistan has rich natural resources and a dynamic workforce, while South Korea excels in technology

and economic growth. He expressed a strong desire to strengthen cultural ties, especially South Korea's interest in Pakistan's Gandhara heritage.

The ambassador announced plans for a Korea-Pakistan Gala in October, which will be held in Islamabad. The event will bring together government officials and artists from both countries to celebrate and strengthen the relationship between South Korea and Pakistan.

## BISP, PSDF discuss progress on skill training programme

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP) and Punjab Skill Development Fund (PSDF) held an important meeting at BISP Headquarters to discuss the progress of the BISP Skill Training Programme.

The meeting was attended by Chairperson of BISP, Senator Rubina Khalid, Secretary BISP, Amer Ali Ahmad and CEO of PSDF, Ahmed Khan.

The meeting focused on the progress of the Skill Training Programme,

which aims to provide skill development opportunities to BISP beneficiaries and their family members across various trades.

Senator Rubina Khalid emphasized the importance of offering top-quality training courses that are recognized internationally.

She pointed out that such training could help beneficiaries find jobs abroad, improving their economic situation and allowing them to contribute to the country's economy.

She also mentioned the increasing need for skilled workers in areas like hospitality management, home care, and receptionist roles. She stressed that trainees should learn basic work ethics and hygiene practices.

Ahmad Khan assured full support from PSDF in providing assistance for the skill training of BISP beneficiaries and their family members. He reiterated PSDF's commitment to ensuring the success of this programme.

## ICT admin bans whistles ahead of Independence Day

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) administration has imposed a complete ban on the sale and use of horns/whistles on the eve of Independence Day in the Federal Capital.

On the special Deputy Commissioner (DC) Islamabad, Irfan Nawaz Memon, the ban aimed to address public safety concerns and maintain order on the streets and roads, said the spokesman of ICT administration. He said the authority banned the sale, stock, and use of horns/whistles following the reports of disturbances caused by hawkers selling horns in public spaces.

Meanwhile, in a recent notification, the administration highlighted that the sale of horns at stalls was causing disruptions to traffic flow and creating noise pollution, which could lead to breaches of public peace. To counter this, the district administration has invoked Section 144 of the Criminal Procedure Code (CrPC), which allows for preventive measures to maintain public order.

The ban would be in effect for the next 10 days, during which time Assistant Commissioners have been ordered to conduct operations to seize horns/whistles and take legal action against violators. DC Islamabad has directed all Assistant

Commissioners to launch a crackdown on hawkers selling horns across various parts of the city.

In the past few days, several operations were carried out in different areas, including I-8, Lehrar Road, Ghori Town, and Kural. These operations led to the confiscation of horns from various stalls, sending a clear message that the sale and purchase of horns would not be tolerated. DC Islamabad also urged citizens to refrain from buying or selling millet and warned that legal action would be taken against those who continue to violate the ban. He emphasized that the peace and comfort of the public were priority for the administration.

As the ban remains in effect, the district administration would continue to monitor the situation closely and take necessary steps to ensure compliance. Citizens are encouraged to cooperate with the authorities to help maintain public order during this period.

**ICT fights dengue: larvae found at 604 sites, 14 cases reported:** The Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) administration are ramping up efforts to control the spread of dengue after 14 cases were reported across 604 locations.

The situation was reviewed in an important meeting led by Additional

Deputy Commissioner (ADC) Usman Ashraf, said the spokesman of ICT administration. In a recent meeting chaired by ADC Usman Ashraf, city officials discussed the ongoing dengue situation and reviewed the reported cases. On the occasion, he directed the officials of district administration for intensified their efforts to control dengue larvae and its breeding in the Federal Capital.

The meeting focused on the measures needed to tackle the spread of dengue, particularly through the control of mosquito larvae.

The officials of the district administration informed that action has been taken against several business centers and under-construction sites where larvae were found. This crackdown also led to the arrest of several individuals for not complying with dengue Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs).

The officials briefed the ADC that in the past week, 604 locations were inspected for dengue larvae. Out of these, 174 larvae were detected in rural areas and 430 in urban areas. The authorities have committed to intensifying efforts against the breeding of dengue mosquitoes, with ADC Ashraf directing that dengue SOPs be strictly enforced across the city.



ISLAMABAD: Speaker National Assembly, Sardar Ayaz Sadiq meeting with Her Excellency Ms. Toshiko Abe San, Minister of State of Japan for Education, Culture, Sport, Science and Technology. —APP Photo

## Bicycle rally welcomed in Rawalpindi

RAWALPINDI (APP): The "President of Pakistan Asif Ali Zardari Sports bicycle Rally" organized in connection with Independence Day, reached Rawalpindi on Monday, where it received a warm welcome.

The rally, departed from Tehsil Office Gujar Khan at its 6th stage, was seen off by Pakistan People's Party leader, Khurram Parvez Raja, District President, Tariq Jalil and Tehsil President Amir Khurshid.

