

Nawaz to depart for London
F.P. Report

LAHORE: PML-N President Nawaz Sharif is expected to depart for London in the second week of September. According to PML-N sources, Nawaz Sharif is expected to leave for London on September 11 where he would undergo a medical checkup. Sources claimed that he is also expected to attend significant political meeting in London.



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Two killed for honour
F.P. Report

MANSEHRA: A man gunned down wife of his elder brother and a youth for honour here on Wednesday. Police arrested the accused. The incident took place in village Bajna Dheri of tehsil Oghi of district Mansehra where a man was suspicious about character of his sister-in-law stated to mother of four children whose husband was staying in Karachi to earn livelihood for family.

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ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif chairing a review meeting regarding economic growth and investment.

Hike in taxes, electricity bills Traders across country observe strike

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: To protest against the government's tax reforms, traders across the country are observing a nationwide strike on Wednesday with support from traders associations and political parties.

The political parties throwing weight behind the traders include Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam Fazl (JUI-F), Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI), Jamaat-e-Islami (JI) and Awami National Party (ANP). Ahead of the countrywide strike, Anjuman-e-Tajirān Karachi had announced a complete closure of business on Wednesday.

"The political leadership has failed," said Javed Shams, the president of the All Pakistan Anjuman-e-Tajirān's Sindh chapter, announcing his support for the nationwide strike. Shams added that all business will be completely closed today in all small and big cities of Sindh. "[We] reject the hike in taxes and electricity bills." He added that the ruling class wants to take away the right to live from the business class and the people, insisting that the "Trader Friendly Scheme" is not acceptable in its current form.

The Karachi Electronics Dealers Association has also backed the strike call. KEDA President Mohammad Rizwan said all trade unions from Karachi to Khyber are participating in the strike. "If the issues are not resolved, the duration of the strike may increase," said Rizwan.

All Karachi Traders Union President Atiq Mir termed the strike as one of the citizens and not traders. "The common man is worried about inflation." Reacting to the countrywide strike, Coordinator to Prime Minister of Pakistan on Implementation and Monitoring, Rana Ishaan Afzal Khan, said the government will not be pressured by traders. Speaking to media, Khan invited the traders for talks if they considered the government's "wrong". He added that Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has reorganised the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR), insisting that the retail sector must also come

under the tax net. Meanwhile in Punjab, cities including Vehari, all business centres are closed following the call of nationwide strike by the Central Traders Association of Pakistan with all markets including those at the Club Road, Jinnah Road, Luddun Road, Rail Bazaar, Choori Bazar and Multan Road completely closed.

The president of the association, supporting the call, said that the government has imposed "cruel taxes" on the traders. In Gujranwala, all small and major markets in the cities' inner parts including Cloth Market, Steel Market and Sanitary Market, as well as those in the Satellite Town will be closed. The city's mobile phone association has also endorsed the call for strike.

In Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's Peshawar, traders' organisations are observing the strike, as various markets remain shut across the city with trade unions demanding the withdrawal of the hike in power bills and reduction in tax rates. All markets including Sadar Bazaar, Shafi Market, Qisa Khwani and Khyber Bazaar have been shut, while traders organisations have set up protest camps in front of the closed markets.

In Dera Ismail Khan, traders are observing a complete strike with all commercial centers closed following support from traders' association, traders' union and traders' action committee. Traders across cities in Sindh — including Nawabshah, Tando Allahyar, Thatta, Sajawal, and others — are also striking with central commercial areas as well as small- and large-scale businesses shut in adhere with the strike. "Monthly tax, withholding tax, professional tax are anti-business policies," said Sindh Traders Association President Waqar Memon. Markets and commercial centres in Punjab cities including Chichawatani are closed following the strike with traders demanding the government to withdraw "cruel" taxes and reduction in electricity cost.

(Continued on Back Page)

Bangladesh lifts ban on Jamaat-i-Islami party

DHAKA (Reuters): Bangladesh's caretaker government revoked a ban on the country's main, Jamaat-e-Islami party and its affiliated groups on Wednesday, saying it has not found evidence of their involvement in "terrorist activities".

Former prime minister Sheikh Hasina's government had banned its rival political party under an anti-terrorism law, blaming it for stoking deadly violence during student-led protests that turned into an uprising against Hasina, forcing her to resign and flee to India on August 5. A gazette notification on Wednesday by the caretaker government that replaced Hasina's administration said there was "no specific evidence of involvement of Jamaat" and its affiliates "in terrorist activities".

The party has denied allegations that it stoked violence and had condemned the ban as "illegal, extrajudicial and unconstitutional." Jamaat-e-Islami has not been able to contest elections of 2014, 2018 and 2024 in Bangladesh after a court said in 2013 its registration as a political party conflicted with Bangladesh's secular constitution.

Shishir Monir, a lawyer for the party, said it will file a petition early next week at the Supreme Court to seek restoration of its registration. Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir, secretary-general of the Bangladesh Nationalist Party, had accused Hasina's government of trying to divert attention from a crackdown by security forces in which more than 600 people were killed, according to United

Nations estimates. Shishir Monir, a lawyer for Jamaat-e-Islami, said the party will file a petition early next week at the Supreme Court to seek restoration of its registration with the Bangladesh Election Commission, so it can go on to contest elections.

Jamaat-e-Islami was founded during British colonial rule in 1941, campaigning against the creation of Bangladesh as an independent state during the war of independence from Pakistan in 1971. Most of the party's senior leaders have been hanged or jailed since 2013, convicted of crimes against humanity, including killings, abductions and rapes, committed in 1971. Bangladesh won independence on December 16, 1971, with the help of neighbouring India.

Afghan govt bans 'violent' mixed martial arts

KABUL (AFP): Afghanistan's Taliban government has banned mixed martial arts (MMA), believing it to be un-Islamic, its sports authority said in a statement on Wednesday.

The order was passed down by Afghanistan's morality police in the Ministry for the Propagation of Virtue and the Prevention of Vice after an investigation into the sport's compliance with Islamic law, or sharia, the statement and local media said.

"It was found that the sport is problematic with

respect to sharia and it has many aspects which are contradictory to the teachings of Islam," the Taliban government sports authority said in a statement sent to AFP. "That's why this decision has been made to ban mixed martial arts in Afghanistan."

A sports authority official told local media MMA was banned in part because it was considered too violent and posed the risk of injury or death. The Taliban authorities returned to power in 2021, implementing a strict interpretation of Islamic law. They recently

ratified a morality law formalising many rules on behaviour and dress, including that men must not wear shorts above the knee. Separately, female sport in Afghanistan has been crushed since the Taliban took over, causing many prominent women to flee the country for fear of persecution. The Taliban went on to drastically limit women's freedoms and rights, including banning women and girls from the country's education system, in what the UN has said could amount to a crime against humanity.

JUI-F seeks PTI's support for 2 senators

ISLAMABAD (INP): Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam-Fazl (JUI-F) Maulana Fazlur Rehman has demanded two Senate seats from the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) in exchange for his party's full support in parliament.

According to sources, JUI-F has demanded PTI's support in electing his two senators, while PTI's committee is willing to support one senator from JUI-F. Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam wants to elect former Khyber Pakhtunkhwa governor Ghulam Ali as a senator, while PTI's committee is inclined to support another candidate, sources said.

However, JUI-F lacks sufficient votes to elect a senator on its own, and therefore, needs PTI's support. Sources said that the PTI committee has sought time to consult party chairman Imran Khan on JUI-F's demands.

Meanwhile, the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) wants to elect Talha Mahmood as a senator, which JUI-F is likely to oppose. Notably, Mehmood parted ways with his decade-long affiliation with the JUI-F and announced joining the Pakistan Peoples Party. Earlier, Maulana Fazlur Rehman said that it would be "fortunate" if his party and the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) develop a consensus.

Maulana Fazlur Rehman said that there were big "mountain-sized" differences between the two parties. "PTI's delegation has come to us and as per our tradition, we have welcomed them," Maulana Fazlur Rehman added. The JUI-F chief said that if their issues with the PTI get resolved, it would be good. "If not, every political party has its stance and opinion," he said.

PTI to hold public meeting on Sept 15

F.P. Report

LAHORE, ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) announced to hold public meeting at Minar-e-Pakistan in Lahore on September 15.

The PTI submitted a request to the district administration for permission to hold the rally. The request, sent by PTI Secretary General Omar Ayub, cited relevant articles and Supreme Court decisions regarding rally permissions. PTI Secretary General Omar Ayub submitted an application to the Lahore administration, seeking permission to hold the public gathering at Minar-e-Pakistan on September 15.

Meanwhile, the Islamabad High Court has demanded explanations for the abrupt suspension of the No Objection Certificate (NOC) for PTI's Tarnool rally. Chief Justice Amir Farooq presided over the case, questioning the administration's decision to revoke the NOC on the day of the event.

Lawyer Shoaib Shaheen argued that the rally had been initially approved but faced last-minute cancellation. Chief Justice Farooq criticized the administration for delaying the decision, highlighting the potential risks to the 25,000 attendees who had traveled from distant areas.

The Frontier Post

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Moody's Ratings has upgraded Pakistan's local and foreign currency issuer and senior unsecured debt ratings to Caa2 from Caa3 owing to improvement in macroeconomic conditions, it said in a release.

"We have also upgraded the rating for the senior unsecured MTN programme to (P)Caa2 from (P)Caa3. Concurrently, the outlook for the Government of Pakistan has changed to positive from stable," the rating agency said in a statement. The upgrade to Caa2 reflects Pakistan's improving macroeconomic conditions and moderately better government liquidity and external positions, from very weak levels.

Accordingly, Pakistan's default risk has reduced to a level consistent with a Caa2 rating, as per Moody's. "There is now greater certainty on Pakistan's sources of external financing, following the sovereign's staff-level agreement with the IMF on 12 July 2024 for a 37-month Extended Fund Facility (EFF) of \$7 billion." Moreover, the rating agency expected the IMF Executive Board to approve the Pakistan loan deal in the next few weeks.

Pakistan's foreign exchange reserves have about doubled since June 2023, although they remain below what is required to meet its external financing needs, it said. According to Moody's, the country remains reliant on timely financing from official partners to fully meet its external debt obligations.

The agency however warned that the "Caa2 rating continues to reflect Pakistan's very weak debt affordability, which drives high debt sustainability risk". "We expect interest payments to continue absorbing about half of government revenue over the two to three years," Moody's said, adding, "The Caa2 rating also incorporates the country's weak governance and high political uncertainty."

The report also highlights the fact the positive outlook reflects a balance of risks skewed to the upside, while it captures the possibility that the government is able to further lower its

PM commends economic team's efforts

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Wednesday expressed his satisfaction with Global rating agency Moody's recent upgrade of Pakistan's credit rating and attributed the achievement to the hard work of the economic team and the blessings of the Almighty.

Chairing a review meeting on the nation's economic development and investment strategies, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif stated that Pakistan's economy had been rescued from default by prioritizing the country's needs over his own political career during his previous term as prime minister. He expressed satisfaction that, after stabilization, the country's economy was now on the path of progressing and development. He noted that the benefits of the government's focus on national interests over political gains were now evident in the economy.

The prime minister also pointed out that Moody's Caa2 rating for Pakistan was an international endorsement of the government's economic strategies. He expressed optimism that the economy would maintain its positive trajectory and continue to progress. The prime minister commended the finance minister and his team for their significant progress and improvements in the overall economic situation. He added that the interest shown by the friendly countries in investing billions of rupees across various sectors was a direct outcome of the government's business and investment-friendly policies. He warned that delays in executing investment projects from friendly countries would not be tolerated. He instructed all ministers and relevant institutions to take immediate action to accelerate progress on these proposed projects. The prime minister emphasized that Pakistan offers substantial investment potential in areas such as information technology, agriculture, minerals and precious stones, and energy. He added that foreign investment in these sectors would not only boost domestic exports but also generate employment opportunities for millions of young people. In the meeting, the prime minister was briefed about the improvement in Pakistan's rating by the international rating agency Moody's, progress on investment agreements with friendly countries in various fields and ongoing projects. The meeting was also informed about the progress on the projects under the second phase of the China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC).

liquidity and external vulnerability risks, and achieve a better fiscal position than "we currently expect, supported by the IMF programme." The IMF has recently released its Executive Board's meeting schedule up to September 4, 2024, but Pakistan is not on the agenda, according to sources. Despite this, the government remains optimistic that the country will secure approval for a \$7 billion bailout package from the IMF next month, sources privy to the matters told media. Pakistan and the IMF reached an agreement on the 37-month loan programme in July.

Moody's emphasised that sustained reform implementation, including revenue-raising measures, could increase the government re-

venue base and improve the country's debt affordability. A record of completing IMF reviews promptly would also allow Pakistan to continually unlock financing from official partners, sufficient to meet its external debt obligations and support further rebuilding of its foreign exchange reserves, the agency added.

It said that the upgrade to Caa2 from Caa3 rating also applied to the backed foreign currency senior unsecured ratings for The Pakistan Global Sukuk Programme Co Ltd. The associated payment obligations were, in their view, direct obligations of the Government of Pakistan, it said adding, that the outlook for The Pakistan Global Sukuk Programme Co Ltd was positive.



ISLAMABAD: Employees of PWD scuffle with police during a sit-in in favour of their demands.

Internet slowdown likely to continue till Oct: PTA

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: The ongoing internet disruption across the country is likely to continue for over a month as the Pakistan Telecommunication Authority (PTA) on Wednesday said the submarine cable, which caused degradation of the services, was expected to repair by early October.

The internet disruptions faced strong criticism from netizens and information technology (IT) sector, attributing the prevailing internet slowdown and limited connectivity to the purported testing of an internet firewall to rein in social media, which is equipped with filters to block unwanted content from reaching a wider audience.

Last week, the PTA blamed the internet slowdown on fault in "two of the seven international submarine cables connecting Pakistan internationally". In a statement issued today, the telecommunication authority said that the ongoing internet disruption was mainly due to fault in two submarine cables.

"It is updated that fault in SMW-4 submarine cable is likely to be repaired by early October 2024," it said. The statement added, "Whereas submarine cable AAE-1 has been repaired which may improve internet experience."

Earlier this month, PTA Chairman Maj Gen (ret'd) Hafeezur Rehman admitted that upgradation of the National Firewall System (NFS) or Web Management System (WMS) was under way for controlling or removing contents from social media, following directions received from executives or courts. He said the PC-1 for

the NFS upgradation was approved in March 2019, when Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) was ruling the country. He also said that social media messaging service X, formerly Twitter, was banned for not complying with the directives issued by the interior ministry, as there was a defined mechanism to slap a ban or remove content on social media under the law of the land.

Under the Web Management System, it is the mandate of PTA to comply with the orders of the executive or superior courts and cited examples that they removed contents related to pornography or blasphemy, the PTA chief said. However, the National Assembly's Standing Committee on Information Technology unanimously rejected slowing down of internet or banning social media platforms. They directed the Ministry of IT to come up with exact estimates of losses faced by the IT sector, in collaboration.

Wireless and Internet Service Providers Association of Pakistan (WISPAP), Pakistan Software Houses Association (P@SHA) and IT experts have slammed the Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif-led government over the issue, citing the economic impact on freelancers, IT professionals and the digital economy in general. With P@SHA estimating a loss of \$300 million loss in light of existing complaints by the businesses and the reputational damage, WISPAP Chairman Shahzad Arshad has said that businesses and individuals who depend on reliable internet connectivity which is an essential pillar of the country's digital economy were now "struggling to maintain operations, and the slowdown is threatening their very survival".

Jl chief praises trade organizations

F.P. Report

LAHORE: Ameer Jamaat-e-Islami (JI) Hafiz Naem ur Rehman has congratulated the nation particularly the trader organizations on successful nationwide shut-down strike on Wednesday following his appeal.

Markets and businesses remained closed across major and smaller cities in Punjab, Sindh, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, and Balochistan. Addressing a press conference in Mansoorah, Hafiz Naem ur Rehman said that the strike sent a strong message to the government to provide relief on electricity tariffs, eliminate unjust taxes on the business community, and establish a transparent mechanism to address these issues.

He noted that while this was the first call for a peaceful strike, JI would continue to escalate its efforts if the government fails to heed their demands. He warned that further strikes, as well as long marches and sit-ins in Islamabad, could be organized if necessary. "We have initiated discussions with trade organizations regarding our future strategy and will issue more calls for strikes if our demands are not fulfilled."

The JI chief stated that the government has 25 days to implement the agreement it had signed with JI after the 14-day sit-in. If the terms are not honored, JI would pursue all peaceful means of resistance to compel the government to act in the interest of the public, he said.

He criticized the ruling elite for their wastefulness and luxury at the expense of state resources, urging the imposition of taxes on feudal lords and the cancellation of unfair agreements with Independent Power Producers (IPPs). He also demanded a uniform power tariff that reflects the true cost of production, excluding the capacity charges levied by IPPs.

CM launches internship program for youth

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif has launched the 'Chief Minister Internship Program' for bright future of the youth. Youth aged between 18 to 25 years can register for the internship program at www.cmip.punjab.gp.pk. The selected interns will get placement opportunities in prominent private sector institutions.

The CM said "We want to guide youth to the path of financial independence in a dignified manner. Young people! step up, bright future awaits you."

The CM said that 6,000 internships spanning over six months duration will be offered In Phase-I, and the interns will receive a monthly stipend of Rs 25,000 doing their internship period. In the Chief Minister Internship Program, preference will be given to graduates who have completed their degrees in the last two years, she informed.

CM grieved over loss of lives: Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif has expressed a deep sense of sorrow and grief over the loss of human lives due to electrocution and collapse of roofs during torrential rains.

The chief minister expressed her heartfelt sympathies and condolence with the bereaved families. The CM directed to provide best medical treatment facilities to the injured persons due to collapse of roofs.

LDA seals 40 illegal properties

LAHORE (APP): The Lahore Development Authority (LDA) on Wednesday sealed another 40 properties, besides demolishing six, during its ongoing operation against commercial fee defaulters and illegal constructions in the provincial capital.

Under the directives of the Director General LDA Muhammad Tahir Farooq, the teams conducted operation in Timber Market, Gujjarpura, Gulshan Ravi and Shadman.

In the Timber Market, four illegal constructions were demolished, while in Gujjarpura, two illegal structures were taken down. The LDA teams sealed 20 properties in Gulshan Ravi for non-payment of commercial fees, including private schools, clinics, grocery shops, and banks. Additionally, five properties on Main Boulevard Shadman and Jail Road were sealed due to the presence of construction materials without following standard operating procedures (SOPs).

Furthermore, in Timber Market, unauthorized shops were demolished, and a wedding hall in Gujjarpura was partially demolished for illegal construction. The LDA Town Planning Zone Two staff also sealed over 20 properties in Sabzazar and Mustafa Town for non-payment of commercial fees.

These properties included private schools, grocery shops, property offices, tailor shops, motorcycle shops, catering centers, and steel stores. Prior to the operation, several notices were issued to the owners of these properties. DG LDA, Tahir Farooq, reiterated that the crackdown on illegal constructions and commercial fee defaulters will continue without any discrimination.



LAHORE: Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Kundi offering dua at the shrine of Hazrat Data Ganj Bakhsh Ali Hajveri. —APP Photo

Minister Lanjar unveils new bar room at Sindh Bar Council

E.P. Report

KARACHI: Sindh Home and Law Minister Zia Ul Hassan Lanjar inaugurated the New Bar Room at Sindh Bar Council today, where he was warmly welcomed by the Bar members.

Speaking on the occasion, Sindh Law Minister said that the land allocation requests for Karachi Bar and Sindh High Court Bar have been approved, whereas another recommendation would be made to PPP Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari, President Asif Ali Zardari, and Sindh Chief Minister, Syed

Murad Ali Shah for payment of land allotment fees.

The Sindh Law Minister acknowledged the lawyers' community struggle and announced that the arms licenses also approved for the lawyers' self-defense at their longstanding demand.

"The lawyers played a crucial role in reshaping and restoring the democracy in Pakistan," added Law Minister.

Sindh Law Minister praised the Karachi Bar's strength and resilience, citing their proactive and most effective role during the judges restoration movement in recent times.

The Law Minister said that the lawyers should keep political affiliations aside, as their primary allegiance is and should be with the Bar, adding that serious efforts are being made to provide plots to all Karachi Bar members.

The Karachi Bar President Amir Vardich presented a Shield and the Turban to the Law Minister Lanjar as a token of respect and the appreciation.

The event was attended by Prosecutor General, Additional Advocate General, District Judges of Karachi, and the representatives of the legal fraternity.

Governor KP Faisal Karim Kundi visits Data Darbar

LAHORE (APP): Governor of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) Faisal Karim Kundi on Wednesday visited Data Darbar, the shrine of famous Sufi saint Hazrat Ali Bin Usman Hajveri, commonly known as Data Ganj Bakhsh.

Faisal Karim Kundi laid a 'chaddar' of flowers on the grave of Data Ganj Bakhsh, and they along with devotees also prayed for the progress and stability of Pakistan and durable peace in the country. Prayers were also offered for the welfare and wellbeing of Muslim Ummah.

The KP Governor had a meeting with the Administrator Aqaf Data Darbar Shahid Hameed Virk who briefed him about the project for the decoration and renovation of Data Darbar.

Faisal Karim Kundi extended greetings to the devotees of Hazrat Data Ganj Bakhsh (RA) in Lahore and around the world in connection with 981st Urs which concluded on Monday. Later on, Faisal Karim also distributed "Langar" (free meal) among the devotees.

Dengue surveillance under way in city

LAHORE (APP): The anti-dengue drive, initiated by the district administration, is in full swing under which surveillance is being carried out at various points in the provincial capital.

In this regard, Deputy Commissioner Lahore Syed Musa Raza visited Youhanabad area on Wednesday, where he inspected anti-dengue arrangements and instructed the house owners about dengue preventive measures.

Assistant Commissioner Model Town Sahibzada Yusuf, CEO Health, and DDHO Gulberg were also present.

The DC checked houses, empty plots and commercial markets of the area and assessed the close monitoring of dengue larva elimination. He observed the attendance and performance of anti-dengue squad deputed on field duty in the area.

The DC assessed dengue surveillance and door marking in the area and issued warnings to various property owners over larva presence. He directed the dengue teams deputed in the area to gear up pace of anti-dengue spray process.

All assistant commissioners also conducted inspection visits in their jurisdictions and monitored the anti-dengue arrangements besides monitoring the fumigation process.

It is pertinent to mention that in the last 24 hours dengue larva were found at 1,854 locations, while 1,778 notices were issued and 76 cases were registered. So far this year 77,768 notices have been issued and 3,751 cases have been registered.

Lahore Deputy Commissioner Syed Musa Raza has appealed to the citizens to keep their surroundings clean and fresh to avoid dengue fever. People are requested not to let rainwater stand anywhere, he added.

Latif calls opposition for table talks to address economic woes

ISLAMABAD (APP): Senior PML-N leader, Mian Javed Latif Wednesday appealed to the opposition parties to refrain from destabilizing the country and instead engage in constructive dialogue to find solutions to the economic challenges facing Pakistan.

Talking to a private news channel, he emphasized the need for table talks to address the issues, rather than resorting to anarchic measures that could further exacerbate the situation.

However, Mian Javed Latif suggested that opposition parties should engage in meaningful dialogue

with the government to find solutions to the economic challenges facing Pakistan. He emphasized that table talks could provide a platform for constructive discussion and consensus-building, rather than confrontation and agitation.

He also pointed out that the country is already facing numerous challenges, including inflation and a sluggish economy. He warned that further destabilization could have severe consequences, including a decline in investor confidence, a decrease in economic growth, and an increase in

unemployment.

Responding a query about joint political movement of PTI and JUI-F, he disclosed that Maulana Fazlur Rehman's JUI-F party will go solo in its political movements, shunning any joint ventures with PTI due to Imran Khan's stubborn stance, which has soured ties between the two opposition parties.

"The PTI government's incompetence and lack of vision have led to the current economic crisis," Latif said adding, "their policies have failed to deliver, and the country is paying the price".

Funeral prayer in absentia of martyred of Balochistan incident offered

KARACHI (APP): Funeral prayer in absentia of the martyred soldiers and civilians of Balochistan incident offered at the Sindh Governor's House here on Wednesday.

Governor Sindh Kamran Khan Tessori while addressing a press conference at the Governor House, said that the recent incident in Balochistan is being orchestrated by foreign elements, said a statement issued by a spokesperson of the Governor House.

The Governor Sindh emphasized that those trying to disrupt peace in Balochistan are miscreants, and called for strict action against those attempting to destroy the peace.

In his discussions with business leaders, Governor Sindh Kamran Khan Tessori was assured of their commitment to Pakistan's development. "The Baloch people are our brothers, and we are their protectors, but those trying to disturb peace in Balochistan are foreign

funded. While we are open to dialogue with our disgruntled Baloch brothers, there can be no negotiations with terrorists," he stressed.

In a lighter note, the Governor Sindh shared that he went out for Nihari with gold medalist Arshad Nadeem to demonstrate that we are a peaceful nation. "Our country is a cradle of peace, and we all stand with our armed forces. Let's prove that we are united with the Pakistan Army," he urged.

Six airports to establish Quarantine centers for Monkeypox care

LAHORE (APP): The Punjab government has announced the establishment of quarantine centers at six major airports across the province to manage and contain the spread of monkeypox among travelers.

This decision was revealed during a visit to the monkeypox screening counter and other facilities at Allama Iqbal International Airport Lahore by Punjab Health Ministers Khawaja Salman Rafique and Khawaja Imran Nazir, following directives from Chief Minister Punjab.


Accompanying the ministers was Professor Javed Akram, head of the technical group, who inspected the screening facilities designed for passengers arriving from abroad. During the visit, a consultative meeting was held with officials from Civil Aviation, FIA, and other relevant departments. Several crucial measures were agreed upon to prevent the potential spread of monkeypox.

Health Ministers Khawaja Salman Rafique and Khawaja Imran Nazir highlighted that space is

being allocated for quarantine centers at airports, adhering to WHO-approved protocols. These centers will be strictly off-limits to other passengers and airport staff. Additionally, federal and provincial personnel stationed at these airports will receive vaccinations against monkeypox.

Plans are also in place to provide specialized training on monkeypox management to doctors, nurses, and para-

medics within the Health department. Hospitals will establish dedicated quarantine wards, and Civil Aviation has been instructed to ensure all airlines implement the necessary SOPs regarding monkeypox. Professor Javed Akram emphasized the importance of the inspections carried out with airport authorities, ensuring that all areas are prepared to handle any potential cases.



Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa
The Khyber Institute of child Health & Bashir Bilour Memorial Children Hospital
Hayatabad Peshawar

CORRIGENDUM / ADDENDUM

Reference Advertisement No. INF (P) 974/24 dated: 16.05.2024,1402/24,1735/24 and 1951/24, appearing in different newspapers. The submission date of the same tender is hereby extended **For all Bids** till further order in the best public interest.
Note: The remaining Terms & Condition of the previous advertisement shall be **same**.

PROJECT DIRECTOR
KICH & Children Hospital, Hayatabad Peshawar
Phase-V, Near Passport Office, Hayatabad Peshawar
INF(P)2199/24

تحصیل میونسپل ایڈمنسٹریشن پہاڑ پور

نوٹس برائے عوام الناس

اس اشتہار کے ذریعہ عوام الناس اور متوقع خریداران کو اطلاع دی جاتی ہے کہ ذریعہ اساماعمل خانہ یوٹی ہاؤسنگ سوسائٹی تحصیل میونسپل ایڈمنسٹریشن پہاڑ پور سے منظور شدہ ہے اس کے علاوہ مندرجہ ذیل تمام ہاؤسنگ سکیموں نے اجازت نامہ حاصل کر لیا ہے بغیر اشتہاری مہم اور پائلوں کی خرید و فروخت جاری کر رکھی ہے۔ اس سلسلہ میں آپ کی توجہ مندرجہ ذیل نوٹس اور کنٹراکٹس کے تحت درج ذیل ہاؤسنگ سکیموں میں پائلوں کی خرید و فروخت غیر قانونی ہے۔

نمبر شمار	نام ہاؤسنگ سکیم/کالونی	رقبہ تقریباً	نمبر شمار	نام ہاؤسنگ سکیم/کالونی	رقبہ تقریباً
01	رائل انڈیا پارک	95 کنال	08	خروئی نزد پہاڑ پور چیتال	45 کنال
02	چیتل گاؤں	30 کنال	09	خالد رمیش ہاؤسنگ سوسائٹی	40 کنال
03	نون سکٹر	49 کنال	10	انڈیا ہاؤسنگ سوسائٹی	500 کنال
04	نیو ریجیڈر کالونی	30 کنال	11	فیصل آباد کالونی	45 کنال
05	عمران ٹاؤن	23 کنال	12	A.H.City	100 کنال
06	عمران ترین ٹاؤن	25 کنال	13	الغوری کالونی	50 کنال
07	الاصفی ٹیری 1	27 کنال	14	تصور کالونی	40 کنال

عوام الناس کو مطلع کیا جاتا ہے کہ تحصیل پہاڑ پور کی حدود میں ایسی تمام سکیموں کا کوئیوں میں سرمایہ کاری کرنے سے پہلے تحصیل میونسپل ایڈمنسٹریشن پہاڑ پور کی منظوری کا نامہ مندرجہ ذیل کر لیں کسی غیر منظور شدہ ہاؤسنگ سکیم کا کوئیوں میں سرمایہ کاری کرنے سے ہوشیار ہیں۔ اس طرح اور دیے گئے تمام غیر قانونی سکیموں کا کوئیوں بنانے والوں اور مالکان کو خصوصی تنبیہ کی جاتی ہے کہ اپنی جملہ ہاؤسنگ سکیموں کا کوئیوں کے نقشہ جات دیگر کاغذات وغیرہ برائے چھان بین تحصیل میونسپل ایڈمنسٹریشن پہاڑ پور میں جمع کر لیں تاکہ ان پر قانون کے مطابق کاروائی ہو سکے۔ بصورت دیگر قانون کے مطابق خت کاروائی کی جائے گی۔ جس میں 50 لاکھ روپے جرمانہ اور تین سال قیدی سزا ہو سکتی ہے۔

نوٹ: ایک بار پھر عوام الناس کو مطلع کیا جاتا ہے کہ آپ TMA پہاڑ پور سے غیر منظور شدہ ہاؤسنگ سکیموں کا کوئیوں میں خرید و فروخت سے گریز کریں۔ مزید معلومات کیلئے دفتری اوقات کار میں دفتر بڑے سے معلومات حاصل کر سکتے ہیں۔

بجائے تحصیل میونسپل آفیسر

المستتر: تحصیل آفیسر (I&S)

ٹ، ایم، اے، پہاڑ پور

بجائے تحصیل میونسپل آفیسر

ٹ، ایم، اے، پہاڑ پور

INF(P) 2206 / 24

DIG Operations claims 40pc crime reduction

LAHORE (APP): DIG Operations Faisal Kamran claimed a significant 40 per cent reduction in crime over the past year, attributing the success to ongoing police efforts and strategic initiatives. He said that measures were in place to sustain this downward trend in criminal activity.

Addressing the 'Meet the Press' event on Wednesday, he emphasized the importance of regular interactions between the police and media, proposing that such programs should be held monthly. "These programs should definitely be held routinely every month. This way, we receive feedback on our work," he stated, highlighting the value of media input in shaping effective policing strategies.

Kamran acknowledged the pivotal role of journalists in connecting

the police with the public. "Many things reach journalists before they reach us. Your role in this is very important," he noted, underscoring the importance of collaboration between the press and law enforcement to enhance public safety.

During the session, Kamran discussed the goals of the 'Meet the Press' initiative, which serves as a platform to update the media on the police's progress.

He reiterated, "The purpose of 'Meet the Press' is to brief about the work done so far. The police should listen to the good advice from journalists or any citizen."

Addressing the challenges faced by law enforcement in Lahore, a city with a population of 20 million, Kamran remarked, "If there are more issues in Lahore, there are

also more resources.

We will try to provide the best services." He also stressed the importance of honesty and integrity within the police force, stating, "As long as there is no evidence, no one will be arrested. There is a complete ban on filing false reports or giving incorrect data."

Concluding the briefing, Kamran reiterated his commitment to the citizens of Lahore, emphasizing that the police's success lies in providing relief to the public. "We can only provide relief to citizens; that is our success," he assured. President Lahore Press Club Arshad Ansari and members of governing body were also present on the occasion.

AT the end, LPC Chairman Arshad Ansari gave souvenir to DIG Operation Faisal Kamran.



Unicef and UoP ink MoU to foster research and data facilitation



F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the University of Peshawar signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) here today, to foster bilateral cooperation for children and families in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, in six key programme areas for the next three years.

The MoU was signed by the UNICEF Representative in Pakistan, Abdullah Fadil and the Vice Chancellor,

Prof. Dr. Muhammad Naem Qazi.

Speaking on the occasion, Mr. Abdullah Fadil said that signing of this MoU is a significant leap forward towards integrating research, data, and evidence into the policies and strategies that directly impact the lives of children and families across Pakistan.

Mr. Fadil said that at UNICEF, we are driven by data and our delivery of services such as water and sanitation, climate change, health and nutrition, polio

eradication, child protection and other areas concerning the welfare of children is always based on knowledge.

"Our collaborative efforts will focus on turning academic insights into practical action. By generating and analyzing evidence, we can make informed decisions that benefit children today and for generations to come," he added.

The vice chancellor University of Peshawar Prof. Dr. Muhammad Naem Qazi welcomed

the new proposed arrangement and termed it a golden opportunity for students and faculty alike.

"It would certainly build our capacity to develop our underdeveloped areas to good environment and social values", he stressed.

The vice chancellor thanked the country representative for showing flexibility in moving MoU for future contingency issues

The six programme areas that both parties would collaborate in are water, sanitation and hygiene; social and behavioural change; education and learning; health and nutrition; child protection and social policy.

Director Planning and development, Prof. Dr. Bushra Khan from University of Peshawar shared with participants that a child lab would be established to bring all research material on children under one roof, while climate risk assessment and climate related monitoring would be jointly carried out by both parties.

All the Programme officers from, UNICEF Peshawar Office participated in the ceremony.



PESHAWAR: View of a deserted City market as traders observed shutdown strike against increasing electricity bills.

Chief Secretary lauds KMU's contributions to medical education

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Chief Secretary Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Nadeem Aslam Chaudhry, has praised Khyber Medical University (KMU) Peshawar for its exceptional contributions to medical education, research, and public health.

He emphasized that KMU's academic and research standards, along with its administrative and financial discipline, set a benchmark for other universities in the province.

The provincial government, recognizing KMU's pivotal role, is committed to prioritizing the university's needs.

The Chief Secretary made these remarks during his visit to KMU, where he was warmly welcomed by Vice Chancellor Prof. Dr. Zia Ul Haq, Registrar Inam Ullah Khan Wazir, Controller of Examinations Prof. Dr. Muhammad Saleem Gandapur, and other departmental heads.

Chief Secretary Nadeem Aslam Chaudhry conducted a significant visit to the Public Health Reference Laboratory (PHRL) at KMU.

Upon his arrival, he was warmly welcomed by Dr. Yasar Yousafzai, Director



of PHRL.

During the visit, Chief Secretary Nadeem Aslam Chaudhry was provided with a comprehensive briefing on the operations and capabilities of the PHRL.

Dr. Yasar Yousafzai detailed the laboratory's extensive preparedness measures, particularly in relation to M. Pox testing and emergency response.

The Chief Secretary expressed his deep appreciation for the dedication and efforts demonstrated by the PHRL team in maintaining high standards of public health readiness.

He commended the laboratory for its vital role in the region's health safety

and emerging health threats, recognizing it as an essential asset in safeguarding public health and addressing emerging health challenges. He also affirmed the provincial government's support for the laboratory's ongoing efforts.

The Chief Secretary highlighted KMU's multifaceted role in not only providing education but also in disease diagnosis, prevention, and policymaking. He expressed confidence that with the opening of the University Hospital, KMU would achieve new milestones in delivering medical services.

He described the KMU

Hospital project as a commendable initiative that would create an ideal model of integrated knowledge, research, and medical services, benefiting the people of the province.

Chief Secretary Nadeem Aslam Chaudhry also applauded the launch of the e-Assessment system, noting that it would save valuable time for students while enhancing transparency and conserving financial resources.

The visit concluded with tours of the KMU e-Assessment Center, the KMU Hospital building, and PHRL, where Vice Chancellor Prof. Dr. Zia Ul Haq provided briefings on ongoing projects.

Newly renovated Inspectorate General of Prisons inaugurated

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Additional Chief Secretary Home and Tribal Affairs Department Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Abid Majeed inaugurated the newly renovated building of the Inspectorate General of Prisons, on Wednesday.

The ceremony was attended by various dignitaries including Inspector

General of Prisons Usman Mehsud. During the ceremony, IG gave a detailed briefing on the current situation of the industry operating within the prisons and informed about future plans for its expansion and development.

He emphasized the importance of modernizing the prison infrastructure and enhancing the capabilities

of the prison staff to improve the management and rehabilitation of prisoners.

The Additional Chief Secretary appreciated the efforts made to improve the prison system and emphasized that it plays a crucial role in the justice system.

He also granted commendation certificates to Superintendents of Haripur,

Peshawar, and Mardan jails and other staff of Central Jail Mardan in recognition of their outstanding performance and services.

The ceremony concluded with a commitment to continue efforts to reform the prison system in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, with the aim of promoting a more reformative and humane approach for prisoners.



KP directs technical institutes to strengthen management committees

PESHAWAR (APP): Special Assistant to KP CM on Industries, Commerce and Technical Education, Abdul Karim Khan Tordher has directed the polytechnical institutes to strengthen their management committees and expand contacts with the local concerned industries to play their role due in practical sustainability of the Technical Education and Vocational Training Authority (TEVTA) in the province.

He issued these directives while presiding over a meeting of the heads of Polytechnical Institutes

for both women and men here at Advance Technical Training Centre, Hayatabad on Wednesday.

The heads of the polytechnical institutes presented proposals regarding the uplift of the public sector polytechnical institutes and improvement in the standard of skills imparted in them.

Addressing the participants of the meeting, the Special Assistant said that the purpose of the meeting was to hold consultations with the principals and get their feedback for bringing improvement in the performance of the

institutes and filling of the vacuum in policy in this regard, which will prove beneficial in the achievement of the desired targets.

He stressed on bringing improvement in the training capabilities of the technical educational institutes and utilization of their assets for the sustainability of TEVTA.

The Special Assistant said that the provincial government has allocated a hefty amount of Rs.4 billion for promotion of technical education and skill imparting sector.