It was welcomed at the martyrdom site of Shaheed Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto, Rawalpindi where it was received by District President Chaudhry Zaheer Sultan, Tehsil President Raja Mansoor Akhtar along with general public and pica administration. The participants were garlanded by the cyclists.

General Secretary People's Sports Wing Central Punjab, Sabir Ali Kasuri while talking to APP said that the seventh stage of the bicycle rally would start on Tuesday, August 13 from the martyrdom site of Benazir Bhutto in Rawalpindi, and the rally reach at the Central Secretariat of the Pakistan People's Party at 10 am same day.

He informed that the cycle rally will leave Jinnah Sports Complex, Islamabad at 2 o'clock. Sabir Kasuri added that the participants of the cycle rally will also participate in the Independence Day celebration in Islamabad on August 14.

It is worthy to note that the bicycle rally of Pakistan People's Party, under the patronage of the party's central leader Chaudhry Manzoor Ahmed, started from Darbar Baba Balhe Shah, Kasur on August 7.

## Interior Minister meets Chairman MQM and Secretary General JUP

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Interior Mohsin Naqvi held separate meetings with Chairman MQM Khalid Maqbool Siddiqui and JUP Secretary General Owais Noorani. During the meetings, matters of mutual interest, the overall political situation of the country and promoting religious harmony and brotherhood were discussed.

Mohsin Naqvi and Khalid Maqbool Siddiqui strongly condemned the vicious propaganda against state institutions. Federal Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi said that state institutions are a proud asset of the country, and the the organized propaganda against state institutions is like betraying the country. He underscored that no one will be allowed to run a nefarious campaign against the state institutions.

Interior Minister pointed out that any attempt to hinder Pakistan's development and people's prosperity will not succeed. He said that personal interests have no value in the face of national interests.

**Naqvi extends heartfelt message on Int'l Youth Day:** Federal Minister for Interior and Narcotics Control, Mohsin Naqvi, extended heartfelt tributes to Pakistan's youth, highlighting their immense potential and contributions to the

nation, on the occasion of International Youth Day.

He paid special homage to Arshad Nadeem, the Olympic champion in the javelin throw competition, who has become a symbol of hope and inspiration for the country's younger generation. "Arshad Nadeem, by winning the gold medal, has proven that Pakistani youth are not only hard-working but also fully capable of achieving greatness," stated Naqvi.

He emphasized that Nadeem's extraordinary performance at the Paris Olympics has infused new energy and enthusiasm among the youth, encouraging them to strive for excellence in all spheres of life.

Naqvi underlined the crucial role of youth in shaping the future of Pakistan. "Youth are the greatest strength of Pakistan, and they possess the full potential to change the destiny of our nation. The talents bestowed upon our youth by God have brightened the name of Pakistan across every field," he remarked.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Interior Mohsin Naqvi in a meeting with JUP Secretary General Owais Noorani. —APP Photo



### Two aircraft restored

KABUL (BNA): The Ministry of National Defense has announced the successful restoration of two grounded aircraft by its Air Force technical teams. According to a press release, Acting Minister Mawlawi Mohammad Yaqoob Mujahid attended the inaugural flight of a Y-12 aircraft, which had been out of service due to pilot shortages, and was successfully repaired and flown. Additionally, an MD-530 helicopter was also restored and returned to operational status.

## The Frontier Post

# AFGHANISTAN

Safar 07 1446 — Tuesday, August 13, 2024

### Three projects launched

HERAT (BNA): Mawlawi Nematullah Hasan, the mayor of Herat, announced the launch of three major infrastructure projects on Monday. These include the construction of a 4.5-kilometer dual carriage-way from Farqa to the Karez area, paving of the North and South lanes of the Farqa road, and the building of the Karez bridge along with irrigation canals in Herat city. The total cost of these projects is 120 million Afghanis.

## Mujahid: Mahmud Shah Habibi not imprisoned in Afghanistan

KABUL (Khaama Press): Zabihullah Mujahid, the spokesperson for the Taliban administration, denied the statements made by the US Special Representative for Afghanistan regarding the alleged imprisonment of Mahmud Shah Habibi, an Afghan-American citizen, in Afghanistan.

Mujahid, in an interview with Ariana News, confirmed the imprisonment of two American citizens in Afghanistan but refuted the US envoy's claim concerning Mahmud Shah Habibi.

Earlier, Thomas West, the US Special Representative for Afghanistan, mentioned that efforts were

being made to secure the release of three American citizens currently held in the prisons of the Taliban.

The names of the American prisoners mentioned by the US envoy are George Goltzman, Mahmud Shah Habibi, and Ryan Corbett. The US Special Representative emphasized the importance of their release from the Taliban's prisons.

However, Mujahid insists that no individual by the name of Mahmud Shah Habibi is imprisoned in Afghanistan. In response to a BBC journalist's question regarding Habibi's fate, he stated, "He is not in prison."

Meanwhile, the US Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) announced yesterday that "Taliban military or security forces detained Mr. Habibi in August 2022, and there has been no news of him since his disappearance."