In this connection, he said markup free loan up

to Rs.0.5 million would be disbursed through Akhuwat Foundation on merit basis among the certified youth for starting their own business.

He said that a similar scheme would also be initiated through social welfare sector. He directed the principals of the polytechnical institutes to provide him useful feedback for bringing improvement in the academic and examination system and pinpointing weaknesses in them to bring further improvement and transparency in the performance of technical educational institutes.

Tourism department facing challenges due to prolonged caretaker govt: Chanzeb

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Advisor to the Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa on Tourism and Culture Zahid Chanzeb has said that his Department faces various challenges subsequently the end of the prolonged caretaker government. He reeled off that challenges like policy continuity, stability, security issues, infrastructure improvement, environmental challenges, foreign investment, training of personnel associated with the tourism industry and the extol of handicrafts would require strong planning and policies.

He expressed these views during the program Ask the Minister arranged by the Creative Wing of the Department of Information and Public Relations. Advisor for tourism and culture stated that under the vision of PTI founder Imran Khan and the sincere

leadership of Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Ali Amin Khan Gandapur, exertion is headway on projects such as the development of better tourism infrastructure at tourist spots, digital tourism, public-private partnerships, the exploration of new tourist routes, cultural and traditional festivals, and environmental protection. This will strengthen the tourism industry and boost the economy.

He adjointed that the provincial government has planned a comprehensive strategy for the renovation and replenishment of historical buildings, mosques and places of worship to ensure these sites are preserved for future generations.

Speaking about the promotion of tourism in the merged districts he said that the arrangement of the Orakzai Festival, initiation of camping pods and rest

houses not only accentuated tourism but also improved the local economy in the merged districts.

Discussing eco-tourism, the Advisor indicated that an eco-tourism campaign has been launched in collaboration with all development authorities. This campaign includes better cleanliness arrangements at tourist spots, the distribution of biodegradable bags, tree plantation campaigns and measures to protect wildlife.

Zahid Chanzeb further stated that the protection and restoration of cultural heritage in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa is a priority of the provincial government, as the presence of ancient culture such as Gandhara art and culture attracts foreign tourists, which in turn boosts the economy and presents a positive image of the country globally.

He also said that the services of the Tourism

Police and the 24-hour Tourism Helpline 1422 have been ensured at tourist spots to deal with any emergencies.

Regarding the World Bank's KITE project, the Advisor stated that the funds from this financial institution are being spent transparently through projects including the installation of signboards at tourist sites, heavy machinery, rescue stations, washrooms and waste bins.

The Advisor said that assistance from the federal government is necessary for the improved infrastructure at tourist spot as major highways and roads are under the control of National Highways Authority.

Zahid Chanzeb stated that over the past four months, more than 10 million tourists have visited Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, which is clear evidence of the accentuation of tourism industry in the province.

PMC students donated 140 bags blood to Hamza foundation

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Hamza Foundation Welfare Thalassemia Center and Blood Transfusion Services has conducted one day blood donation camp at Peshawar Medical College (PMC), on Wednesday.

PMC Principal Muhammad Aman Khan, Owais Qarni President Social Welfare Society, Asmatullah Khan General Secretary and Javeria Khan supported the Hamza foundation in arranging blood donation camp. Muhammad Aman Khan accompanied with the SWS members has

inaugurated blood donation camp.

On this occasion Resource Mobilization officers Hamza Foundation Ateeq ur Rehman, Ibrarullah Jan



and woman Medical Officer Dr. Kashmala Shah, briefed the Students and worthy teaching staff about different welfare activities of the organization, especially free of cost treatment providing to Thalassemia, Hemophilia patients and they also delivered motivational speech about the importance of Blood donation.

Indeed, it was very successful blood donation camp at PMC. As many as 140 healthy volunteer students donated their blood for saving precious lives of 1502 registered Thalassemia and Hemophilia kids of Hamza Foundation.

Founder Chairman of Hamza Foundation Ijaz Khan, highly appreciated the cooperation and support of the Principal, teaching staff and also the dedication and spirit of the Students blood Donors. On this special occasion, Dr. Kashmala Shah and RMOs of Hamza Foundation presented shields to PMC Principal and other worthy office bearers of the Social welfare Society of PMC. Founder Chairman of PMC. Foundation also thanked the management of the college for the arrangements of such a Successful blood donation camp for the ailing humanity.

Govt to resolve Mardan varsities issues: Commissioner

F.P. Report

P E S H A W A R : Commissioner Mardan Division Javed Marwat has said that the government is aware of the problems of the land owners of Abdul Wali Khan University, Bacha Khan Medical College, Engineering University Mardan and Agricultural University and is determined to pay compensation to them adding that the issue will be resolved soon.

He was addressing a high-level meeting in the conference room of the commissioner's office. Vice Chancellors of Abdul Wali Khan University, Engineering University Mardan and University of Agriculture Peshawar,

Additional Advocate General Azhar Rahim, Additional Deputy Commissioner Saeedullah Jan, District Attorney Arshad Alam, Revenue officials and representatives of land owners attended.

The meeting was told that there are judgments of the Higher judiciary regarding the payment of compensation to the land owners according to which the payment of compensation is the responsibility of the government. The representatives of the land owners thanked Commissioner Mardan Division Javed Marwat for convening today's meeting and taking practical steps to solve the problem and expressed full confidence in him in this regard.



Commissioner Mardan

assured the representatives of the affectees on this occasion that the government is serious in taking steps to give them their right and a positive decision will be taken soon. Various proposals regarding payment to the affectees were considered and recommendations were made which will be sent to the Ministerial Committee for further process.



In brief

Imran's future is bleak: Muqam F.P. Report

MARDAN: Federal Minister for SAFRON Amir Muqam said on Wednesday Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) founder Imran Khan's chapter seemed to have been closed as he did not see the latter coming out of jail anytime soon. Speaking to reporters in Mardan, Muqam said the future of the PTI founder was bleak, pointing out the 126-day-long sit-in of the PTI which, he said, didn't bring any change. He further said the PTI was struggling to get the founder out of jail. The minister praised Jamiat-Ulema-e-Islam (JUI-F) chief Maulana Fazlur Rehman for his experience in politics, suggesting that he should play a positive role during the current circumstances. Speaking about internal rifts in the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government, he said PTI's own leaders were turning against the provincial leadership. He dismissed all claims of the opposition regarding ouster of the government, maintaining that civil and military leaderships were doing combined efforts to improve the overall situation of the country.

15 injured in road accident F.P. Report

LOWER DIR: At least fifteen people including women and children were injured when a passenger coach hit a motorcar near Shaheed Chowk in Timergara tehsil of Lower Dir district late night, police informed on Wednesday. Police said a passenger coach heading towards Upper Dir hit a motorcar near Shaheed Chowk Timergara. As a result, 15 people including women and children were injured. The injured included Afzal Khan, Inayat, Hanif, Abdullah, Rahat, Akram, Sar Zaneen, Muhammad Ans and seven others including four women whose names could not be ascertained. The injured were shifted by the officials of the Rescue 1122 to Timergara Hospital while the recovery vehicle removed the collided vehicles from the main road.

Peoples' issues to be resolved F.P. Report

TANK: Deputy Commissioner Tanveer Ahmed Khattak on Wednesday held an open court (Kuli Kacheri) to resolve problems of people. Addressing the forum held at his office, the DC remarked that the district administration was accountable to the public, taking all possible measures to address public issues promptly. He stressed the need to discourage corruption and added that officials involved in corruption would be dismissed rather than suspended, and no leniency would be tolerated in this regard. He urged the public to highlight administrative shortcomings and welcomed criticism for improvement. During the open court, most complaints were related to NADRA services, passport issues, and 19-hour power outages. The DC issued immediate instructions to address these complaints and assured that defending public rights and administrative reforms were among his priorities within his first month of appointment. Moreover, a one-window operation for obtaining domicile certificates has been initiated at the Tehsil Building, providing all necessary facilities to students, he added. This operation will continue for the next fifteen days. The DC personally answered the public's questions, and his efforts were appreciated by the participants.



LANDI KOTAL: Shops closed due to nationwide shutter down strike of traders' against high electricity tariff and unjust taxes. — F.P. photo

Sindh CM visits rain affected areas in Thatta

F.P. Report

THATTA: Chief Minister Sindh, Syed Murad Ali Shah, visited the rain-affected areas of District Thatta and Sujawal on Wednesday, directing the concerned authorities to take necessary measures for the rehabilitation of the rain-affected population of both districts.

During a media talk, the provincial chief executive said that the strong system of torrential rains had reached Sindh after playing havoc in Bangladesh and India, adding that Tharparker had received heavy rainfall this year. He further said that Thatta, Sujawal, Badin, Umerkot, and Nawabshah were likely to be more affected by the recent spell of downpours, however, districts on the other end of the River Indus were also under the threat of heavy rainfall.

"In case of more rainfall, it will be difficult to receive water, particularly from the urban areas of the province," said Murad Ali

Shah, adding that it was cumbersome to convince journalists. The CM Sindh mentioned that ministers had been assigned the task to monitor rain-related measures in different districts.

Talking about the housing scheme for the flood-affected of 2022, he said that the housing scheme launched by the PPP government aimed at improving the quality of life of the affected masses, as 200,000 houses were being built across Sindh, including Sujawal and Thatta districts.

"The situation across Sindh is well under control," he claimed and further disclosed that heavy rain had been forecast for two more days across Sindh. The Chief Minister directed the district administration to shift affected villagers to safe places. Provincial Minister Ali Hassan Zardari and other briefed C.M about the preventive measures taken by the authorities concerned. The CM Inspected the construction work of a bridge

in Gharo city as well.

Separately, intermittent moderate to heavy rainfall for three consecutive days has caused huge losses in coastal areas of District Thatta and Sujawal. According to information provided by credible sources in the affected areas, as many as 36 thatched houses in different coastal villages of Taluka Ghorabari, Ketri Bunder, Shahbunder, and Bagan had caved in; moreover, straw-made roofs of several houses had also blown away following gusty winds.

The rain, coupled with blustery winds, had damaged solar panels worth millions set up in different areas of the district. Paddy crops cultivated in Jungshai, Jhumpir, Var, and other areas of District Thatta had also inundated following continuous downpour. The rain that started at around 10:00 PM on Tuesday night continued till the filing of this report in different coastal areas of Thatta and Sujawal districts.

Residents hold protest against FIA inspector F.P. Report

LARKANA: The relatives of a young man who was allegedly killed by the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) arranged a protest in front of the Larkana press club including the people of Sheikh community of Lahori Mohalla area of Larkana city.

On that occasion, 70-year-old laborer Ghulam Hussain Sheikh, the father of the allegedly murdered youth Ijaz Ali Sheikh with his sons Irfan and Kamran Sheikh and others, said that on July 29 last month, the FIA Sukkur team under the leadership of Inspector Lutfullah Sodhar along with Larkana police raided my house and arrested my young son Ajaz Ali Shaikh, after which we contacted him and asked for a bribe of 6 lakh rupees for my son's release, because we were poor and could not pay.

FIA Inspector Lutfullah Sodhar brutally tortured my son and killed him and on August 2 my son died of his injuries, he claimed. He demanded the arrest of Inspector Lutfullah Sodhar and a case of murder of my son should be filed against him, otherwise we will be forced to commit suicide, the responsibility of which will be fixed on the all related government employees.

Meanwhile, the residents of Qamber district village Jan Muhammad Mugheri protested against the bloodless justice of the woman who was killed by her husband in front of the Larkana Press Club. On the spot relatives Muharram Ali Mugheri, Ghulam Qadir Mugheri and others said that on July 13, Shabana Mugheri who was mother of our 2 children, was killed innocently by her husband Shafiq Mughiri and Amjad Mughiri, when we reached nearly police station Pakho of Qamber District they refused to lodge any FIR or NC against killers.

Stone crushing plants sealed F.P. Report

LOWER DIR: The local administration sealed 4 stone crushing plants, 2 petrol pumps and 4 shops for selling illegal petrol and a bakery warehouse at Talash for violation of official SOPs. The Assistant Commissioner Revenue Tariq Khan along with other officials conducted operations at Talash here the other day and sealed 4 crushing plants for having no relevant documents.

Meanwhile 2 petrol pumps having difference in rate and gauge and not having legal documents and Form K were also sealed, while two shops selling illegal petrol and diesel were also sealed. The Assistant Commissioner sealed 4 shops illegally supplying LPG gas to vehicles. A bakery was sealed for poor cleanliness and selling substandard quality items. The AC collected the CNICs from several shopkeepers who were violating government orders, including those selling substandard food items. Taking notice of the public complaint the AC issued instructions to the TMA officials to clean the drain near the Category D Hospital Talash, which had become very dirty due to which people were facing difficulties.

relevant department attended the meeting. DC said that smoke emitting factories, vehicles, burning of remaining of crops and bricks kilns working without zigzag technology causing to damage environment and create smog.

He directed the agriculture offices to provide awareness about hazards of burning of residues of crops so that they refrain from burning of remaining of paddy crop as well as to pressured farmers to use latest machinery for discarding residues of crops. Deputy Director Agriculture Hafizabad Muhammad Yousaf informed the meeting that 39 special teams were monitoring both sides of Motorways while 381 teams were supervising different villages to contain burning of residues of crops in the district.

Dir hospital admn asked to improve performance

F.P. Report

LOWER DIR: The district development advisory committee (DDAC) chairman MPA Ubaidur Rehman expressed grave concern over the bad condition of the Munda hospital during his surprise visit. The lawmaker inspected various units of the hospital and took strict notice of the absence of two out of three gynecologists in the gynae unit. He also expressed anger over the negligence in duty by the lady health visitors.

The DDAC chairman issued orders to immediately overcome the shortage of medicines and provision of modern equipment to the hospital. He said that there would be no compromise of provision of basic facilities to poor patients at the health centers. The lawmaker said the staff negligence in duty would never be tolerated. He directed the hospital management to focus on cleanliness and warned to take actions against it if the cleanliness was not improved within three days.

During the visit, the DDAC chairman also took notice of the poor perform-

ance in duties of the class IV employees stationed at the hospital and warned the hospital in-charge that strict measures would be taken if internal problems were not resolved within the stipulated time.

The lawmaker said that poor people were dependent on government hospitals and any negligence of the staff was unacceptable. He assured the public that he would monitor himself and take every possible step to improve the performance of the hospital so that the best medical facilities could be provided to the people.

Later, the DDAC chairman along with deputy commissioner Mohammad Arif Khan, DPO Saleem Abbas Kulachi and divisional forest officer Asif Ali Shah launched a plantation campaign by planting a sapling in the newly built police lines at Timergara. Speaking on the occasion, he said that the public should participate in the ongoing monsoon plantation to make the area clean and green.

He said that every individual could play a vital role in making the area lush green and beautiful. He added that planting was not

PPLA hold protest in favor of their demands

F.P. Report

HAFIZABAD: Professors and lecturers of Hafizabad staged protest demonstration in front of Press Club led by General Secretary Punjab Professors and Lectures Association (PPLA) Gujrat Division Prof. Jawad Asif.

President PPLA District Hafizabad Professor Imran Mustafa, Vice-President (Women) Professor Sumaira Bano and a large number of professors and lecturers participated in the protest. The participants carrying flexes and placards inscribed with demands of the professors and lectures.

The protestors also raised slogans against unnecessary delay to issue posting orders of newly promoted professors and lecturers by the Higher Education Department Punjab. They

warned the government to accept their demands immediately otherwise protest PPLA will be compiled to expand scope of protest demonstration.

Admn continues crackdown on pollution-caused kilns: District Administration Hafizabad have constituted special teams to take actions against burning remaining of crops, smoke emitting vehicles, factories and brick kilns working without Zigzag technology to make the district Hafizabad smog and pollution free especially along with both sides of Motorway M-2 and M-4.

This was stated by the Deputy Commissioner Abdul Razzaq while addressing the meeting of Anti-Smog Committee. Additional Director General Environmental Protection, Punjab, Muhammad Nawaz and officers of other

Traders in Khyber disapprove electricity tariff

F.P. Report

LANDI KOTAL: On nationwide call of Jamat-e-Islami (JI) Pakistan, traders in Khyber observed a shutter down strike against high electricity tariff, unjust International Power Producer (IPPs) contracts and Tajir Dost Scheme of Federal Board Revenue (FBR).

In Landi Kotal scores of JI volunteers accompanied by local traders gathered at Bacha Khan Square, set tyres on fire to protest against the price hiking of power and what they said were unjustified taxes.

Addressing on the occasion JI Tehsil Ameer Murad Hussain Afridi, Akhtar Ali Haji Akbar and others categorically rejected Tajir Dost Scheme of FBR, electricity tariff and asked the government to stop burden-

ing the poor segment of society with extra-taxes.

They maintained that instead of providing relief to the poor segment of tribal society of the merged districts, the rulers implemented additional burden in form of various tariffs, compelled them to serve their lives under the poverty line. The traders will never pay arbitrary taxes and urged to impose taxes on big fishes to steer the country out of economic crises and to get rid of the International Monetary Fund, they added.

They also urged the Koki Khel tribesmen in Jamrud to resume the Pak-Afghan road for traffic to ensure supply of edibles to Landi Kotal and adjacent areas. While chanting slogans against the power tariff and added taxes they dispersed peacefully. In the

same way traders in Jmarud and Bara Tehsils suspended their business centers in protest against the electricity tariff and Tajir Dost Scheme of FBR and stressed upon the government to formulate pro-traders policies to encourage business in the country.

Addressing the rallies, traders and political leaders said that the successful strike proved a people's referendum against the government's move of burdening the citizens with taxes. Have mercy on them and revise all anti-trading policies to enhance business activities in the country, they opined. They threatened to extend their agitation to indefinite time if the government does not withdraw its notification of imposition of Tajir Dost Scheme and extra-taxes on traders' community.

Mardan traders observe shutter down strike

F.P. Report

MARDAN: Like in other cities of the country, the business community in Mardan also rejects the businessmen "Tajir Dost Scheme". There is a complete shutter down in Mardan, all the small and big business centers across the district are closed, on Wednesday.

And this strike is not of any political party but of businessmen, the head of IMF has made it clear that we ask to tax the elders but the Pakistani rulers tax the poor, the government is taxing under the businessmen friendly scheme. The Central Organization of Traders, under the leadership of Provincial General Secretary Zahir Shah, took out processions in different markets of Mardan district. The rent should be abolished immediately, the law of withholding tax on food and drink should be withdrawn, the rulers should get down from big vehicles and use smaller vehicles, the time of the government to indulge in the people's money is over, the government should accept the demands of the businessmen in any case.

Government will have to issue a notification to end the trader friendly scheme, withdraw the taxes levied in the electricity and gas bills, review the IPPs agreements, political parties and the people have fully supported the shutdown. They have come to the field to save the country's economy, Zahir Shah said that like other cities of Pakistan, the shutter down

work, education or residence was successful in Mardan district as well. The traders of Mardan made the strike successful by trusting their district, provincial and central leadership.

Meanwhile, a complete shutter-down strike was observed in Takht Bhai, like other parts of the country, on the call of the Central Organization of Traders Pakistan and other trade organizations. All markets and bazaars in Takht Bhai were completely closed.

On the occasion of the strike, a protest rally was organized by the Takht Bhai Traders Association, which was attended by traders, political and social organizations. The rally was addressed by Haji Tariq, President of the Takht Bhai Traders Association, General Secretary Wahab Yousufi, Irfan Mohmand, President of Mina Bazaar Mohsin Khan, Kashif, Gul Dad Nazim, Jamaat-e-Islami leader and former MPA main Nadir Shah, Jamaat-e-Islami's.

Awareness session held to discourage illegal migration: Hamid Ullah Khan Coordinator of the Migrant Resource Center (MRC) Peshawar emphasized the importance of curbing illegal migration, stating that it is a pressing need of the time. Speaking at a one-day awareness session in Mardan, Khan highlighted the center's role in providing authentic and transparent information, as well as essential support services to individuals seeking to travel abroad for

work, education or residence.

The session attended by civil society, students, youth and women aimed to promote safe, legal and informed migration while raising awareness about the rights of migrants. Speakers including Muhammad Hussein Abdali and Mah Noor Shaheen stressed the importance of choosing legal migration channels to ensure safety and protection.

Khan noted that lack of authentic information is a primary reason for opting for illegal migration, which often leads to exploitation and danger. He advised individuals seeking overseas employment to contact government-registered and licensed recruitment agencies or the Overseas Employment Corporation.

The MRC established in 2016 in Islamabad and Lahore and recently in Peshawar in 2024, operates under the Ministry of Overseas Pakistanis and Human Resource Development (MOPHRD) and the Labour and Human Resource Department Government of Punjab. The European Union funds the project which aims to expand the MRC's outreach, enhance awareness campaigns, provide timely and accurate information and ensure the sustainability of MRCs. The project seeks to support migration management and governance while protecting the rights, welfare, and interests of Pakistanis in the global labor market.

Awareness drive on Mpox directed

F.P. Report

KOHAT: Commissioner Kohat Division Syed Motasim Billah Shah has strictly directed the authorities concerned of Health Department to conduct an effective awareness campaign in the entire division regarding MPox Disease and engaged the Hospitals, Educational Institutions, Union Councils, Village Councils and Neighborhoods. He also directed to take the services of Ulema, Religious Scholars and Deeni Madaris as well in this regard.

He issued these directions while chairing a Video Link Meeting on MPox Disease in his office on Wednesday. The meet-

ing beside the Deputy Commissioner Kohat Abdul Akram, DPO Kohat Umar Khan and DHO Kohat, was also participated by the Deputy Commissioners, DPOs and DHOs of Hangu, Karak, Orakzai and Kurram Districts through Video Link.

Deputy Commissioners and DHOs of all Districts, while sharing information on MPox, informed that no case of MPox has been reported in their respective districts so far, but preparations have already been made for it. Isolation wards have been allocated in hospitals for it.

Commissioner Kohat said that MPox is not such a fatal disease that can cause

immediate death adding that the death rate in this disease is negligible. He added that there is a need to take precautionary measures for MPox before it taken difficult situation. He urged the DCs, DPOs and DHOs to devise a viable plan of action and sensitize the society for it so that there is no fear at the public level on MPox disease.

Commissioner Kohat asked the Health Department to alert their Rapid Response Teams and keep in close contact with all the related departments and institutions. He further directed to share the measures taken in connection with MPox with his office immediately in black and white.

HEC Accreditation Committee visits Buner's university

F.P. Report

BUNER: Higher Education Commission (HEC) Accreditation/Inspection Committee visited University of Buner (UOB) for Institutional No Objection Certificate (NOC). Director General Hazrat Bilal, Nasir Shah Director HEC Regional Office Peshawar, Dr. Najeab, Dr. Moazzam Khattak, Dr. Syed Hussain Mustafa Gilani, Hakeem

Ali Talpur comprised the inspection committee, on Wednesday.

University of Buner Vice-Chancellor Dr. Saiful Islam, Registrar Prof. Dr. Nimatullah have thanked the HEC inspection team and hoped the inspection-based NOC would help improve status of the University of Buner. The purpose of the HEC team's visit was to issue the Institutional NOC which would be a major milestone

for the University of Buner, the VC UoB claimed.

UOB VC added obtaining NOC will validate all BS programs but also facilitate initiation of M. Phil. In addition, programs in seven new departments will be established as well as 10 new sub-departments as well, he shared. This development will provide educational opportunities for the students of the University of Buner, VC gladly shared.



Thursday, August 29, 2024



KYIV: Rescue and medical workers treat a wounded resident at the site of a Russian strike in Kryvyi Rih, Ukraine.

Ukraine drones set oil depot ablaze in Russia's Rostov region

KYIV (Reuters): Ukrainian drones set oil tanks on fire at an depot in Russia's Rostov region, Russian Telegram channels reported on Wednesday. Russia's air defence units destroyed four drones over the Rostov region overnight, the Russian defence ministry and Rostov's governor, Vasily Golubev, said on the Telegram messaging app, but made no mention of an attack on an oil depot.

The Baza Telegram channel, which is close to Russia's security services, said that three tanks were burning at an oil depot in the Kamensky district of the Rostov region after two drones fell on the area. Videos posted on Russian social media showed what looked like large tanks ablaze at night. Reuters was able to identify the location of one of the videos as in Rostov's Kamensky district. There was no immediate comment from Ukraine.

A fuel storage depot in the Kamensky district was attacked in early August as well. The attack comes while tanks were still on fire at another Rostov's oil depot, in the Proletarsk district, some 10 days after a Ukrainian attack, Russian Telegram channels report. Separately, Alexander Gusev, the

governor of the Voronezh region that borders Ukraine, said debris from a Ukraine-launched drone over the region sparked a fire "near explosive objects." Gusev added that there was no detonation. The fire had been extinguished, Gusev said on Telegram, and residents from two settlements who were evacuated from their homes were returning. The Russian defence ministry said eight attack drones were destroyed over the Voronezh region, but it provided no further detail. Russian officials often do not disclose the full extent of damage inflicted by Ukrainian attacks. Both sides deny targeting civilians in the 30-month-old war that Russia launched with a full-scale invasion on its smaller neighbour. Kyiv says that its air attacks aim to destroy energy, transport and military infrastructure that's key to Moscow's overall war effort. Ukraine's top commander said that Kyiv's forces were still advancing in Russia's Kursk region, but warned that Moscow was building up its forces on the eastern Pokrovsk front, where Russian troops have been advancing.

General Oleksandr Syrskyi said by video link in remarks broadcast on television that Russia was trying to

disrupt Ukraine's supply lines to the front near Pokrovsk, a coal mining city that has strategic military value as a transport hub. "The situation on the Pokrovsk front is fairly difficult ... the enemy is using its advantage in personnel, weapons and military equipment, it is actively using artillery and aviation," he said. Ukraine's three-week-old thrust into Russia's Kursk region has captured 100 settlements, he said. Moscow's troops were trying to counterattack in the area and encircle Kyiv's forces, but those attempts were being repelled, he added.

He said that one of the objectives of the Kursk operation was to divert Russian forces from other areas, primarily the Pokrovsk and Kurakhovo sectors. "The Kursk operation diverted a significant number of its forces," he said, noting that Russian troops had been drawn from Ukraine's south. "As of now, we can say that around 30,000 servicemen have been sent to the Kursk front and this figure is growing." But he said Russia was strengthening its force on the Pokrovsk front. Disclosing a number for the first time, Syrskyi said that Ukraine had captured 594 Russian servicemen during its operation in the Kursk region.

Mexico freezes relations with US, Canadian embassies

MEXICO CITY (Reuters): The Mexican government has paused its relationship with the US and Canadian embassies in the country, President Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador said, after their ambassadors criticized a proposed judicial reform that he backs.

"There is a pause," Lopez Obrador said in a press conference, clarifying that the freeze was with the embassies and not with the countries. The president is pushing a reform to elect judges, including Supreme Court justices, by popular vote. A committee in the lower house of Mexico's Congress passed the proposal late on, paving the way for it to be approved when the newly elected Congress takes office in September.

Proponents say the reform will boost democracy and help fix a system that they argue does not serve the public, while crit-

ics say it will skew power in favor of the executive, cut off judges' careers, and make the courts more susceptible to criminal influence.

US Ambassador Ken Salazar last week labeled the reform a "major risk to the functioning of Mexico's democracy" and cautioned of a potential risk to the US-Mexico trade relationship. The US and Mexico are each other's largest trade partners.

Canada's ambassador to Mexico, Graeme Clark, also warned of investment concerns. Later on after Lopez Obrador's comments, Salazar posted a diplomatic note from the embassy, dated Aug. 23. "The United States supports the concept of judicial reform in Mexico, but we have significant concerns that the popular election of judges would neither address judicial corruption nor strengthen the

judicial branch of the Government of Mexico," the note read. The Canadian embassy did not immediately respond to requests for comment. Lopez Obrador had criticized what he called Salazar's interference in internal politics. "How are we going to allow the ambassador to give his opinion, to say what we're doing is wrong?" Lopez Obrador added. "We aren't going to tell him to get out of the country. But for him to read our Constitution, yes, we will say that." Salazar had previously said he was open to speaking with Mexican government leaders to discuss different judicial models.

Lopez Obrador said the "pause" would continue until "there was confirmation that (the embassies) would respect Mexico's independence." Later on, Mexican Foreign Minister Alicia Barcena backed

Being Black in Germany has never been easy

ERFURT, Germany (AP): It was a balmy summer night in 2020, shortly after the lifting of Germany's first COVID-19 lockdown, and Omar Diallo and two friends from his home country of Guinea wanted to celebrate Eid al-Adha, the Muslim festival of sacrifice.

"We were enjoying life, playing music, walking through the city at night - we just wanted to be together again and have a good time," Diallo, 22, told The Associated Press in Erfurt, in the eastern state of Thuringia. He was not prepared for how the day would end. Suddenly Diallo and his friends were confronted by three black-clad white men.

"They were shouting: 'What do you want here, f--- foreigners, get out!'" Diallo remembered. "First there were three, then five, seven - they were surrounding us from all sides. We couldn't run away, and then they started chasing us," he

said. At some point Diallo managed to call the police, and when the officers finally arrived, the attackers ran away. One of his friends was beaten up so badly that he had to be hospitalized. "I simply tried to survive," Diallo said. "I hadn't done anything wrong. It all happened only because of my skin color." Being Black in Germany has always meant exposure to racism, from everyday humiliations to deadly attacks. In eastern Germany, the risk can be even greater. After World War II, West Germany became a democratic, diverse society but in East Germany, which was run by a communist dictatorship until the end of 1989, residents barely had any contact with people of different ethnicities and were not allowed to travel freely abroad.

Experts say that specifically in Thuringia, radical far-right forces have created an environment that's hostile toward minorities,

including Black people. Now, with the rise of the far-right Alternative for Germany, or AfD, Black Germans and African migrants like Diallo are growing increasingly concerned. Thuringia, which has a population of 2.1 million, holds state elections on Sept. 1, and the fiercely anti-immigration AfD is leading the polls, on 30%. In 2023, the NGO Ezra, which helps victims of far-right, racist and antisemitic violence, documented 85 racist attacks in Thuringia, down only slightly from 88 attacks in 2022, which Ezra described as "an all-time high of right-wing and racist violence" in the state. "In recent years, an extreme right-wing movement has formed in Thuringia, which has contributed to a noticeable ideological radicalization of its followers. Politically, the Alternative for Germany party is the main beneficiary," Ezra and a consortium of organiza-

tions tracking racism wrote in their annual report. AfD's Thuringia branch is particularly radical and was put under official surveillance by the domestic intelligence service four years ago as a "proven right-wing extremist" group. "Authoritarian and populist forces, which are becoming very strong here now, harbor a great danger in Thuringia," says Doreen Denstaedt, Thuringia's minister for migration, justice and consumer protection. Denstaedt, the daughter of a Black father from Tanzania and a white German mother, was born and grew up in Thuringia. The 46-year-old member of the Green party said that growing up in Communist East Germany, she was "always the only Black child." As a teenager, she was never allowed to go home on her own because of the risk of racist attacks, and she sometimes suffered racist slurs in her school. — Aljazeera

China for more support to Ukraine peace plan

BANGKOK (AP): China called for more countries to endorse its peace plan for Ukraine, after a round of diplomacy with Indonesia, Brazil and South Africa to support its plan.

Envoy Li Hui called the three countries representative of the Global South and "important forces in promoting world peace" who share similar positions with China. "They have maintained communication with both Russia and Ukraine and stay committed to a political settlement to the crisis through dialogue and negotiation," said Li, China's special envoy for Eurasian affairs.

China and Brazil issued a joint peace plan earlier this year that calls for a peace conference with both Ukraine and Russia and no expansion of the battlefield. China and Russia were absent from a peace summit hosted in Switzerland in June. Russia was not invited while China chose not to attend. Initially, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said China had pressured other countries to not attend the peace summit. But since then, Ukraine has recognized China's role in a peace process, given its close relationship with Russia, with the Ukrainian foreign minister paying a visit to the country in July, the first since the war began.

While a diplomatic dialogue between Russia and Ukraine so far appears out of reach, the war has shifted. In August Ukraine opened a new front in the war by attacking the Russian oblast of Kursk, in a surprise move that made clear Russia was also vulnerable. Zelenskyy has said the aim was to create a buffer zone to protect Ukraine from attacks.

Li noted the incursion and criticized Western support for Ukraine. "All sides are worried that the West continues to relax conditions for Ukraine to strike the Russian territory with aided weapons," Li said. "And recent developments on the battlefield confirmed these kind of worries." The US and NATO have called China an enabler of Russia in the war. NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg then said China provides equipment, micro-electronics and tools that are "enabling Russia to build the missiles, to build the bombs, to build the aircraft, to build the weapons they use to attack Ukraine." Just last week, the US expanded sanctions to cover more Chinese firms that trade with Russia.

Prosecutors seek death penalty for 3 Americans

KINSHASA (AP): Prosecutors called for 50 people, including three Americans, to face the death penalty for what the Congolese army says was a coup attempt earlier this year. Military prosecutor Lieutenant Colonel Innocent Radjabu urged the judges to sentence to death all those on trial, except for one defendant who suffers from "psychological problems."

The defendants, whose trial opened in June, face a number of charges, many punishable by death, including terrorism, murder and criminal association. Six people were killed during the botched coup attempt led by the little-known opposition figure Christian Malanga in May that targeted the presidential palace and a close ally of President Felix Tshisekedi. Malanga was fatally shot for resisting arrest soon after livestreaming the attack on his social media, the Congolese army said. Malanga's 21-year-old son Marcel Malanga, who is a US citizen, and two other Americans are on trial for their alleged role in the attack.

His mother, Britney Sawyer, has said her son is innocent and simply followed his father, who considered himself president of a shadow government in exile. Tyler Thompson Jr., 21, flew to Africa from Utah with the younger Malanga for what his family believed was a vacation, with all expenses paid by the elder Malanga.

Iran opens door to talks with US over nuclear program

DUBAI (AP): Iran's supreme leader opened the door to renewed negotiations with the United States over his country's rapidly advancing nuclear program, telling its civilian government there was "no harm" in engaging with its "enemy." Ayatollah Ali Khamenei's remarks set clear red lines for any talks taking place under the government of reformist President Masoud Pezeshkian and renewed his warnings that Washington wasn't to be trusted. But his comments mirror those around the time of Iran's 2015 nuclear deal with world powers, which saw Tehran's nuclear program greatly curtailed in exchange for the lifting of economic sanctions. Yet it remains unclear just how much room Pezeshkian will have to maneuver, particularly as tensions remain high in the wider Middle East over the Israel-Hamas war and as the US prepares for a presidential election in November.

"This does not mean that we cannot interact with the same enemy in certain situations," Khamenei said, according to a transcript on his official website. "There is no harm in that, but do not place your hopes in them." Khamenei, who has the final say on all state matters, also warned Pezeshkian's Cabinet, "Do not trust the enemy." Khamenei, 85, has occasionally urged talks or dismissed them with Washington after then-President Donald Trump unilaterally withdrew the United States from the deal in 2018. There have been indirect talks between Iran and the US in recent years mediated by Oman and Qatar, two of the United States' Middle East interlocutors when it comes to Iran. Khamenei's remarks came a day after Qatar's prime minister visited the country.

Asked for comment, the US State Department told The Associated Press: "We will judge Iran's leadership by their actions, not their words." "We have long said that we ultimately view diplomacy as the best way to achieve an effective, sustainable solution with regard to Iran's nuclear program," it said. "However, we are far away from anything like that right now given Iran's escalations across the board, including its nuclear escalations and its failure to cooperate" with the International Atomic Energy Agency, the United Nations nuclear watchdog. "If Iran wants to demonstrate seriousness or a new approach, they should stop nuclear escalations and start meaningfully cooperating with the IAEA," it said. Since the deal's collapse, Iran has abandoned all limits that the deal put on its program, and enriches

uranium to up to 60% purity - near weapons-grade levels of 90%.

Surveillance cameras installed by the IAEA have been disrupted, while Iran has barred some of the Vienna-based agency's most experienced inspectors. Iranian officials also have increasingly threatened that they could pursue atomic weapons. Meanwhile, tensions between Iran and Israel have hit a new high during the Israel-Hamas war in the Gaza Strip. Tehran launched an unprecedented drone-and-missile attack on Israel in April after years of a shadow war between the two countries reached a climax with Israel's apparent attack on an Iranian consular building in Syria that killed two Iranian generals and others. The assassination in Tehran of Hamas leader Ismail Haniyeh also prompted Iran to threaten to retaliate against Israel.

Pezeshkian, a former lawmaker who won the presidency after a May helicopter crash killed hard-line President Ebrahim Raisi, campaigned in part on a promise to reengage the West with negotiations. Khamenei's remarks as Iran's paramount leader could provide him with the political cover to do so. Pezeshkian's new foreign minister, Abbas Araghchi, was deeply involved in negotiations on the 2015 deal. "After doing everything we can, a tactical retreat might sometimes be necessary, but we should not abandon our goals or opinions at the first sign of difficulty," Khamenei also said, the second time in recent days he's referred to a "tactical retreat" amid the tensions. However, it's not just Iran that's facing a new presidency. The US will hold a presidential election on Nov. 5, with Vice President Kamala Harris and Trump as the leading candidates. Iran has been concerned about Trump's return to power. While the US engaged in indirect talks with Iran under President Joe Biden, it remains unclear how that would carry over to a possible Harris administration. Harris, in a speech to the Democratic National Convention last week, said: "I will never hesitate to take whatever action is necessary to defend our forces and our interests against Iran and Iran-backed terrorists."

The RANE Network, a risk-intelligence firm, said if Harris wins, "the likelihood of a deal will rise as the Israel-Hamas war winds down." "Once negotiations begin, Iran will likely demand more protections regarding a potential US withdrawal from a new deal after the United States walked away from the previous deal in 2018," RANE said in an analysis.

Greek-flagged tanker burning after Houthi attacks

DUBAI (AP): A Greek-flagged tanker repeatedly attacked by Yemen's Houthi rebels in the Red Sea remains ablaze but hasn't sprung a major oil leak in the waterway, a European Union naval command said.

The attack on the Sounion marks the most serious assault in weeks by the rebels, who continue to target shipping through the Red Sea corridor over the Israel-Hamas war in the Gaza Strip. The attacks have disrupted the \$1 trillion in trade that typically passes through the region, as well as halting some aid shipments to conflict-ravaged Sudan and Yemen.

Images published by the EU's Operation Aspidos, whose mission is to protect shipping in the area, showed smoke rising from multiple points along the Sounion's deck and its bridge. Fires could be seen burning in at least nine different locations on the deck of the vessel, which had been loaded with 150,000 tons of Iraqi crude oil - roughly 1 million barrels. Some flames appeared near hatches of the tanker's oil tanks.