The FBI's statement also requested information about Mr. Habibi, noting that "Mr. Habibi and his driver, along with 29 other employees of the Asia Consulting Company, were detained; all except Mr. Habibi and one other individual have been released."

It is worth noting that the Taliban administration had previously linked the release of George Goltzman

and Ryan Corbett to the release of Afghan citizens held in US prisons.

Mujahid reiterated the Taliban's conditions, stating that American prisoners would only be released from the prisons if the US also released Afghan citizens from its prisons.

The ongoing situation reflects the complex dynamics between the US and the Taliban, with both sides using detained individuals as leverage in their negotiations.

The fate of Mahmud Shah Habibi remains uncertain amidst conflicting statements and the lack of concrete information from both parties.

## 500 children hospitalized, 12 deaths

KUNDUZ (TOLOnews): Since the beginning of this solar year, more than 500 children in Kunduz province have been hospitalized in the regional hospital due to malnutrition, and 12 of them have lost their lives.

Doctors said that this illness has increased by 20% compared to the same five months of last year.

Sediqullah Zare, a malnutrition specialist at the Kunduz regional hospital, said: "Since the month of March we have hospitalized 530 patients, which shows a 15 to 20 percent increase compared to the same five months of last year, with 10 to 12 cases resulting in death."

Poverty, lack of spacing between births, and delayed vaccination of children are cited as the main causes of this illness.

Sayed Shakib Haleem, a doctor, said: "One of the main reasons is during pregnancy when mothers are not properly nourished, they face a lot of stress and other issues. Additionally, postnatal nutrition is also poor, which leads to malnutrition, and the child becomes a victim of poverty."

Sediqa, a patient, said: "Our economic situation is weak, and I am happy that I came to this hospital because they provide milk to the child, and we also have a malnutrition card."

Fatima, another patient, said: "Our economic situation is very bad, and that's why our children suffer from this illness. We have a lot of problems."

According to doctors, the long-term effects of malnutrition can lead to health problems and chronic diseases, increasing the risk of obesity, heart disease, and diabetes.

## Completion of road work demanded

KABUL (TOLOnews): Some residents of the 17th district of Kabul have once again complained about the slow pace of construction work on the Khair Khana Pass Road.

They are urging the Kabul Municipality to speed up the construction of this road.

Nisar Ahmad, a resident of Khair Khana, said: "People have been unable to go to work or make a living; neither cart-pushers nor shopkeepers can earn a livelihood. Our request to the government is to oversee this work so that it is carried out seriously."

Abdul Samad, another resident of Khair Khana, said: "Especially on Fridays and Thursdays, people are stuck in traffic for hours. People have sick ones, and there are a lot of problems. If they had contracted it for a month, they should finish it in 20 days."

However, the Kabul Municipality said that the work on this road is progressing normally and will be completed within the scheduled time.

Nematullah Barakzai, a representative of the Kabul Municipality, said: "Currently, according to the existing rules and the contract, the work is progressing. The engineers of Kabul Municipality oversee the work daily. God willing, I repeat, it will be inaugurated on the 8th or 10th month of the new year."

The construction work on the second phase of the Khair Khana Pass Road began nearly four months ago in the presence of Islamic Emirate officials.

## Iranian investors met Deputy PM: Baradar express readiness to invest



KABUL (BNA): Several Iranian investors, during a meeting with the Deputy Prime Minister for Economic Affairs, expressed their readiness to invest in seven key infrastructural and developmental sectors.

According to information from the Office of the Deputy PM, these investors met on Monday with Mullah Abdul Ghani Baradar Akhund, the Deputy Prime Minister for Economic Affairs, to con-

vey their interest in investing in Afghanistan's iron ore mines, solar power generation, highway and railway network development, establishing standard industrial factories, and creating a special industrial zone between the two countries.

They noted that Afghanistan has become a suitable country for investment and expressed their willingness to invest in the mentioned sectors, share their experiences, and provide

training opportunities in Iran to enhance the capacities of Afghans.

For his part, Mullah Abdul Ghani Baradar Akhund welcomed the Iranian investors' interest in various sectors and committed to providing full support from the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan.

The Deputy Prime Minister also assured the investors of cooperation from the relevant ministries and agencies.

## Abdul Hamid Khorasani holds no position: Mujahid

KABUL (Khaama Press): Zabihullah Mujahid, the spokesperson for the Taliban administration, has denied any official position or authority held by Abdul Hamid Khorasani within the Taliban, describing him as a "nomad."

In an interview with Tasnim News Agency, a media outlet close to the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps of Iran, Mujahid stated that Abdul Hamid Khorasani holds no "position or authority" in Afghanistan.

Tasnim also reported, citing the Taliban's spokesperson, that Abdul Hamid Khorasani does not

represent any institution or organization and is merely a "nomad."

The Iranian-affiliated media described Abdul Hamid Khorasani as a "troublemaker" between Afghanistan, Iran, and the Taliban.