"So far there are no obvious signs of an oil spill," the EU mission said. The Sounion "is both a navigational and an imminent

environmental hazard. This situation underlines that these kinds of attacks pose not only a threat against the freedom of navigation but also to the lives of seafarers, the environment, and subsequently the life of all citizens living in that region."

The US State Department similarly warned about the ecological danger to the Red Sea, home to coral reefs and other natural habitats and wildlife. Footage showing explosions on board the Sounion released earlier by the Houthis and later analyzed by The Associated Press suggested that the rebels again boarded an abandoned vessel and rigged it with explosives in an attempt to sink it. "While the crew has been evacuated, the Houthis appear determined to sink the ship and its cargo into the sea," State Department spokesperson Matthew Miller said in a statement. "Through these attacks, the Houthis have made clear they are willing to destroy the fishing industry and regional ecosystems that Yemenis and other communities in the region rely on for their livelihoods, just as they have undermined the delivery of vital humanitarian aid to the region through their reckless

attacks."

For their part, the Houthis' al-Masirah satellite news channel highlighted the EU's photographs and described the Sounion as being targeted for "punishment to the company that owns the ship for violating the decision to ban access to the ports" of Israel. The Sounion came under repeated attack last week by the Houthis. A French destroyer operating as part of Operation Aspidos later rescued the Sounion's crew of 25 Filipinos and Russians, as well as four private security personnel, and took them to nearby Djibouti.

The Houthis have targeted more than 80 vessels with missiles and drones since the war in Gaza started in October. They seized one vessel and sank two in the campaign that also killed four sailors. Other missiles and drones have either been intercepted by a US-led coalition in the Red Sea or failed to reach their targets. The rebels maintain that they target ships linked to Israel, the US or the U.K. to force an end to Israel's campaign against Hamas in Gaza. However, many of the ships attacked have little or no connection to the conflict, including some bound for Iran.

Modi urges early resolution of Ukraine conflict

MOSCOW/NEW DELHI (Reuters): Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi said that he told Russian President Vladimir Putin that he backed an early, peaceful resolution to the Ukraine conflict, days after he held talks with President Volodymyr Zelenskyy in Kyiv.

Modi's visit last week, the first by an Indian prime minister in Ukraine's modern history, came at a volatile point in the war that started when Russia invaded its neighbour in February 2022. Despite Western pressure to distance itself from Russia, India has maintained its ties with Moscow, which has been an important supplier of weapons to India since

the days of the Soviet Union.

Modi said he spoke to Putin by phone and discussed ways to strengthen the partnership between their two countries. The Kremlin gave no details except for saying they spoke by phone. "Reiterated India's firm commitment to support an early, abiding and peaceful resolution of the conflict," Modi said in a post on X, describing the conversation. Modi shared "insights" from his visit to Ukraine with Putin and "underlined the importance of dialogue and diplomacy as well as sincere and practical engagement between all stakeholders" to find peace, the Indian foreign

ministry said in a statement. Modi's Ukraine visit followed his trip to Russia in July, during which he embraced Putin on the same day that a deadly Russian missile strike hit a children's hospital.

That visit angered Ukraine and the US State Department said it had raised concerns with India about ties with Russia. In recent years, Washington has looked to woo New Delhi as a way to counter China's growing regional influence. Zelenskyy has said he told Modi he would support India hosting a second peace summit after one held in Switzerland as Kyiv hopes to find a host among countries in the global south.

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Drought in Namibia and Sicily

THE two places, Namibia in south-west Africa, and Sicily, the island-province in the south of Italy, are as far from each other geographically as one can imagine. Namibia is a poor and undeveloped country compared to Sicily, which is part of Italy, a member of the G7, one of the most industrialised and rich countries.

The drought in the two places – a case of acute scarcity – comes in different forms. In Namibia, the failure of monsoon has destroyed agriculture on a large scale. People are struggling for food. And the government is thinking of culling wild animals in the national parks, including 83 elephants, and to distribute to the hungry people.

In Sicily, it is the scarcity of water. There is an acute shortage of water. The local government is rationing water, allowing supply once in two weeks. People are forced to buy water at exorbitant prices from private water-tanker suppliers. People in Sicily feel helpless, but they have no alternative but to pay the price.

It would not be easy to generalise from these two incidents, one in Europe and the other in Africa. But the global dimension of the problem stares us in the face. There is change in the pattern of monsoon. The monsoon is erratic, and it is causing shortages which are affecting the people at large. The governments are helpless because they have no control over the monsoon.

But there are lessons to be drawn, and measures to be taken to counter the crisis. The question to be raised in Namibia is whether people can eat the animals in the wild. The Namibian authorities plan to cull 723 animals, including 83 elephants, 30 hippos, 60 buffaloes, 100 blue wildebeest, 300 zebra and 100 eland. The argument offered by the authorities is that the animal population has grown large, and it had turned into a man-beast conflict.

It is reckoned that in southern Africa, the elephant population is 200,000, the largest in Africa. The authorities will have to check whether the meat of these animals is fit for human consumption, especially that of elephants, hippo and zebra. The consumption of their meat should not lead to medical problems in the future. And the natural question is: why is it that the Namibian government is not importing food, and if it is not able to pay for the imports, why is it not seeking food aid from the United Nations agencies?

The magnitude of the drought in Sicily is of a different dimension. Water scarcity can lead to all sorts of problems, including medical crises. But it seems that the local authorities are treating it as a temporary crisis. It is not the case that every drop of water has disappeared. The authorities are appealing to citizens who own private wells to share the resource with the needy neighbours, and the private owners of wells are being promised rewards.

If the water crisis persists, then there will be major consequences. It could lead to migration, it could affect the prosperity of the people through fall in tourism, through shortage of food because of the failure of agriculture. And this could lead to mass migration.

The challenge that Namibia and the Italian government in Sicily face is indeed grave. If the drought in the two places is to be traced to the effects of climate change, then there is an urgency to counter climate change issues at the global level. There would also be need to find local solutions to drought in the two places. In Namibia, it could mean recharging the water table, preserving green cover through forests so the monsoon plays less truant. In Sicily, it could mean changes in lifestyle. There are no readymade solutions. But there is need to think hard about them.

Important Notice

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The true price of peace: Understanding the pain of a martyr's family

Muhammad Mohsin Iqbal

IN the course of life, there is one inevitable truth that no one can escape-death. It is the one certainty that transcends all boundaries, uniting every soul regardless of status, wealth, or power. Every living being is destined to taste death, and its timing is as fixed as the rising and setting of the sun. This universal fact is often accepted in theory, yet the reality of facing the departure of a loved one is a profoundly painful experience, one that shakes the very foundations of those left behind.

The grief is especially poignant when death comes unexpectedly, claiming the life of someone who is neither aged nor suffering from any life-threatening illness. Such losses are like a thief in the night, robbing families of their joy and leaving a void that can never be filled.

The shock is compounded when the deceased is young, full of dreams, and with their whole life ahead of them. For those who had only just begun to experience the springtime of their lives, who were on the cusp of milestones such as marriage or the birth of a child, death seems unbearably cruel. Imagine a family preparing to decorate their daughter's head with the crown of a bride, only to be told that the groom has been taken by the cold hand of death. Picture a father who has not yet seen the face of his unborn child, or a brother who was planning to arrange for his sister's wedding, only to receive the heart-wrenching news that their loved one has fallen in battle. The dreams of a future filled with joy and celebration are shattered in an instant, replaced by the harsh reality of loss and mourning.

In Pakistan, such tragedies are not uncommon, particularly among the families of soldiers. These

brave men-whether they be Sepoy, Havildar, Lance Naik, Second Lieutenant, Lieutenant Captain, or Major-serve with honor and courage, knowing full well that death could claim them at any moment.

Yet they go forth willingly, not for the paltry sum of money they earn, but for the love of their homeland and the protection of its people. The salary of a soldier, no matter how high, can never truly compensate for the life they risk every day. Human life is far too precious to be measured in rupees, yet these soldiers lay down their lives with the knowledge that their sacrifice is for a

ment, ensuring that the spirit of patriotism and honor continues to inspire future generations. Their legacy is etched into the very soil of the country, a testament to their unwavering devotion to Pakistan.

When the body of a martyr returns to his home, the scene is one of unspeakable sorrow. The wails of mothers, the silent tears of fathers, the devastated expressions of siblings and spouses-all speak to the immeasurable loss that has befallen them.

The grief of losing a loved one to war is compounded by the pride in knowing that they died a hero, yet this pride does little

to ease the hearts of those who remain. And yet, for the sake of the nation, these families bear their grief with dignity, knowing that their loved one's sacrifice was not in vain. It is a reminder that the freedoms and security we often take for granted are built on the sacrifices of those who came before us, and those who continue to serve.

As a responsible citizen, it is our duty to honor these martyrs, not just in words, but in our actions and attitudes. We must recognize the enormity of their sacrifice and appreciate the peace and safety they have provided for us. It is easy to become absorbed in the trivialities of daily life, forgetting that there are those who have given everything so that we may live in peace. Yet, it is precisely because of their sacrifice that we have the luxury to do so.

Living nations are those that remember and honor their heroes. They understand that their freedom was bought with blood, and they do not let the memory of their martyrs fade away with time. Instead, they keep their legacies alive, teaching future generations about the price of freedom and the value of sacrifice. In this way, the memories of the fallen are preserved, and their sacrifices continue to inspire and protect the nation long after they have gone.

So, the next time you hear of a soldier who has been martyred, take a moment to reflect on the life that was lost and the family that is now grieving. Consider the dreams that will never be fulfilled, the joys that will never be experienced, and the future that was cut short. Let this be a reminder to cherish those who are still with you, to appreciate the sacrifices made on your behalf, and to honor the memory of those who gave their lives for your tomorrow.

Imagine a family preparing to decorate their daughter's head with the crown of a bride, only to be told that the groom has been taken by the cold hand of death. Picture a father who has not yet seen the face of his unborn child, or a brother who was planning to arrange for his sister's wedding, only to receive the heart-wrenching news that their loved one has fallen in battle. The dreams of a future filled with joy and celebration are shattered in an instant, replaced by the harsh reality of loss and mourning.

greater cause. The land of Pakistan has also been a witness to countless sacrifices, where the atmosphere has reverberated with the tales of valor and dedication. Those who bore the weight of four stars on their shoulders and chests, symbols of their courage and glory, have selflessly embraced death for the sake of the nation.

These brave souls, standing at the forefront of duty, have laid down their lives with unwavering commitment

groundwork for the geopolitical confrontation between the US and Russia, leading to the Russia-Ukraine conflict.

The US' primary goal is to weaken Russia by promoting anti-Russia movements in the former Soviet republics and coercing them to strengthen cooperation with the European Union and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. By trying to Westernize the former Soviet republics, the US wants to change the political systems and install pro-Western governments in the former Soviet republics. To achieve that, it has even triggered "color revolutions" in those countries.

On gaining formal independence in 1991 after the collapse of the Soviet Union, Ukraine had great development potential thanks to its abundant natural resources. Although Russia and Ukraine had disputes before and after the Soviet era, those disputes did not lead to any military confrontation. In fact, the two sides managed, even resolved, many of their disputes during former

Ukrainian president Leonid Kuchma's administration.

However, the US continued to cultivate proxy leaders in Kyiv, and instigated the 2014 "Maidan Revolution" in Ukraine because it considers the country a strategic fulcrum to deal with Russia. Ultimately, when Ukraine chose to join the Western camp, its disputes with Russia intensified, leading to the Crimea incident and the Donbas conflict. Following the two incidents, the US and NATO began fanning anti-Russia sentiments in Ukraine, which eventually led to the Russia-Ukraine conflict.

Since the outbreak of the Russia-Ukraine conflict, the US and its allies have increased their military aid to Ukraine, encouraging the Ukrainian army to attack new targets in Russia. At the same time, the US has been trying to control the pace of the conflict. It refuses to send troops to assist the Ukrainian army and, instead, has been egging Kyiv to continue the conflict

and cross Russia's redline and claim later that it was "unaware" of Ukraine's actions.

The US' policy is not, as it claims, to promote the development of Ukraine, because the US has always put its own interests first. To fulfill its narrow political goals, it can trigger a conflict and even hold Europe hostage, without the latter knowing about it. Its evil design is evident in its attempt to create a rift between China and the EU and smear the China-Russia relationship.

Given the US' machinations, the chances of a political resolution to the Ukraine crisis appear slim. However, calls for negotiations between Russia and Ukraine to end the two-and-a-half-year conflict became stronger this year. In his interviews in June and July, Zelensky, too, expressed his willingness to open the door to direct talks with Moscow. As a matter of fact, he said in July that Russia should be represented at the proposed second peace summit in

The US is Israel's accomplice, not a ceasefire mediator

Belén Fernández

ON July 21, 2006, nine days into the 34-day Israeli war on Lebanon that killed 1,200 people, United States Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice opined that "an immediate ceasefire without political conditions does not make sense".

In response to a journalist's question at a press briefing, the secretary declared that she had "no interest in diplomacy for the sake of returning Lebanon and Israel to the status quo ante".

In addition to manoeuvring to delay a ceasefire, the US also expedited shipments of precision-guided bombs to Israel to assist in the mass slaughter.

Just two and a half years later, Rice was back agitating against a too-quick ceasefire in the Gaza Strip, where over the course of 22 days in December 2008 and January 2009 Israel massacred some 1,400 Palestinians.

In this case, Rice claimed that the US was "working toward a ceasefire that would not allow a re-establishment of the status quo ante where Hamas can continue to launch rockets out of Gaza", Hamas's largely ineffectual rockets clearly being a graver problem than the slaughter of 1,400 people.

Fast forward 15 years to Israel's straight-up genocide in the Gaza Strip, which is undoubtedly a more effective means of eradicating the "status quo ante" – at least if we take "status quo ante" to mean Gaza and its inhabitants. With official fatalities now exceeding 40,000 Palestinians and predictions that the real death toll may in fact be many times higher, an immediate ceasefire is the only non-genocidal option on the table.

And while US President Joe Biden has repeatedly stressed the urgency of just such a ceasefire, it is a bit tricky to stop a war when you have just approved an additional \$20bn in weapons transfers to the party that has officially killed nearly 17,000 Palestinian children since October.

Indeed, current US qualifications to ostensibly mediate a ceasefire in Gaza are rather dubious given that the country could easily be taken for a de facto belligerent to the conflict. On Sunday, The New York Times reported that, like Israel, the US has "poured vast resources into trying to find" Hamas leader Yahya Sinwar, and has not only "provided ground-penetrating radar" to Israel but also tasked US spy agencies "with intercepting Mr Sinwar's communications".

The Times quotes White House national security adviser Jake Sullivan on additional US contributions to the obsessive search for Sinwar: "We've had people in Israel sitting in the room with the Israelis working this problem set. And obviously we have a lot of experience hunting high-value targets".

But again, simultaneously "hunting" the leader of the very organisation one professes to be negoti-

ating a ceasefire with does not exactly speak to one's credibility as a mediator.

According to the Times article, US officials believe that Sinwar's killing or capture would give Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu "a way to claim a significant military victory and potentially make him more willing to end military operations in Gaza" – a most convincing argument, no doubt, for extrajudicial assassination.

Not that Netanyahu is interested in ever really "ending" anything, anyway, regardless of Sinwar's fate. The Israeli premier, after all, is of the opinion that Israel reserves the right to resume fighting Hamas notwithstanding any ceasefire agreement, which kind of defeats the whole purpose.

On Tuesday, the Times of Israel reported that, although US officials persisted in insisting on "progress" in ceasefire negotiations, Israel's Channel 12 news had learned that the "thorny issues" had been set aside for the time being: "The network said American mediators hope to reach agreements on other matters first, such as Israel's ability to veto the release of some Palestinian security prisoners and exile others."

The "thorny" stuff includes matters like whether Israel should be allowed to keep occupying the entire length of Gaza's border with Egypt after the war. This issue would be "left to the very end of talks, according to the [Channel 12] report, which quoted officials saying they don't believe Hamas chief Sinwar will budge on the Gaza-Egypt border unless he feels the [Israeli military] is closing in on him." The Times of Israel reported.

Per the diplomatic hallucinations of White House national security spokesperson John Kirby, delaying tactics in the interest of enabling the perpetual occupation of whatever remains of the Gaza Strip are apparently indicative of "constructive" talks.

And in the meantime, of course, genocide proceeds apace, as the Israeli military goes about inflicting unceasing terror and starvation on the civilian population. Access to water and aid delivery has now been restricted in the city of Deir el-Balah in central Gaza, where the United Nations has been forced to shut down operations once again in order to abide by Israel's pathological evacuation orders.

To be sure, Israel's habit of commanding Palestinians to evacuate an area and then bombing them when they comply is hardly "constructive".

The New York Times dispatch on US assistance in the "hunt" for Sinwar quotes a senior Israeli official on the "priceless" nature of US intelligence support.

But as the United States continues buying Israel time for the obliteration of the status quo ante in Gaza along with all pretences to human decency and morality, the world itself will pay the price.

Trump’s new indictment rocks his newly reshaped race against Kamala Harris

SPECIAL counsel Jack Smith defiantly re-injected the question of Donald Trump’s bid to steal the 2020 election into the intensifying end game of this year’s White House race.

By trying to rescue his case after his initial indictment was gutted by the Supreme Court’s immunity ruling, Smith signaled that he is determined to bring the former president to justice — even though there will be no trial before Election Day.

“I think this is basically Jack Smith saying, ‘I still got this!’” former FBI Deputy Director Andrew McCabe, a CNN legal and national security commentator, said after the special counsel on Tuesday filed a modified indictment endorsed by a new grand jury.

His move underscored the huge personal investment Trump has in winning the presidency in November: He not only would return to the nation’s top office, but would also gain the authority to halt this and another federal case against him and head off any sentences that could include jail time if he is convicted.

“This is a very big year, it is a very important election,” former federal prosecutor Ankush Khardori told CNN’s Alex Marquardt on Tuesday. “This case is at stake in the election, because if Trump wins, it is going away. If Trump loses to Harris, this case is going to proceed to some sort of conclusion.”

The conservative majority’s ruling earlier this summer that Trump could be covered by immunity from criminal prosecution for some of his actions as president represented one of the most consequential moments in Supreme Court history and has massive implications for the US system of government. Many mainstream scholars blasted the decision as contrary to the spirit of the country’s founders in that it appeared to hand significant unchecked powers to the presidency.

The decision also sent shockwaves through an already tumultuous presidential race, since it appeared to offer an ex-president who already believed he was all powerful the chance to pursue strongman rule if he wins November’s election. Democratic nominee Kamala Harris criticized the decision in her convention speech last week: “Consider, the power he will have ... Just imagine Donald Trump with no guardrails, and how he would use the immense powers of the presidency of the United States.”

Smith’s move also creates other profound political, legal, and constitutional overtones at a critical national moment, 10

weeks from an election that could profoundly reshape the country and that may again test its institutions to the limit.

What’s in the new indictment

The facts and the evidence of Smith’s case haven’t changed. The indictment still charges Trump with conspiracies to defraud the government system that counts election votes and to corrupt and obstruct the process of certifying Joe Biden’s victory. It also accuses him of hatching a conspiracy against the bedrock right of citizens to cast a vote and have it counted.

But in deference to the Supreme Court ruling, Smith removed language that alleges that Trump used the Justice Department to promote his claims of electoral fraud. And he attempted to style much of the remaining alleged conduct as that of a “candidate” rather than a presi-

Stephen Collinson

“If Donald Trump doesn’t like how late this is happening, he should not have been delaying and postponing for many, many months,” Maryland Rep. Jamie Raskin, a Democrat who sat on the House committee that investigated the January 6, 2021, attack on the US Capitol, said on CNN’s “The Situation Room.” “Jack Smith is playing the cards he’s been dealt by Donald Trump and by Trump’s supporters on the Roberts Court who have made this go as slow as possible. And I think there’s something quietly heroic about Jack Smith insisting on going forward to make sure that this plot comes to light.”

For all its success in delaying the initial January 6 federal case, the ex-president’s camp was unable to prevent Trump’s conviction in a hush money case related to the 2016 election and a

ident’s new face-off with the replacement nominee, Harris.

The revised indictment will freshen the issue of Trump’s alleged criminality and autocratic ambitions in the minds of voters, after his mountain of legal woes faded as a driving force in the campaign in the furor over Biden’s disastrous debate performance, his subsequent withdrawal from the race and Harris’ storming start to her own campaign. Although there’s no chance the case could come to trial before the election, any attempt by Smith to hold evidentiary hearings in the coming weeks could create a new wave of news coverage about Trump’s alleged criminality as early in-person and absentee voting begins.

Being indicted, yet again, in the middle of a presidential campaign would be a disqualifying

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The conservative majority’s ruling earlier this summer that Trump could be covered by immunity from criminal prosecution for some of his actions as president represented one of the most consequential moments in Supreme Court history and has massive implications for the US system of government. Many mainstream scholars blasted the decision as contrary to the spirit of the country’s founders in that it appeared to hand significant unchecked powers to the presidency. The decision also sent shockwaves through an already tumultuous presidential race, since it appeared to offer an ex-president who already believed he was all powerful the chance to pursue strongman rule if he wins November’s election. Democratic nominee Kamala Harris criticized the decision in her convention speech last week: “Consider, the power he will have ... Just imagine Donald Trump with no guardrails, and how he would use the immense powers of the presidency of the United States.” Smith’s move also creates other profound political, legal, and constitutional overtones at a critical national moment, 10 weeks from an election that could profoundly reshape the country and that may again test its institutions to the limit.
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dent acting in his official capacity, to get around the issue at the center of the court’s ruling.

But his case still faces huge obstacles. Presiding District Court Judge Tanya Chutkan must now interpret the high court’s ruling to decide which evidence remains admissible. And the ex-president’s legal team will fight Smith at every turn and use every appellate option available. The Trump legal and campaign team may accuse him of infringing Justice Department custom to avoid proceedings against key political figures so close to an election. Of course, the reason the original version of the case did not go to trial long before the election was partly because of the successful delaying tactics of Trump’s legal team.

massive fraud judgement against him, his firm and his adult sons in New York.

Trump was also found liable for defamation in another case over sexual assault allegations by writer E. Jean Carroll. But a Trump-appointed judge in Florida recently dismissed Smith’s classified documents case against Trump (the special counsel is appealing). And another election meddling case, in Georgia, has been beset by multiple delays. The former president has pleaded not guilty to all charges in all cases.

Immediate political reverberations

The political significance of Smith’s fresh attempt to force Trump to face unaccustomed accountability for his actions adds another dimension to the ex-pres-

badge of shame for most candidates. Yet Trump has used his criminal problems to revive his campaign before — especially during the Republican primary contest.

His new indictment came almost exactly a year after he showed up to be booked in an Atlanta jail and submitted to a mug shot that his campaign turned into a defiant emblem.

Trump has struggled in recent weeks to find traction for his campaign against a new Democratic nominee. And the issue of the ex-president’s legal woes had not been a central focus of the election race in recent months. But no sooner had the new Smith charges been filed, the muscle memory of his team returned, as he revived the core narrative

Harris and fortifying Black-Palestinian solidarity

Yoav Litvin

OVER the past month, as Kamala Harris’s campaign for the US presidency has gained momentum, hopes she would take a strong stance on the genocide in Gaza have dwindled.

Her candidacy has brought disillusionment among supporters of the Palestinian cause, and with it, growing tensions between anti-genocide activists and Harris supporters.

The tension was reflected in a bitter exchange earlier this month between TikTok creators Maya Abdullah and Tori Grier, which fuelled a debate on social media about racism and disparate community interests. Grier’s supporters argue the Black community should vote for Harris to avoid increased violence and discrimination under another Trump administration. On the other hand, Abdullah’s supporters contend Palestinian Americans should not be pressured to vote for someone who has enabled the genocide of their relatives in Palestine and that allies from other ethnic and religious groups should stand in solidarity with them.

It is unclear to what extent this debate is changing voting attitudes, but if it deepens, it could affect Black-Palestinian anticolonial solidarity at a critical moment in history. This would be a loss for both communities.

The engagement between the Black and Palestinian communities in the United States and beyond has a long history. Its roots lie in the recognition that for Black and brown people, oppression manifests itself in similar ways: as white supremacy, structural racism, Islamophobia and imperialism which subjugate, dispossess and kill.

It is no coincidence that in the US, the Black liberation movement features influential leaders like Malcolm X, Kwame Ture, Huey P Newton, Angela Davis and others who have spoken up about the colonisation and occupation of Palestine. In the 1960s, amid the civil rights struggle, the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) and the Black Panther Party repeatedly emphasised the need for anticolonial alliances to confront white supremacy, Zionism, capitalism and imperialism.

The African anticolonial struggles also repeatedly made parallels with the Palestinian struggle. To this day, the Palestinian cause remains close to the heart of the South African and Algerian nations, who led their own struggles against colonial rule.

In 1969, seven years after it liberated itself from French colonial rule, Algeria hosted the inaugural Pan-African Cultural Festival, positioning itself as a leader of revolutionary struggle. Hundreds of delegates attended the event from 31 independent African nations, including representatives from the Palestinian Liberation Organisation (PLO). The festival was crucial in uniting the struggles of Africa and Palestine into a broader global movement against imperialism.

More recently, over the past decade, the pro-Palestinian movement has supported and directly engaged with the Black Lives Matter (BLM) move-

ment, as it has risen against anti-Black violence, particularly following the murder of George Floyd. For a growing number of Black Americans, the parallels between their own oppression and that of Palestinians living under Israeli apartheid and occupation have become apparent.

After Israel launched its genocidal war on Gaza, key organisations of the Black community called for a ceasefire. Among them are the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), the leading civil rights organisation in the US, the Council of Bishops of the African Methodist Episcopal Church and The Martin Luther King Jr Center. In June, the NAACP issued a bold statement, urging the Biden administration to halt weapons shipments to Israel.

Black students and organisations, alongside Palestinian and Jewish anti-Zionist groups, among others, came together in the student anti-genocide movement, demonstrating their shared commitment in the fight against all forms of racism. They rejected Zionism as a white supremacist European project, like other manifest destiny ideologies underpinning Western settler-colonial ventures, including in the US.

A similar alliance drove the Uncommitted Movement, which called for Democrats to vote “uncommitted” in presidential primaries to pressure President Joe Biden into meeting their demands for a ceasefire in Gaza and an arms embargo on Israel.

Divide and rule

Over the years, the strength of Black-Palestinian solidarity has been increasingly recognised as a threat by Israel and American Zionists. They view intersectional and anti-colonial solidarity as a threat because it challenges and dismantles divisive Zionist propaganda.

In the past, liberal Zionist media and major Zionist lobbies have launched smear campaigns against BLM, accusing the movement of anti-Semitism. After October 7, there has also been a concerted media effort to convince the Black community that Palestinian liberation is “not their battle”.

The American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC) has consistently targeted Black politicians who have challenged Zionist interests, often through coordinated smear campaigns. A notable example is US Representative Ilhan Omar, who has faced relentless attacks seeking to unseat her and damage her reputation.

This year, AIPAC successfully unseated Representatives Jamaal Bowman and Cori Bush, who have been vocal advocates for Gaza and Palestine, by pouring massive amounts of money into their opponents’ campaigns during the Democratic primaries.

In this context, a rift between the Black and Palestinian communities would play into the hands of Israel and its Zionist supporters.

When debating whether to support Harris or not, it is important here to note who she represents. Though she is a woman of colour, her politics reflect those of the

liberal bourgeois class — referred to by Martin Luther King Jr. as “white moderates” — which undermine progressive and anticolonial agendas under the guise of practicality.

Once in office, she may pay lip service to the antiracism struggle, but would do little to challenge racist structures and institutions. She would likely continue to strengthen the military-industrial complex, promoting economic policies that enrich the wealthy and impoverish the poor, and upholding “tough on crime” practices which disproportionately harm people of colour and poor communities.

Some argue that Harris is the “lesser evil” within the American duopoly, given her emphasis on diverse representation and promises of social reform, yet she may emerge as a more “effective evil” — a term coined by the late journalist Glen Ford to describe President Barack Obama’s ability to push through right-wing policies, while assuaging progressive pushback.

The reluctance to feature a Palestinian voice at the Democratic National Convention, along with Harris’s both-sideism narrative in her acceptance speech, reflect Ford’s framework.

Solidarity against genocide

It is important to remember that the forces driving genocidal violence in Gaza are the same ones fueling global oppression. The settler-colonial projects in the US and Israel share core white supremacist ideologies and capitalist-imperial interests, oppressive tactics, aggressive strategies and propaganda techniques.

These powerful networks of colonial and imperial interests, bolstered by the military-industrial complex and surveillance technology, shape US policies including those which enable and dominate Israel-Palestine, from police militarisation to the violent crackdown on immigration and marginalised communities.

For this reason, the genocide in Palestine has far-reaching implications for people of colour and other marginalised groups. Palestine acts as a testing ground for military technologies and the normalisation of extreme violence which can be deployed against oppressed peoples in the Global South and BIPOC in the Global North, who are disproportionately affected by white supremacist, corporate capitalist policies.

A unified Black-Palestinian front is essential to resist these forces and their genocidal aims. Without this solidarity, both communities remain weaker and more isolated in their struggles against their common enemy. Unity, solidarity and the recognition of a shared struggle against oppression strengthen and drive principled grassroots movements like BLM and Boycott Divestment and Sanctions (BDS).

Dismantling racist capitalist oppression requires an unwavering commitment to revolutionary principles and rejecting alliances with counterrevolutionary forces. True liberation in the US and Palestine can only be achieved through a broad antiracist and anticolonial movement.

Work by Palestinian artist to open NIKA Project Space’s Paris gallery

NIKA Project Space, Dubai, is expanding its reach with the opening of its Paris gallery in the vibrant Komunuma art district, with an inaugural exhibition by Palestinian artist Mirna Bamieh titled “Sour Things” (Sept. 8 – Oct. 27). The exhibition showcases a new body of work by Bamieh, exploring the politics of disappearance and memory. The gallery will also present a solo booth of the artist’s work at Asia NOW – Paris Asian Art Fair (October 17 – 20), at the Monnaie de Paris. Founded in 2023 by Veronika Berezina, NIKA Project Space serves as a platform for artistic discourse and experimentation and champions the work of female artists and curators, especially art practitioners from the Global South. It hosts exhibitions which focus

on conceptualisation, abstraction and philosophical inquiry, and promotes contemporaneity and dialogue through talks, performances and educational initiatives.

The gallery also has a research programme, inviting artists to create new works that are research-based and have experimental creative processes.

It also holds off-site projects across the Dubai. Its parent space is located in Al Khayat Avenue in Dubai’s art district Al Quoz, in a space designed by award-winning international practice T.ZED Architects. NIKA Project Space’s second gallery in Paris, announced by Berezina, marks a significant step in the gallery’s growth.

In her search to find a Paris location that aligns with the centre in Dubai, she chose Komunuma, the cultural and artistic

quarter in Romainville, for its similar creative atmosphere.

Berezina said: “I am delighted to be opening a space in Paris, one of the most important cities in the world for art, to support our artists and programmes in Europe. This new gallery brings us closer to key relationships and will create a bridge between Paris and Dubai initiatives, facilitating rich exchanges and dialogue.”

Bamieh is renowned for her socially engaged work; she explores the politics of disappearance and memory production by unpacking the social concerns and limitations of Palestinian communities amid contemporary political dilemmas.

Since 2019, she has been reflecting on the process of fermentation through text, ceramics and video works incorporated into site-specific interactive installations. She melds food and sto-

rytelling to develop socially engaged work through Palestine Hosting Society, a live art project she founded in 2018.

Staging dinner performances and various interventions that draw from food practices as well as the passage of recipes through generations, the project aims to revitalise traditional Palestinian food cultures, on the verge of disappearing.

Her recent works in the upcoming NIKA exhibition include “The Pantry” (2024), a co-commission between NIKA Project Space and the Het Noordbrabants Museum in the Netherlands.

In the installation, Bamieh uses fermentation to reflect on displacement, uprooting, and the loss of space. She creates a zone where preservation is possible,

but fermentation is not, symbolising both internal and physical dislocation. New works also include “Sour Things: The Wall”, a sculpture of citrus ceramic pieces that explores the stages of grieving and preservation, connecting personal grief with universal experiences, reflecting on the ongoing Palestinian experience of war and displacement. “Sour Things: The Staircase” is composed of oversized ceramic sculptures of okra, garlic, chili, and clove spice, glazed in chlidlike drawings, expressing trauma and pain.

The pungent ingredients are imbued with symbolism and are hung like threads, reminiscent of traditional dehydration methods used to preserve vegetables.

“These works deal with grief, pain, and processing the uncontrol-

lable,” says Bamieh. “They invite reflection and create empathetic spaces. The ‘Sour Things’ series has always been about processing big topics without providing answers, offering internal, psychic spaces of empathy.”

Berezina emphasises the gallery’s ongoing commitment to highlighting the work of female artists and artistic curatorial concepts from the Global South. “NIKA will continue to champion female practitioners and facilitate research from across the region, extending these efforts across both of its locations,” she says.

Gallery artists include Adrian Pepe, Nika Neelova, Alexander Ugay, Polina Kanis, and Katya Muromtseva. Berezina has worked with international practitioners, looking at artists and curators from the Global South. She is currently building a rigorous

Muhammad Yusuf



Kundi stresses joint efforts for economic development

LAHORE (APP): Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa Governor Faisal Karim Kundi said on Wednesday that Pakistan is a country rich in potential and resources and urged all segments to work together for the country's development and prosperity.

He expressed these views during his visit to Lahore Chamber of Commerce and Industry, where LCCI President Kashif Anwar presented the address of welcome and highlighted various issues including industry, economy, Independent Power Producers (IPPs) and tourism etc. Senior Vice President Zafar Mahmood Chaudhry, Executive Committee Member Fareeha Younus and other distinguished members were also present.

The KP governor said the situation in Punjab was relatively better while KP was suffering from 16 to 18 hours of load-shedding, adding that after Tarbela no major dams have been constructed. He suggested that if KP, which produced the cheapest electricity, was given even half of its production, the province's load-shedding issue could be solved.

LCCI President Kashif Anwar said that running businesses has become

exceedingly difficult. The industry is grappling with challenges such as currency depreciation, rising tariffs for electricity, gas and fuel, high-interest rates, and numerous other issues that are escalating the cost of doing business. He said that continuity in policies is essential for business stability.

Governor Kundi agreed with Kashif Anwar that a robust tax net is crucial for national development. He shared his experience from a recent visit to Dushanbe, where investors questioned whether Pakistan could offer the same facilities they receive in Tajikistan such as electricity at 2 cents per unit.

Addressing the issue of Afghan transit trade, he acknowledged the importance of maintaining good relations with Afghanistan as it serves as Pakistan's gateway to Central Asia.

Kashif Anwar underscored the need to reduce expenses to stabilize the economy, particularly focusing on revising agreements with IPPs to prevent the nation from incurring unnecessary costs. He stressed that these agreements are a burden on the taxpayers and should be renegotiated or terminated

in the national interest.

He highlighted KP's vast potential in tourism and the need for better facilities, such as security and accommodations to attract tourists. Anwar also mentioned the immense potential in the gems and jewelry sector, which could generate significant foreign exchange if value addition is prioritized.

The Governor acknowledged the challenges faced by KP, including inflation, economic issues, and terrorism. He highlighted the need for vocational training and support for the youth to improve the province's soft image and promote peace.

LCCI President objected the burdensome SROs which have increased the difficulties for existing taxpayers. He called for measures to control inflation, which is driving unemployment and affecting the law and order situation in the country. He also raised concerns about industries relocating abroad and the increasing brain drain due to a lack of facilities at local level.

Kashif Anwar emphasized the importance of broadening the tax base and urged the government to encourage existing taxpayers by reducing their bur-

dens and creating a more business-friendly environment. He mentioned that LCCI has declared the first year of his presidency as the "Business Facilitation Year" and is actively holding awareness sessions and seminars on tax issues.

He also stressed the need for import substitution, stating that industries must be provided with affordable electricity and gas to reduce production costs, which is crucial for boosting exports. Anwar highlighted the potential of the IT sector in generating foreign exchange and called for policies that support the growth of this sector.

Furthermore, Anwar called for an end to smuggling and transit trade issues, which are harming the economy, and urged political parties to sign the Charter of Economy immediately. He acknowledged the sacrifices of security forces in maintaining peace and emphasized the need for continuity in economic policies.

The LCCI President concluded by stating that the business community's sole focus is on sustaining their businesses, and their loyalty lies with the nation's economy, regardless of political affiliations.



PESHAWAR: President SCCI Fuad Ishaq presenting a Chamber's shield to Chief Secretary Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Nadeem Aslam Chaudhry. Vice president Ejaz Khan Afridi also present on occasion.

35 illegal gas connections disconnected

F.P. Report

LAHORE: As part of its ongoing campaign against gas theft, SNGPL has carried out a series of raids in Punjab, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, and Islamabad, resulting in the disconnection of 35 illegal gas connections and the imposition of fines totaling Rs 1.2 million.

In Lahore, 8 connections were severed due to illegal gas usage, with fines amounting to Rs 0.79 million imposed on offenders. The Bahawalpur team disconnected 2 illegal connections and another 3 for unauthorized compressor usage. In Faisalabad, 2 connections were cut off, and Rs 0.04 million in fines were imposed.

The Sheikhpura team severed 1 connection for illegal gas use, imposing fines of Rs 0.29 million.

In Multan, 12 connections were disconnected due to unauthorized gas usage, while in Sahiwal, 2 connections were cut off, resulting in fines totaling Rs 0.12 million.

RDA inflows rise to \$8.416b

ISLAMABAD (APP): The inflow of remittances under Roshan Digital Account (RDA) has risen to US \$8.416 billion by the end of July 2024 as compared to US \$8.255 billion by June (2024) end, according to the latest data released by SBP.

The data showed that the inflows of remittances during July were recorded at US\$161 million as compared to US\$ 200 million in June and US\$ 224 million in May 2024.

These accounts provide innovative banking solutions to millions of Non-Resident Pakistanis, including Non-Resident Pakistan Origin Card holders, seeking to undertake banking, payment, and investment activities in Pakistan.

The number of accounts registered under the programme also rose by 10,820 to 723,598 in July 2024 from 712,778 accounts in June 2024.

By the end of July, overseas Pakistanis have invested US \$357 million in

Naya Pakistan Certificates, US \$618 in Naya Pakistan Islamic Certificates, and US \$39 million in Roshan Equity Investment.