Previously, Abdul Hamid Khorasani had fought in the ranks of the Taliban forces. After the rise of the Taliban regime in Afghanistan, he was appointed as the head of security in Panjshir province and later, in March 2023, as the district governor of Ahmad Aba in Paktia province.

Khorasani has a contro-

versial past, marked by erratic behavior and a reputation for causing discord.

His actions have often been criticized both within Afghanistan and by neighboring countries, particularly Iran, for fueling tensions.

In addition to his tumultuous career, Khorasani has been married several times, which has also drawn attention and criticism.

His multiple marriages and personal conduct have further complicated his public image and raised questions about his influence and intentions within the region.

## Salang Highway closure announced for reconstruction



KABUL (Khaama Press): The Ministry of Public Works has announced that the Salang Highway will be closed to traffic starting from the 21st of August due to ongoing concrete laying work.

Mohammad Ashraf Haqshenas, in a statement released, mentioned that the road will remain closed until the completion of the work.

The statement from the Ministry of Public Works also added that after this date, small passenger vehicles will be able to use an alternative route prepared by the ministry.

Previously, the Ministry of Public Works had stated that the reconstruction work on this vital highway was halted last year due to cold weather, but this year,

they have reached an agreement with three domestic companies to proceed with the rebuilding of the Salang Highway.

The Salang Highway is one of the most important commercial and economic routes in the country, connecting the northern provinces to the central region.

This highway also plays a crucial role in the trans-

portation of commercial goods from the country to Central Asia.

The reconstruction of this highway began in the last year under the supervision of the Ministry of Public Works. During this period, the concrete laying inside the tunnel, the sixteenth gallery, and the third section of the highway were completed.

The successful completion of this project is expected to significantly enhance the connectivity and economic integration between the northern provinces and the central region.

Furthermore, it will facilitate smoother and more efficient trade routes to Central Asia, which is vital for the country's economic growth. The Ministry of Public Works is committed to ensuring that the reconstruction efforts meet the highest standards, aiming for the long-term sustainability and safety of the Salang Highway.

## 63% Afghan population under 25 years old

KABUL (Ariana News): The United Nations Population Fund in Afghanistan (UNFPA) said that approximately 63 percent of Afghanistan's population is under 25 years old.

The organization on Monday on the occasion of "World Youth Day" said in a post on X that with meaningful engagement of this group, humanitarian and development efforts will be more effective and sustainable for the country.

"Enhancing digital literacy and providing access to digital tools and platforms can bridge the gap for Afghan youth, enabling them to participate in the global economy, pursue remote work opportunities, and innovate within their local contexts," said UNFPA.

## Afghanistan declared Aug 15 as public holiday

KABUL (Khaama Press): The Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs of Afghanistan has declared August 15 as a public holiday, marking it as the "Victory of the Afghanistan Jihad against Occupation."

In a statement released, the ministry stated that this day has been declared a nationwide holiday in Afghanistan by order of Hibatullah Akhundzada, the leader of the Taliban.

August 15, 2021, corresponds to the day when the Taliban regained power, leading to the fleeing of President Mohammad Ashraf Ghani from Kabul, the withdrawal of US forces, and the end of NATO's twenty-year mission in Afghanistan.

The Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs has also

declared this day a public holiday in the past two years.

However, the return of the Taliban to power has been accompanied by widespread human rights violations, particularly concerning women's rights.

The ban on education for girls beyond the sixth grade has led to an increase in child marriages and forced marriages, as families struggle with poverty and see no future for their daughters in a country where education is restricted.

Reports from various human rights organizations highlight the dire humanitarian crisis in Afghanistan, exacerbated by growing poverty and unemployment.

The lack of economic

opportunities and the ongoing restrictions on basic freedoms have plunged millions into poverty, forcing many to marry off their young daughters as a means of survival.

The deteriorating situation has also led to a significant increase in migration, as Afghans seek refuge in other countries to escape the harsh conditions.

The combination of economic hardship, human rights abuses, and lack of educational opportunities has driven thousands to leave their homeland in search of a better future.

The international community continues to express concern over the worsening conditions in Afghanistan and the implications for regional stability.

## Over 1,700 families receive cash aid in Ghor province



GHOR (Khaama Press): Local officials in Ghor province report that the Islamic Welfare Organization, in coordination with the Directorate of Rural Rehabilitation and Development, has distributed cash assistance to 1,741 underprivileged families in the districts of

Firozkoh, Dawlatyar, and Charsadda through a food security and vulnerable persons support program.

Zabihullah Ghosi Zada, the media officer for the Ghor Rural Development Directorate, stated that each family received 15,900 Afghanis.

He added, "This program,

supported by the Islamic Welfare Organization, aims to improve the economic conditions of vulnerable and underprivileged families. It was implemented in coordination with the Ghor Rural Development Directorate across three districts of Ghor, benefiting 302 families in Dawlatyar district,

441 families in Charsadda district, and 998 families in Firozkoh."