German team visits PSGMEA

SIALKOT (APP): A German delegation on Wednesday visited the Pakistan Sports Goods Manufacturers and Exporters Association (PSGMEA) and discussed trade issues.

The delegation was included Bettina Muller, Project Director, SEQUA, Christian von Mitzlaff, Supply Chain Due Diligence Consultant, Sarim Mehmood, Sector Expert/Consultant and Dr Michael Arretz, Managing Director VFI e.V German Importers.

Chairman PSGMEA Muhammad Arshad Latif Butt, Vice Chairman Zarar Ahmed Dodhi, Secretary General Mohsin Masood and other members welcomed the guests.

Arshad Latif Butt said: "We look forward to learn how we can collaborate to enhance sustainable practices within our supply chains, ensuring that Pakistani products continue to meet the highest standards".

SCCI, CS decided to setup close-liaison to resolve issues

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Sarhad Chamber of Commerce and Industry president Fuad Ishaq and Chief Secretary Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Nadeem Aslam Chaudhry have decided to establish liaison between chamber and CS office to promptly resolve business community issues.

The decision was made during a meeting presided over by SCCI President Fuad Ishaq on the occasion of Chief Secretary Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Nadeem Aslam Chaudhry's visit to the chamber house on Wednesday. Leader of the Businessman Forum former senator Ilyas Ahmed Bilour especially participated in the meeting.

On this occasion, Senior Vice President of SCCI Sanaulah Khan, Vice President Ejaz Khan Afridi, Special Secretary Finance Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Abdullah Kakakhel, Advisor KPRA Fazal Amin Shah, Former Presidents Zahidullah Shinwari, Faiz Muhammad Faizi, Malik Niaz Ahmed, Former Senior Vice Presidents, Zia-ul-Haq Sarhadi, Shahid Hussain, former vice-presidents Naem Butt, Shuja Muhammad, Haji Abdul Jalil Jan, executive committee members Affaf Ali Khan, Naem Qasmi,

Muhammad Ismail Safi, former chairman APCEA Mushtaq Ahmed, FMCG office bearers Khalid Farooq, Atif Shahzad, Imtiaz Ahmed Ali, Syed Jawad Hussain Kazmi, Khalid Sultan Khawaja, Business leaders Habibullah Zahid, Haji Naseer, Syed Aftab Hayat, Sadar Gul, Ishtiaq Muhammad, Fazl Wahid, Aftab Iqbal, business leaders, industrialists, exporters and importers were present in large numbers.

Fuad Ishaq in his opening remarks informed the meeting about reservations of the business community over the implementation of two percent tax on exports by the provincial government, obstacles in mutual trade, transit trade, taxes through various provincial departments/authorities, undue harassment, harassment and fines under the guise of implementation rules and official orders, the precarious security situation, the implementation of various unnecessary taxes at the central provincial level and gave practical suggestions for their resolution.

SCCI chief emphasized on solving all the problems and issues through better policy and implementing business and trade friendly policies.

Ilyas Ahmed Bilour also spoke on this occasion and

demanding the provision of all rights under his own soil. He said that the treatment of the people of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa like a stepmother should be stopped immediately.

The BF leader said that this province has made numerous sacrifices for the country and peace, the people and the business community here should be given facilities and privileges. He called for the abolition of all unnecessary taxes and the implementation of business-friendly policies.

Later, while addressing the meeting, Chief Secretary Nadeem Aslam Chaudhry agreed with the proposals of the SCCI president and emphasized on strengthening the links between the Chamber and the bureaucracy for quick resolution of the problems.

The Chief Secretary said that facilitating business and trade and removing the difficulties of the business community are among the top priorities of the government. He said that all the problems should be presented at the sector level so that they can be solved immediately.

Nadeem Aslam fully assured to solve all the problems related to business and trade and taxes by utilizing all the resources at the government level.

Asia Insurance Company a first for Pakistan insurance industry

F.P. Report

LAHORE: Zain Ul Qureshi CEO Asia Insurance Company Ltd and Dr. Asrar Hussain Ch. VP HOD Livestock Department state that we are pleased that Asia Insurance Company Ltd. have made a breakthrough and settled JWS Pakistan's claim A/C of Razia Bibifrom T. T. Sing within same working day and becomes a first for Pakistan insurance industry.

As per agreement with Microfinance sector Asia Insurance Company is liable to settle claims within 7-10 working days but previously we made payments within 2-3 days of OLP Pakistan Microfinance

but today we braked our own record and settled JWS Pakistan's Livestock claim within same day.

It becomes possible due to establishment of digital claim settlement mechanism through Tagmu Fied App designed with the collaboration of Tagmu Pvt. Ltd and hard working with passion and commitment of ASIC's Livestock department's team under the supervision of Dr. Asrar Hussain Ch. Vice president HOD Livestock Projects department/Agri. Livestock/Tagmu Claims, the Executive Director Livestock Department Punjab. He said that Asia Insurance Company will maintain its standard milestone for prompt client service delivery.

Zain Ul Qureshi CEO said that now we may claim that ASIC's team is capable to accord claim payment within same day subject to completion of mandatory documents. Moreover we may accept the challenge accordingly while setting business agreements with corporate sector.

Qazi Atif Aftab Area Manager JSW Pakistan expressed that we appreciate the fastest claim payment speed of Asia Insurance Company and continue our business relationships with confidence and satisfaction.

47 nomination papers filed for FCCI polls

FAISALABAD (APP): Forty seven nomination papers have been filed for the election of 30 seats of executive committee of Faisalabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry (FCCI) for the term of 2024-26 on Wednesday.

According to the members of the election commission Muzammil Sultan, Chaudhry Muhammad Nawaz and Rashid Munir, 23 nomination papers have been received for 14 seats of corporate class while one nomination paper was received for one reserved seat of women for this class.

Similarly, 22 candidates are contesting for 14 seats of associate class whereas one female candidate has filed her nomination paper from this class against one reserved seat.

According to election schedule, the scrutiny of the nomination papers would be conducted on August 29, 2024.

100-Index of Pakistan Stock Exchange loses 91 points

ISLAMABAD (APP): The 100-Index of the Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) shed 91.45 points on Wednesday, showing a negative change of 0.12 percent, closing at 77,992.79 points against 78,084.24 points on the last working day.

A total of 636,024,989 shares were traded during the day as compared to 591,511,522 shares the previous day, whereas the price of shares stood at Rs 16.267 billion against Rs 17.177 billion on the last trading day.

As many as 452 companies transacted their shares in the stock market, 140 of them recorded gains and 260 sustained losses,

whereas the share price of 52 companies remained unchanged.

The three top trading companies were Kohinoor Spinning with 124,735,968 shares at Rs 11.44 per share, Fauji Foods Ltd with 39,280,114 shares at Rs.8.92 per share and Younsuf Weaving with 34,902,609 shares at Rs 5.81 per share.

Mari Petroleum Company Limited witnessed a maximum increase of Rs 88.16 per share price, closing at Rs 3,389.88, whereas the runner-up was Hallmark Company Limited with a Rs 62.56 rise in its per share price to Rs 688.13.

Unilever Pakistan Foods

Limited witnessed a maximum decrease of Rs 160.00 per share closing at Rs 17,340.00 followed by Nestle Pakistan Limited with Rs 46.40 decline to close at Rs 6,817.15.

Rupee sheds 13 paise against dollar

Pakistani rupee on Wednesday depreciated by 13 paise against the US dollar in the interbank trading and closed at Rs 278.45 against the previous day's closing of Rs 278.32.

However, according to the Forex Association of Pakistan (FAP), the buying and selling rates of the dollar in the open market stood at Rs 278.6 and Rs 280.1 respectively.

The price of Euro decreased by 15 paise to close at Rs 310.72 against the last day's closing of Rs 310.87, according to the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP).

The Japanese yen went up by 01 paise and closed at Rs1.92, whereas an increase of 86 paise was witnessed in the exchange rate of the British Pound, which traded at Rs368.45 as compared to the last day's closing of Rs 367.59.

The exchange rates of the Emirates Dirham and the Saudi Riyal increased by 04 paise and 03 paise to close at Rs75.81 and Rs74.20 respectively.

Sukkur IBA University holds 19th Syndicate meeting

F.P. Report

SUKKUR: The 19th Syndicate meeting of Sukkur IBA University convened on Wednesday in the university's meeting room under the chairmanship of Vice Chancellor Professor Dr. Asif Ahmed Shaikh. During the syndicate meeting, significant decisions were endorsed concerning the academic, administrative, development, and financial aspects of the university.

A major highlight was the approval for the Sukkur IBA University Sub campus in Ghotki, and IBA Community Colleges in Sehwan and Bhan Saeedabad, as per the cabinet decision. The Syndicate also reviewed and approved the management case for the Sukkur IBA Mirpurkhas Sub-Campus in accordance with a court order, and the IBA Community Colleges, public schools, and IT centers as per directives from the Sindh government.

Vice Chancellor Professor Dr. Asif Ahmed Shaikh presented a progress report of the University for the last



six months, which was appreciated by the Syndicate members. The Syndicate approved the revised estimates for the financial year 2023-24 and the budget estimates for the financial year 2024-25 for Sukkur IBA University and its sub-campus, including Kandhkot, Dadu, and Khairpur Mirs. The meeting also reviewed and approved investment of funds, including endowment and provident funds.

Additionally, the Syndicate approved the Sustainable Procurement and

Purchase Policy of Sukkur IBA University, aligning it with international standards and government regulations. The reconstitution of the university's Academic Council was also reviewed, with the directors of sub-campus being approved as members.

The Syndicate approved the Annual Report and the adoption of Sustainable Development Goals. The Strategic Plan and Vision 2030 for Sukkur IBA University were also approved.

The meeting was attend-

ed by external members, including Ex-Federal Secretary Fazalullah Qureshi, Prof. Dr. Ghulam Raza Bhatti, HEC member Syed Naveed Hussain Shah, President SZABIST Madam Shahnaz Wazir Ali, Muhammad Abbas Baloch, Asif Ikram, Mufti Nazeer Ahmed Mahar, and internal members including Pro Vice Chancellor Prof. Dr. Syed Mir Muhammad Shah, Dean Professor Dr. Abdul Rehman Soomrani along with two observers and other key stakeholders.

Stocks diverge as traders eye Nvidia earnings

PARIS (APP/APP): US shares fell marginally and European stock markets mostly inched higher Wednesday as investors cautiously awaited the latest earnings results from US chip giant Nvidia, a bellwether for the tech sector.

Traders are also waiting for key US economic data later this week that could provide clues about the size of an expected interest-rate cut next month.

In New York, the main indexes were all down slightly shortly after opening. In Europe, London's FTSE 100 Index was lower, while Paris and Frankfurt were higher in mid-after-

noon trading.

All markets are focused on the release of Nvidia's second-quarter results after the close of US markets Wednesday.

The market has a "wait-and-see mentality", said Patrick J. O'Hare, an analyst at Briefing.com, because Nvidia "is primed to move. Everybody knows that. What they don't know is which way. So, the market is operating in a guarded fashion."

Nvidia is up about 160 percent year-to-date and has accounted for a third of the broad-based S&P 500 index's gains this year.

The market expects the

company to post sales ranging between \$27 billion and \$32 billion, more than double from a year ago, said Swissquote Bank analyst Ipek Ozkardeskaya.

"The expectations for Nvidia's Q2 results are sky-high," she said, which means markets could be in for a rough ride if Nvidia disappoints.

"This is the one that could either lift all boats or sink the entire fleet," said analyst Stephen Innes in his Dark Side Of The Boom newsletter.

Nvidia has seen profits soar thanks to demand for its powerful GPU chips, which have set the indus-

try's pace in pushing new advances in artificial intelligence.

Its success has pushed its market valuation over the \$3 trillion mark.

Investors are also waiting for the release of US economic growth data on Thursday and the Federal Reserve's favoured gauge of inflation on Friday, followed by jobs figures next week.

Fed chief Jerome Powell said last week that the central bank was ready to cut rates, which were raised to a 23-year high in efforts to combat inflation, but he did not indicate by how much.



In brief

Shaheens, Bangladesh A match abandoned

ISLAMABAD (APP): The second game of the three match One-Day series between Pakistan Shaheens and Bangladesh A was abandoned due to persistent rain and wet outfield here at the Islamabad Club on Wednesday. Pakistan Shaheens lead the 50-over series by 1-0 after having won the first match by eight wickets on August 26. The third match will be played on August 30 at the same venue.

Athletics Championship from Sept 11

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistani team will feature in the SAAF Junior Athletics Championship to be held from September 11, in Chennai, India. According to the Chairman of the South Asia Athletics Federation Maj. Gen. (R) Muhammad Akram Sahi both men's and women's teams from seven countries are participating in the championship, including Pakistan, hosts India, Maldives, Nepal, Bhutan, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka. He said, "15 categories of men's and women's events will be held in the championship." Men's events include 100m race, 200m race, 400m race, 800m race, 1500m race, 3000m race, 110m hurdle race, long jump, triple jump, high jump, shot put, desk throw, javelin throw, 4x100m relay and 4x400m relay while Women's events are 100m race, 200m race, 400m race, 800m race, 1500m race, 3000m race, 100m hurdle race, long jump, triple jump, high jump, shot put, desk throw, javelin throw, 4x100m relay and 4x400m relay. He said, "The championship will continue till September 13 and prizes will be distributed among the winning players at the end."

SA women to play three T20Is in Pakistan

LAHORE (Monitoring Desk): Pakistan and South Africa women's cricket teams will prepare for next month's ICC Women's T20 World Cup 2024 in the UAE by competing in a three-match series at the Multan Cricket Stadium. The South Africa team will arrive in Multan on 13 September, with matches scheduled for 16, 18, and 20 September. To ensure all three matches are broadcast live and give exposure to women's cricket, the matches on 16 and 18 September will start at 7pm, while the match on 20 September will begin at 10am. After the series, South Africa will depart for the UAE on 21 September, while Pakistan will leave on 23 September. Pakistan is in Group A of the ICC Women's T20 World Cup 2024, along with Australia, India, New Zealand, and Sri Lanka, while South Africa is grouped with Bangladesh, England, Scotland and the West Indies. Following warm-up matches against Scotland and Bangladesh on 28 and 30 September, respectively, Pakistan will face Sri Lanka on 3 October in Sharjah, followed by matches against India on 6 October in Dubai, Australia on 11 October in Dubai and New Zealand on 14 October in Dubai. Meanwhile, the PCB has confirmed that the squad announced for the ICC Women's T20 World Cup 2024 will feature in the three-match series against South Africa. The squad is: Fatima Sana (captain), Aliya Riaz, Diana Baig, Gull Feroza, Iram Javed, Muneeba Ali (wicket-keeper), Nashra Sundhu, Nida Dar, Omaira Sohail, Sadaf Shamas, Sadia Iqbal (subject to fitness), Sidra Amin, Syeda Aroob Shah, Tasmia Rubab and Tuba Hassan.



RAWALPINDI: Mohammad Rizwan, Naseem Shah and Mir Hamza gear up for the second Test against Bangladesh.

Rizwan achieves career-best ICC Test Ranking

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan's Mohammad Rizwan has reached a career-high position in the top 10 in the ICC Men's Test Batting Rankings, released on Wednesday. Rizwan's impressive performances in his recent matches, including scores of 171 not out and 51 against Bangladesh in the first Test of the two-match series have catapulted him into the elite ranks for the first time. Rizwan's rise comes amidst a flurry of movements in the Test rankings, following standout performances by several players. England's Harry Brook has surged to fourth place, just shy of his career-best third position, thanks to solid scores of 56 and 32 against Sri Lanka in the first match of their ICC World Test Championship series in Manchester. Bangladesh batter Mushfiq's

match-winning 191 in the first Test of the WTC series against Pakistan in Rawalpindi has helped him advance seven places to a career-best-equaling 17th position while Pakistan's Rizwan is in the top 10 for the first time after scores of 171 not out and 51. Others to move up the Test rankings include Sri Lanka batters Dinesh Chandimal (up four places to 23rd) and Kamindu Mendis (up eight places to 36th), Bangladesh's Liton Das (up two places to 27th) and England's Jamie Smith (up 22 places to 42nd). In the Test bowling rankings, England's Chris Woakes is up four places to 16th after taking three wickets each in both innings against Sri Lanka while Asitha Fernando is up 10 places to 17th after also finishing with six wickets in the match. Pakistan fast bowler Naseem Shah

(up four places to 33rd), England's new-ball bowler Gus Atkinson (up four places to 42nd) and Matthew Potts (up five places to 57th) are the prominent movers in the bowling rankings. In the Men's T20I Player Rankings, Nicholas Pooran of the West Indies has moved into the top 10 after scores of 65 not out, 19 and 35 in a 3-0 victory over South Africa in Trinidad. South Africa's Reeza Hendricks is another one to gain, moving up to 13th position. In the bowling rankings, left-arm spinner Akeal Hosein of the West Indies has moved up four places to second position after taking four wickets in three matches. Gudakesh Motie, also a left-arm spinner from his team, is just one position behind Hosein after moving up 10 slots while Romario Shepherd is up to the 31st position.

Djokovic tackles Djere, Gauff set to shine under US Open lights

NEW YORK (AFP): Defending champion Novak Djokovic will aim for a fast start against fellow Serbian Laslo Djere on Wednesday as he steps up his bid for a record 25th Grand Slam singles title at the US Open. Djere, ranked 109th in the world, was the only player to take a set off Djokovic at last year's US Open, taking the first two of their third-round clash before Djokovic turned the tide. "It was a very tough match," Djokovic recalled, vowing to take the lessons learned into their second-round match under the lights of Arthur Ashe Stadium. Djokovic, coming off an emotional triumph at the Paris Olympics, will anchor a night session that opens with women's defending champion Coco Gauff, 20, taking on 37-year-old Tatjana Maria of Germany. Djokovic, tied with Aussie legend Margaret Court with 24 Grand Slam titles but chasing his first of

2024, says he relishes the energy of Ashe at night -- but the 37-year-old hinted after his Monday victory over Radu Albot that he'd be up for opening the night session for chance at a slightly earlier bedtime. "I don't think that aging helps really, staying so late," he said after his opener finished a tick before midnight. "I can feel my batteries are low - I'm shutting down." That likely means he'll be even more determined to shut down Djere early, but Djokovic said his 109th-ranked compatriot is no pushover. "I think he loves the conditions here," Djokovic said. "It's a bit quicker. Ball stays low. He has a very flat backhand particularly and very good serve, great return. He's physically as fit as anybody." Fitness could be a big factor on Wednesday, with a forecast for hot, humid conditions. That promised to be especially challenging for afternoon matches, includ-

ing Australian Open champion Aryna Sabalenka's meeting with Italian Lucia Bronzetti on Louis Armstrong Stadium. Sabalenka, runner-up to Gauff last year, is aiming to go one better and become the first woman since Angelique Kerber in 2016 to win both hard court Grand Slam titles in the same year. She tuned up for the Open with a victory in the hard court tournament at Cincinnati, where she bounced world number one Iga Swiatek in the semi-finals. Seventh-seeded Paris Olympics gold medalist Zheng Qinwen and eighth-seeded Wimbledon champion Barbora Krejickova are also in action. Zheng taking on Erika Andreeva and Krejickova facing Elena-Gabriela Ruse. Street style Having bagged China's first Olympic tennis singles gold, Zheng is now aiming to follow compatriot Li Na as a Grand Slam winner

after coming up short against Sabalenka in the Australian Open final. She reached the quarter-finals last year in New York, where she's learning to love the restless energy. "It's always going to be noisy in the stadium," Zheng said, noting the new rule where officials don't even try to stop fans from moving around between games. "New York is busy, it's street style. It's different - I like it." Other seeds in action Wednesday included No. 4 Alexander Zverev of Germany and sixth-seeded Russian Andrey Rublev, a four-time US Open quarter-finalist. Eighth-seeded eighth-seeded Casper Ruud of Norway, runner-up in 2022, takes on French crowd-pleaser Gael Monfils. Americans Ben Shelton and Frances Tiafoe seek second-round wins that would send them into a third-round rematch of their memorable quarter-final clash last year.