Residents of Ghor have welcomed this assistance, stating that these cash donations can alleviate some of the people's problems. They also urged relief organizations and the government to expand their aid programs in the province further.

Meanwhile, the dire humanitarian crisis in the country has been exacerbated by the forced deportation of migrants from Pakistan and Iran. Thousands of Afghans are being sent back to Afghanistan with little to no resources, overwhelming already strained local aid efforts.

The returnees, many of whom have lost their livelihoods in neighboring countries, are in desperate need of food, shelter, and medical assistance. The situation demands urgent international attention to prevent further deterioration of the humanitarian situation in Afghanistan.

## Deputy PM Mawlawi Kabir highlights reconstruction efforts

KABUL (BNA): The Deputy Prime Minister for Political Affairs, during a meeting with elders and influential figures from Nangarhar, emphasized that despite limited resources, the reconstruction and development of the country have commenced.

According to a statement from the ARG, Mawlawi Abdul Kabir, the Deputy Prime Minister for Political

Affairs of the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan, met yesterday with several elders and influential figures from the Farm Hada area of Nangarhar at the Sapidar Palace.

During the meeting, the elders praised the achievements of the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan in a short period and expressed their support for the government's domestic and

foreign policies. They affirmed that just as the people of Afghanistan stood alongside the Mujahideen during the occupation, they are now prepared to make any sacrifice for the survival and stability of the Islamic system.

Meanwhile, Mawlawi Abdul Kabir urged unity and collective effort for the country's development, calling Afghanistan the

common home of all Afghans.

He also assured that security is established, every Afghan will receive their rights, and despite limited resources, the country's reconstruction and development efforts have begun.

In conclusion, the Deputy Prime Minister committed to addressing the issues and suggestions raised during the meeting.



# Pakistan protects minorities' rights: President

## F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: President Asif Ali Zardari has said that protection of rights of minorities and provision of equal opportunities as enshrined in the Constitution of Pakistan being ensured to excel them in every walk of life

The president while addressing a ceremony held at the Aiwan-e-Sadr on Monday to mark the Minorities Day said, "Under the Constitution and under the onus of oath my office, I have the duty to protect all rights of the minorities and provide all kind of facilitation". The event arranged by the Ministry of Religious Affairs and Interfaith Harmony was attended by members of parliament, religious leaders and scholars, members of the diplomatic corps, media and representatives from different minorities.

Asif Ali Zardari said that the objective behind the observance of Minorities' Day at the official level was to acknowledge the valuable contributions made by the members of different communities living in Pakistan. He further stressed upon enhancement of jobs opportunities for the minorities in different government's departments on merit basis besides, increasing the existing jobs quota.

Lauding the role of the minorities in the national progress and prosperity, the president said that they were

the equal citizens of Pakistan and future builders of the nation. He stressed upon the significance of Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah's vision and said they were required to fully emulate his message aimed at fostering unity, brotherhood and religious tolerance in society.

Comparing the current situation in India, the president said "Modi's India is not a safe haven for the minorities," and lauded Quaid's far-sightedness and leadership who had realized the future fate of minorities in India. President Zardari said the people of Pakistan always felt the pains of sufferings of humanity and for those lying lowly in society and accorded due respect and space to all the minorities living here because such a message of human consideration had been embedded in their religion and culture.

He also recited a verse of famous Sindhi poet, Shah Abdul Latif Bhittai, in this regard to emphasize his point of view. While recollecting the events of Pakistan Movement, he said that his father in his youth took active part for the creation of Pakistan. President Zardari referring to the ongoing Israeli aggression in Gaza, said that atrocious and indiscriminate strikes were targeting all Palestinians and people from different faiths.

Minister for Religious Affairs and Interfaith Harmony Chaudhry Salik Hussain felicitated the minorities on

the observance of national day and said that all communities living in the country enjoyed religious freedom and were bonded with affection, tolerance, peace and brotherhood. He underlined that they were ought to spread this message across the globe. Citing different constitutional articles, he said minorities' rights had been guaranteed under the constitutional provisions, besides the Islamic teachings had also laid emphasis upon such rights. Archbishop Rawalpindi and Islamabad Dr Joseph Arshad, Haroon Sarb Diyal representative of Hindu community, Sardar Gurpal Singh representative of Sikh community, Dr Seema Farzad representative of Bahai community and Isphandiyar M. Bhandra, a member of National Assembly and representative of Parsi community, also expressed their views on the occasion.

The appreciated the government's steps for the protection of their rights, welfare and well beings, besides according them equal opportunities in different walks of life. They said nation's founder Quaid e Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah, in his historic speech of August 11, 1947 had stressed upon the religious freedom and rights of all communities. The speakers also lauded the president for the observance of Minorities' Day at the national level and the recent signing of Christian Marriage Act (Amended) 1872.



ISLAMABAD: President Asif Ali Zardari addressing a ceremony in connection with Minorities' Day in Pakistan, at Aiwan-e-Sadr.

## KP Governor thanks center

### F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Kundi on Monday paid thanks to federal government to allocate funds for the long-standing demand of Chashma Lift Canal project Dera Ismail Khan that will not only resolve water problem but to increase in agriculture sector.

He said this during a meeting with a delegation of senior journalists from Dera Ismail Khan led by senior journalist Muhammad Qureshi and Chief Editor of a local daily, Chaudhry Asghar at the Governor's House Peshawar.

The Governor said that he always raised the issue of lift bank canal at every forum. He said that the Chashma Lift Canal is a crucial irrigation project in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province, designed to enhance agricultural productivity by diverting water from the Chashma Barrage to the arid lands of Dera Ismail Khan.

This ambitious project involves lifting water from the barrage through a series of pumps and canals, providing a reliable water source to areas previously affected by water scarcity. The canal aims to improve crop yields, support local farmers, and contribute to the region's overall economic development.

Recent federal and provincial budget allocations reflect the project's significance, with efforts underway to expedite its completion and inauguration within the current fiscal year. The delegation also discussed political and public issues.

## Musk embraces Trump

WASHINGTON (Reuters): When Elon Musk endorsed Donald Trump for president last month, the Tesla founder and chief executive backed a candidate who vows to "drill, baby, drill," "end the electric vehicle mandate" and reduce subsidies of the sort that helped Tesla become the US's dominant EV manufacturer.

So instrumental have government loans, tax breaks and other EV policies been to Tesla's fast growth that despite Musk's gradual embrace of the former president and his Republican Party rhetoric in recent years, the company continues to lobby the US and state governments for benefits championed by the Democratic Party.

In February, for instance, Tesla in a filing with the US Environmental Protection Agency, or EPA, urged the Biden administration to allow California to pursue stricter vehicle emissions rules than the rest of the country – an idea Trump opposes.

Months earlier, in a previous filing with the agency, Tesla lobbied the government for regulations that would ban the production of most new gasoline cars by 2035 – the so-called "EV mandate" that Trump and others on the American right have criticized. The disparity is hardly the first time that the billionaire entrepreneur – himself increasingly dismissive of subsidies – has sent mixed signals on business and politics.

"Elon tends to say he's hostile to subsidies while Tesla is gobbling them up like a hungry Godzilla," said Mike Murphy, a Republican strategist who runs the EV Politics Project, a Los Angeles-based advocacy group that seeks bipartisan support for electric vehicles.

# Israel keeps up strikes in Gaza

## Putin to hold talks with Abbas today

MOSCOW (TASS): Russian President Vladimir Putin will hold talks on Tuesday with Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas, who is visiting Russia, state news agency TASS reported. Abbas arrived in Russia on Monday to discuss the Gaza war with Russian President Vladimir Putin, a Palestinian envoy said. Russia's state-run TASS news agency cited the Palestinian ambassador in Moscow as saying Abbas will arrive on Monday and meet Putin on Tuesday. Abbas heads the Fatah Palestinian movement, a rival to Hamas. Ambassador Abdel Hafiz Nofal said the two leaders would discuss events in Gaza since the October 7 attacks on Israel. "They will talk about Russia's role, what can be done." He added: "We have a very difficult situation, and Russia is a country that is close to us. We need to consult each other." Moscow for years tried to balance relations with all major players in the Middle East, including Israel and the Palestinians.

one Palestinian official close to the mediation effort. Hamas' reaction to the talks came as preparations for a larger scale confrontation grew, with Washington ordering a guided missile submarine to the Middle East and the Abraham Lincoln strike group accelerating its deployment to the region.

Israeli Defense Minister Yoav Gallant told US Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin that Iran was making preparations for a large-scale military attack on Israel, Barack Ravid, a normally well-sourced reporter for Axios News reported on Twitter. Israel has been braced for a major attack since last month when a missile strike killed 12 youngsters in the Israeli-occupied West Bank and Israel responded by killing a senior Hezbollah commander in Beirut.

A day after that operation, Ismail Haniyeh, the political leader of Hamas, was assassinated in Tehran, drawing Iranian vows of retaliation against Israel. The potential escalation

underlined how far the Middle East has been thrown into turmoil by the war in Gaza, now into its 11th month.

The Hamas-led attack on Israeli communities around the Gaza Strip killed some 1,200 people, with more than 250 taken into captivity in Gaza, according to Israeli tallies, in one of the most devastating blows against Israel in its history. In response, Israeli forces have flattened Gaza, displaced most of the population and killed around 40,000 people, according to the Palestinian health ministry, in a war that has caused horror around the world.

On Saturday, scores of people were killed in Israeli strikes on a school building in Gaza City that the military said targeted fighters from the armed wings of Hamas and Islamic Jihad. Gaza health officials say most of the fatalities have been civilians but Israel says at least a third are fighters. Israel says it has lost 329 soldiers in Gaza.

# PHC orders recovery of enforced disappeared brothers

## Humayun Khan

PESHAWAR: Peshawar High Court (PHC) Justice Ijaz Anwar has given last deadline to police for recovery of four enforced disappeared brothers of the Alkuzai family from Hayatabad, Peshawar within one week, on Monday.

PHC observed that if the missing individuals are not recovered, the court will summon the Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, while adjourned further hearing till 19th August. Justice Ijaz Anwar remarked that the court is not satisfied with the performance of the Joint Investigation Team (JIT) formed to investigate the disappearance of four

brothers.

The CCTV footage shows police vehicles, but the police claim they do not know who picked up the individuals, PHC observes. The petition was filed by Gullalai Alkuzai, who stated that six months ago, armed men took away Usman Khan Alkuzai, Muhammad Nasir, Abdul Waris, and Zahir Shah Alkuzai from their home in Hayatabad. The court had ordered the police to recover the missing individuals, but the police failed to do so. Justice Ijaz Anwar said that the police claim they do not know who picked up the individuals, but the CCTV footage shows police vehicles. We are not satisfied with the JIT

report. We give you one week to recover the individuals and present them before the court. If police fail to do so, PHC will summon the Chief Minister.

The counsel Nadir Shah advocate argued the court that armed men took away four members of the Alkuzai family from their home in Hayatabad, and CCTV footage is available, but their whereabouts are still unknown. The police also claim they do not know anything about it. PHC ordered police to produce four enforced disappeared members of Alkuzai family within a week otherwise the court will summon Chief Minister while adjourned further hearing till August 19.

# Ukraine will 'receive response' over Kursk incursion: Putin

MOSCOW: Russian President Vladimir Putin says Ukraine is trying to undermine Russian stability with its incursion into the south of the country and warns that Ukraine will receive "a worthy response".

Last week, Ukrainian forces rammed through the Russian border and swept across western parts of the Kursk region. The incursion is Ukraine's biggest across the border since the start of Russia's war in the country in 2022. Apparently caught by surprise, Moscow has hit back militarily by deploying its own troops to quash the incursion.

Defence Ministry said on Monday that additional forces and resources had arrived in Kursk, without elaborating on the numbers.

"Heavy tracked vehicles are being loaded onto automobile trailers for prompt delivery to the areas where Ukrainian Armed Forces formations are being blocked and to ensure the safety of the road surface," the military reported. On Monday, Ukraine's army chief, Oleksandr Syrskiy, said Kyiv controls about 1,000sq km (386sq miles) of Kursk, according to a video excerpt of his report

shared by President Volodymyr Zelenskyy on Telegram.

Monday was also the first time Zelenskyy confirmed that Ukrainian military forces are operating inside Kursk. In his nightly address the president said war was now coming back to Russia after Moscow had taken fighting to other countries. Earlier in the day, Kursk Governor Alexei Smirnov told Putin that six days of Ukrainian ground attacks on his region had resulted in the loss of 28 settlements, and the incursion was about 12km deep and 40km wide. — Aljazeera

## Climber Sadpara passes away

### F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: One of the top climbers of the country, Murad Sadpara, who went missing after being wounded in the Broad Peak a day ago, passed away on Monday.

The vice president of Alpine Club, Ayaz Shigri, confirmed the news of Sadpara's death. Sadpara was injured on his way back from the summit of Broad Peak which is 8,047 metres high. The Pakistan Army helicopter helped four climbers reach the base camp where they were also trying to retrieve Sadpara's dead body.

It must be noted that Sadpara had climbed four peaks including the K2. He was spearheading the 'K2 Clean-up Expedition' and involved in retrieving Hassan Shigri's dead body last year. President Asif Ali Zardari expressed his grief on the tragic death of a leading climber and prayed for Sadpara's family. He lauded the climber's efforts in the field of mountain climbing. Gilgit-Baltistan Chief Minister Gulbar Khan also extended his condolences to the family.

Meanwhile, Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif expressed his deep grief over the death of mountaineer Murad Sadpara. "The services of late Murad Sadpara in the field of mountaineering will be remembered forever," the prime minister said in a statement.

He prayed to Allah Almighty for peace for the departed soul and strength for the bereaved family to bear the loss with fortitude. Sadpara was severely injured when he slipped at an altitude of around 5,000m on Sunday while working as a guide for a climber during her summit of Broad Peak. However, he succumbed to his injuries on Monday morning, a day after the Pakistan Army launched an operation to rescue him from the Broad Peak.

## Defence Minister visits Naval HQs

### F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Defence Minister Khawaja Muhammad Asif visited Naval Headquarters Islamabad and called-on Chief of the Naval Staff Admiral Naveed Ashraf. During the meeting, matters pertaining to Regional Maritime Security milieu and operational readiness of Pakistan Navy were discussed. Naval Chief apprised the Defence Minister on maritime challenges and Pakistan Navy's preparedness to meet them. Defence Minister was also briefed on Pakistan Navy's future capability enhancement and modernization plans.

The Defence Minister took keen interest in details of recent acquisitions of state-of-the-art platforms and equipment which will further strengthen the seaward defence of the country. The Defence Minister also acknowledged the importance of Pakistan Navy to safeguard maritime interest of the country. He assured that his Ministry will make all efforts to meet the requirements of Pakistan Navy despite the prevailing economic constraints.

# No increase in ETEA test fees: KP CM

## F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Emphasizes Merit-Based Transfer Posting and Accelerated Land Record Computerization Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister Sardar Ali Amin Khan Gandapur has issued directives for the appointment, posting and transfer of officers based on merit and performance in all key positions to enhance efficiency within the provincial affairs. He emphasized that officers who demonstrate outstanding performance will be duly rewarded.

Presiding over a meeting of the Revenue and Estate Department on Monday, the Chief Minister instructed the relevant authorities to expedite the process of computerizing land records and land settlement under the Board of Revenue, with a mandate to complete the project within the stipulated time frame. He assured that the provincial government would prioritize the provision of all necessary resources to achieve this goal.

The meeting was attended by Provincial Minister for Revenue and Estate Department Nazir Ahmad Abbassi, Chief Secretary Nadeem Aslam Chaudhry, Senior Member Board of Revenue Ikramullah Khan,

Principal Secretary to the Chief Minister Amjad Ali Khan, and other senior officials. During the session, a comprehensive briefing was given on the progress of the computerization of land records and land settlements.

It was reported that 2,876 mauzas across the province have been made operational, with rapid progress being made on the remaining mauzas. To date, 81% of land records under phases one and two across 19 districts have been computerized. The district-wise progress was also shared, highlighting that 100% of the mauzas in Mardan, Buner, Kohat, Tank, Shangla, and Hangu districts have been operationalized. Additionally, 98% of the mauzas in Peshawar and Abbottabad are now operational, along with significant progress in Swabi (84%), Nowshera (83%), Haripur and Bannu (79%), Batagram and Swat (75%), Lakki Marwat (71%), D.I. Khan (70%), Charsadda (69%), Karak (68%), and Mansehra (47%).

The Chief Minister stressed the importance of completing the land settlement process within the stipulated timelines, noting that its completion will significantly reduce land disputes.

Later, during the 32nd meeting of the Board of Governors of the Education Testing and Evaluation Agency (ETEA), the Chief Minister directed the procurement of necessary equipment to enhance the efficiency and transparency of test administration within government departments. He highlighted the importance of using jammers in examination halls to effectively prevent the use of mobile and other unauthorized devices. The Chief Minister reiterated that the primary objective is to ensure transparency in the testing process and called for all possible measures to be taken.

Furthermore, the existing fee structure for various tests conducted by ETEA was validated during the meeting. The Chief Minister affirmed that there would be no increase in ETEA test fees, considering the economic conditions of the public. The meeting also approved ETEA's budget for 2024-25 and other related matters. The meeting was attended by Provincial Minister for Higher Education Meena Khan Afridi, Principal Secretary to the Chief Minister Amjad Ali Khan, Executive Director ETEA, and other relevant officials.



ISLAMABAD: Defence Minister Khawaja Muhammad Asif exchanging views with Chief of the Naval Staff Admiral Naveed Ashraf at Naval Headquarters.

# Billions in dollar and euro notes reach Russia

LONDON (Reuters): Around \$2.3 billion in dollar and euro bills have been shipped to Russia since the United States and EU banned the export of their banknotes there in March 2022 following the invasion of Ukraine, according to customs data seen by Reuters.

The previously unreported figures show Russia has managed to circumvent sanctions blocking cash imports, and suggest that dollars and euros remain useful tools for trade and travel even as Moscow strives to reduce its exposure to hard currencies. The customs data, obtained from a commercial supplier that records and compiles the information, shows cash was transported to Russia from countries including the UAE and Turkey, which have not imposed restrictions on trade with Russia. The country of origin for more than half the total was not

stated in the records.

The US government in December threatened penalties for financial institutions that help Russia circumvent sanctions and has imposed sanctions on companies from third countries throughout 2023 and 2024. China's yuan has overtaken the greenback to become the most traded foreign currency in Moscow, although significant payment problems persist.

Dmitry Polevoy, head of investment at Astra Asset Management in Russia, said many Russians still wanted foreign currency in cash for trips abroad, as well as small imports and domestic savings. "For individuals, the dollar is still a reliable currency," he told Reuters.

Russia's central bank and the United States' sanctions authority, the Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC), did not respond to requests for comment. Russia started labelling the

dollar and euro as "toxic" in 2022 as sweeping sanctions cut its access to the global financial system, hampering payments and trade. Around \$300 billion of the Bank of Russia's foreign reserves in Europe have been frozen.

A European Commission spokesperson said it could not comment on individual cases of sanctions application. The spokesperson said the European Union engages with third countries when it suspects that sanctions are being circumvented. The customs records cover March 2022 to December 2023 and Reuters could not access more recent data.

The documents showed a surge in cash imports just prior to the invasion. Between November 2021 and February 2022, \$18.9 billion in dollar and euro banknotes entered Russia, compared with just \$17 million in the previous four months.