Ben Stokes on track for Pakistan tour comeback after hamstring tear

LONDON (Agencies): Ben Stokes is on track to recover from his hamstring injury in time to play a full role as an allrounder in England's Test series against Pakistan in October. Stokes tore his left hamstring two-and-a-half weeks ago while playing for Northern Superchargers in the Hundred. He was ruled out for the rest of the summer but has been with the England squad during their ongoing series against Sri Lanka, and has been batting in the nets at Lord's ahead of Thursday's second Test. England are due to arrive in Pakistan on October 2 ahead of the first Test five days later, which is scheduled for Multan. They won 3-0 on their most recent tour there in 2022, with Stokes only bowling 35 overs in the series as he managed a chronic knee injury. A return to full fitness ahead of this tour would be a significant boost to their chances. Stokes described his return as "scratching an itch" on Tuesday. "I'm all good, just slowly progressing," he said in an ECB video. "It's still very early days in the rehab period... I want to get back as quick as I possibly can, so being around the medical team here with physio and doctors, I thought that was going to give myself the best chance of getting back sooner rather than later." Ollie Pope, England's stand-in captain, believes that Stokes will be "as fresh as anyone" heading into their winter tours to Pakistan and



New Zealand. "He's obviously still a fair while away off playing, and he's not trying to play as a batter and a first slip - just yet, anyway. But it's been great to see him. "Injuries are never ideal, but they're also great chances for people to keep improving their game and have a little bit of time of reflection and think about what he can work on in his game. I'm sure that's exactly what he's doing in the nets. Going into that Pakistan series and then into New Zealand, he's going to be as fresh as anyone." Zak Crawley, who is also missing the Sri Lanka series, came to Lord's on Tuesday with his broken little finger in a split. Like Stokes, he is targeting a return for October's tour to Pakistan, though will not be able to resume batting until later next

month. "It's great to have those guys around," Pope said. "I know [Crawley] is gutted he's not here playing in these Test matches, but for him to pop in and catch up with the guys is great and it shows where we're at as a squad, and how we're a tight-knit unit. We want to keep driving that forwards because I think that helps us on the pitch as well." Mark Wood is also out of this series injured, and has been replaced in England's XI by Olly Stone for the second Test at Lord's. Pope played with Stone at London Spirit in the Hundred this year, and believes that he will be able to replicate Wood's impact as a high-pace bowler - even if he may not touch Wood's top speeds. "He's obviously had a tough time, and has injuries that unfortunately fast bowlers can just get, especially when they bowl up to 90mph. I'm really excited for Olly to get the opportunity to pull that shirt back on. I know how hard he's worked and I know how hard it is being injured for such a long period of time." Stokes described Pope as moving into his interim role "seamlessly" and said that he had enjoyed watching from the dressing-room in Manchester. "I was actually pretty relaxed and pretty chilled," he said. "I thought I might be a little bit frantic... When you don't have the emotion of being in the game, you do look at it from a different point of view."

Champions One-Day Cup to begin from Sept 12

LAHORE (APP): The Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) on Wednesday announced schedule for the Champions One-Day Cup, featuring country's 150 best of the best cricketers, to be played at the Iqbal Stadium Faisalabad between 12-29 September with the opening match featuring Wolves and Panthers. The PCB had earlier announced the five champion mentors with their team names and 15-player squads to be unveiled in the coming days. The 50-over tournament will be played on a single-league format with the matches to commence at 3pm. There will be three playoffs in four days with the final on Sunday, 29 Sept. Except for the 16 September match between Lions and Panthers, which will commence at 9.30am local time, all other 13 matches will begin at 3pm. Lions and Panthers will go toe to toe in a morning match to allow Pakistan women's versus South Africa women's T20I to be broadcast live. Event schedule (all matches at Iqbal Stadium Faisalabad: 16 Sep match will start at 9.30am, rest of the matches will start at 12pm): 12 Sep - Wolves v Panthers 13 Sep - Stallions v Lions 14 Sep - Dolphins v Panthers 15 Sep - Wolves v Stallions 16 Sep - Lions v Panthers 17 Sep - Dolphins v Wolves 19 Sep - Stallions v Dolphins 20 Sep - Lions v Wolves 21 Sep - Panthers v Stallions 22 Sep - Dolphins v Lions 24 Sep - Qualifier (Team No.1 v Team No. 2) 25 Sep - Eliminator 1 (Team No.3 v Team No.4) 27 Sep - Eliminator 2 (Losing Qualifier v Winning Eliminator 2) 29 Sep - Final.

Abrar, Kamran joins Pakistan Test squad

ISLAMABAD (APP): Abrar Ahmed and Kamran Ghulam have joined the Pakistan Test squad ahead of the second Test match against Bangladesh, scheduled to take place at the Rawalpindi Cricket Stadium from August 30 to September 3. Both players were released from the Test squad before start of the first Test match and featured for Pakistan Shaheens in a four-day game against Bangladesh 'A' at the Islamabad Club from August 20 to 23. Also, Shaheen Shah Afridi, who was released from the squad at the conclusion of the first Test, rejoined the squad on Tuesday evening. Meanwhile, Aamir Jamal, who had been released from the squad to work on his fitness at the NCA, has been recalled. Aamir's participation in the second Test will remain subject to fitness clearance. Pakistan squad for second Test against Bangladesh: Shan Masood (captain), Saud Shakeel (vice-captain), Aamir Jamal (subject to fitness), Abrar Ahmed, Abdullah Shafique, Babar Azam, Kamran Ghulam, Khurram Shahzad, Mir Hamza, Mohammad Ali, Mohammad Huraire, Mohammad Rizwan (wicket-keeper), Naseem Shah, Saim Ayub, Salman Ali Agha, Sarfaraz Ahmed (wicket-keeper) and Shaheen Shah Afridi.

Women's Badminton training Camp begins in Abbottabad



F.P. Report

ABBOTTABAD: The Summer Girls' Badminton Training Camp organized by the Directorate of Sports KP and the Regional Sports Office Abbottabad has commenced at the City Sports Complex Abbottabad. The camp was officially inaugurated by DSO Abbottabad Junaid Rehman. The event was attended by Badminton Level One Coach Bushra from the Directorate of Sports Assistant Amir Shehzad and other notable personalities. The camp which includes over fifty female players, is being held under the special instructions of Commissioner Hazara Zaheer-ul-Islam and with the cooperation of Regional Sports Officer Ahmad Zaman. On the first day Coach Bushra briefed the participants on physical fitness and various skills along with delivering a special lecture. DSO Junaid Rehman stated that the Directorate of Sports KP is taking positive steps for the promotion of sports and the Summer Badminton Training Camp is a part of these efforts. School and college students can participate in this camp without any fee and it is expected to be extremely beneficial for them.

Dawid Malan retires from international cricket



LONDON (Agencies): Dawid Malan, England's former No.1-ranked T20I batter, has announced his retirement from international cricket at the age of 37. Malan, who played 22 Tests, 30 ODIs and 62 T20Is, is one of only two England men's batters (alongside Jos Buttler) to have made centuries in all three international formats. However, he had not featured in an England squad since the 50-over World Cup in India last year, and confirmed his decision after his omission from the forthcoming white-ball series against Australia. "It has been an incredible journey since July 2017," Malan said. "I am so grateful to have had the opportunity to play for England in all three formats. "Cricket, like most sports, is an industry where almost everyone eventually retires wishing they had done that little bit more. Whether you've played ten Tests or 100, many step away regretting not playing just one more, scoring a few more runs, or winning more trophies. "Right now, as I retire from international cricket, I can say I am genuinely satisfied. It has not been easy. It may be my nature, but for whatever reason, it has always seemed that I had something to prove and often felt as if I was playing for my place. The pressure goes with the territory, but it does take a mental and physical toll. Even so, I look back with pride on what I have been able to achieve." Despite announcing himself with a free-flowing innings of 78 from 44 on his

T20I debut against South Africa in 2017, Malan's initial breakthrough with England came on the following winter's Ashes tour, where he made his only Test hundred, 140 from 227 balls, in partnership with Jonny Bairstow at Perth. However, it was in the T20I format that he truly made his name, most particularly in the aftermath of England's ODI World Cup victory in 2019, when he forced his way into the team's 20-over plans through his sheer wealth of run-making, including a 48-ball hundred at Napier on that winter's tour of New Zealand. In September 2020, he reached the top of the ICC's batting rankings for T20I cricket, and the following March, he became the fastest men's player to reach 1000 runs in the format, from just 24 innings, all but one of which had been at least double-figures. He was also a T20 World Cup winner in Australia in 2022, although he missed the knock-out stages after tearing his groin in the field against Sri Lanka. Due to the success of the 50-over squad, Malan took longer to break into the ODI team - despite the prevailing sense that it was the format for which he was best suited, with his tendency to begin an innings cautiously before unfurling his full range of strokes at the back end often attracting criticism during his T20I performances. Nevertheless, he seized his chance when it came, scoring five ODI hundreds in the space of 15 innings between June 2022 and September 2023, to make an unequivocal case to replace England's incumbent opener, Jason Roy, in the 2023 World Cup squad. He then added a sixth hundred in the second match of the tournament to guide England to victory over Bangladesh in Dharamsala, but he could not survive the fall-out from the team's disappointing overall campaign.

Speaking to The Times, Malan said that he had "exceeded all expectations of myself in white-ball formats", but admitted that his inability to forge a more consistent Test career would be a regret. Ten of his 22 appearances came on consecutive tours of Australia in 2017-18 and 2021-22, where his average of 33.00 is bettered only by Alastair Cook, Joe Root and Jonny Bairstow among regular England performers of the past decade. However, he never played the format again after England's 146-run defeat at Hobart in January 2022. "Test cricket was always the pinnacle for me growing up," he said. "At times I played well but in between just wasn't good enough or consistent enough, which was disappointing because I felt I was a better player than that. "I took all three formats extremely seriously but the intensity of Test cricket was something else: five days plus the days building up. I'm a big trainer; I love hitting lots of balls and I'd train hard in the build-up, and then the days were long and intense. You can't switch off. I found it very mentally draining, especially the long Test series that I played, where my performances dropped off from the third or fourth Test onwards. "But, you know, on the field I always did what I felt was right to win a game for the team. I never walked off the field if I got runs not caring about whether we had won or lost. It was always about winning and I'd always question myself as to whether I'd made the right decisions on the field to do that." Malan is likely to be in high demand on the T20 franchise circuit with his England career behind him. He was most recently in action for Oval Invincibles, helping the team to victory in the Men's Hundred, two years after he was part of the Trent Rockets squad that claimed the 2022 title.



In brief

ANF seizes 137 kg drugs

RAWALPINDI (APP): Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) while conducting six operations across the country managed to recover 137 kg drugs worth over Rs 10 million and arrested six accused including a woman, said an ANF Headquarters spokesman here on Wednesday. He informed that 8.7 kg ice was recovered from a parcel sent to Australia at a courier office in Rawalpindi. In second operation, 88.3 kg hashish was recovered from Karam Agency. 30 kg opium was recovered from the Dalbandim Chagai area. In fourth operation, 2.4 kg hashish was recovered from two suspects including a woman arrested in Rawalpindi. During another operation conducted near Rawalpindi, 7.2 kg hashish and 29 intoxicated tablets were recovered from the possession of two suspects. 1.2 kg hashish was recovered from an accused netted near Motorway Islamabad. Cases under the Anti-Narcotics Act have been registered against the arrested accused and further investigations are under process.

NHMP imposes Rs 350,000 fine on foodlets

ISLAMABAD (APP): The National Highways and Motorway Police (NHMP), in its ongoing drive against overcharging and expired items of checking foodlets in the services area on Wednesday, inspected various sites and fined Rs 350,000 for violating Food Authority Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs). NHMP North Zone spokesman Muhammad Saqib said that the teams comprising respective Assistant Commissioners, Motorway Police, and Food Authority officials, while inspecting on M-1, M-2, the Saat Expressway, and Hazara Expressway, found expired items at several outlets and discarded them on the spot. The teams also sealed various outlets for overcharging and imposed Rs 350,000 on them. He further said that strict action was being taken against the violators on the motorways to ensure the provision of hygienic food to the customers.

DC pushes for digital land record overhaul

ISLAMABAD (APP): Deputy Commissioner (DC) Islamabad Irfan Nawaz Memon has chaired an important meeting focused on revenue matters, with key officials from the Revenue Department and ADCR in attendance. The meeting primarily discussed the auditing of fees charged by housing societies, alongside the implementation of decisions made in previous meetings, said the spokesman of Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) administration. In a crucial meeting, Islamabad's Deputy Commissioner (DC) emphasized the need for swift action on pending revenue cases and audits of housing societies, marking a significant move towards transparency and efficiency in the city's administrative processes. A thorough review of Islamabad's pending revenue cases was conducted. The DC stressed the urgency of resolving these cases to provide relief to the citizens, calling for daily reporting on progress from ADCR Revenue. The DC also highlighted the need for action against revenue staff who delay cases without justifiable reasons. In addition, the meeting addressed the digitization of land records, with the DC noting that the newly implemented digital policy would simplify the process for citizens, making it easier for them to access services.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Interior Mohsin Naqvi in a meeting with the UN Special Representative for Afghanistan Indrika Ratwatte. —APP Photo

CM, Governor urged to establish Information Commission

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: The Centre for Peace and Development Initiatives (CPDI) has once again called on the Government of Balochistan to take immediate action to establish the Balochistan Information Commission, as mandated by the Balochistan Right to Information Act 2021.

Despite repeated letters to various authorities, including the Chief Minister, Governor, and key legislative officials, no progress has been made in appointing the members of the Commission, a delay that undermines the fundamental right to information and violates the law.

The latest letters were sent to Mr. Shaikh Jaffar Khan Mandokhail, Governor of Balochistan, and other officials urging them to facilitate the establishment of the Commission.

This follows several earlier communications, including letters dated March 12, May 07, June 07, and August 01, 2024, addressed to Mr. Sarfaraz Ahmed Bugti, Chief Minister of Balochistan.

These letters highlighted the provincial government's failure to appoint Commission members within the legally mandated period of 120 days from the commencement of the Act.

Access to information is not just a legal right; it is a pillar of democratic governance," said Mukhtar Ahmad Ali, Executive Director of CPDI. "The ongoing delay in establishing the Balochistan Information Commission not only violates the Balochistan Right to Information Act but also deprives citizens of their right to hold the government accountable. This negligence is regrettable, and we urge the provincial government to fulfill its legal obligations without further delay."

The Balochistan Right to Information Act 2021 was designed to promote transparency and accountability within government institutions by providing citizens with the right to access public information. However, the absence of an Information Commission has severely hampered the implementation of this law, effectively rendering it toothless.

CPDI has also written to the Speaker of the Balochistan Assembly and the Secretary of the Law Department, urging them to use their good offices to ensure that the Balochistan Information Commission is established promptly. The letters emphasize that the lack of progress in this matter continues to hinder the promotion of transparency and good governance in the province.

CPDI remains committed to advocating for the enforcement of right-to-information laws across Pakistan and will continue to press for the establishment of the Balochistan Information Commission until the law is fully implemented.

About CPDI Centre for Peace and Development Initiatives (CPDI) is an independent, non-partisan and a not-for-profit civil society organization working on issues of peace and development in Pakistan that seeks to inform and influence public policies and civil society initiatives through research-based advocacy and capacity building.

High quality network of roads being built the country: Aleem

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Communications, Privatization, and Board of Investment Abdul Aleem Khan said on Wednesday that a network of high-quality highways and motorways was being laid in the country.

In future, no motorway will be constructed with less than six lanes while the motorways from Karachi to Sukkhar and Sialkot, Kharian to Islamabad will be the top priority of the National Highway Authority (NHA), these views were expressed by the minister in the departmental briefing of NHA where Chairman NHA, Federal Secretary Communications, and other senior officers were present.

He further directed that all motorways should be constructed with at least three lanes on one side so that these can fulfill the needs of the future. He said the NHA should collect maximum revenue by constructing a toll plaza for heavy traffic, and public and private transport.

He said that to strictly ensure the implementation of axle load rules on these roads and motorways which should not be violated at any cost.

Abdul Aleem Khan further said that there was no room for corrupt and incompetent staff in the NHA. He further said that in those areas where there were problems in revenue collection, the issue could be solved by handing over

the toll collection to the private sector. He directed that every year the National Highway Authority should set its annual revenue targets which will surely not only increase the efficiency and revenue of the institution but also bring a clear and positive difference.

The minister said that the NHA should adopt a self-reliance policy and use available resources, professional skills, and manpower. "NHA should be a financially stable and independent entity in the future", he remarked. Improving the means of transportation was one of the top priorities of the government while creating a business model compatible with modern requirements has become inevitable as

well.

"By introducing a new vision in NHA, we should not only enhance our capacity globally by offering our expert services to other countries but also earn a significant amount of foreign exchange", he added.

NHA Chairman while giving a briefing to the Minister said that in the current situation, it was a bitter reality that only 13% of toll tax was being collected from the NHA highways. He further informed that the process of refinement has been started in the light of the instructions of the Federal Minister for Communication and measures were being proposed for a short and long-term policy, in this regard.

Pakistan and Morocco commit to strengthen parliamentary ties

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Pakistan-Morocco Parliamentary Friendship Group held its first meeting on Wednesday, with Mohamed Karmoune, the Ambassador of the Kingdom of Morocco to Pakistan, in attendance.

Chaired by Mirza Ikhtiar Baig, MNA and Convener of the Pakistan-Morocco Parliamentary Friendship Group (PFG), the meeting was attended by group members, including Syed Naveed Qamar, Shaista Pervaiz, Aijaz Hussain Jakhrani, Rana Muhammad Qasim Noon, Khurshed Ahmed Jonejo, Makhdoom Syed Sami ul Hassan Gillani, and Sabheen Ghoury, said a news release.

The members discussed ways to strengthen bilateral ties between Pakistan and Morocco. While welcoming the Moroccan Ambassador, Mirza Ikhtiar Baig expressed satisfaction with the existing cordial relations between the two countries and assured that these ties would be further strengthened through cooperation.

The meeting aimed to explore avenues of cooperation between the two nations, with various areas of mutual interest discussed in detail. The Ambassador expressed Morocco's desire to enhance bilateral and economic ties with Pakistan.

The Parliamentary Friendship Group emphasized

the importance of reviving the Joint Ministerial Commission (JMC) between the two countries, as it could serve as a platform to further cooperation in all areas of mutual interest. The group reiterated Pakistan's commitment to fostering stronger relations with Morocco and stressed the need for regular interactions between the two nations.

Both sides agreed that Parliamentary Friendship Groups can play a pivotal role in promoting parliamentary diplomacy, fostering people-to-people contact, and strengthening parliamentary relations between the two countries.

Shibli stresses CPEC's role in Pakistan's development

ISLAMABAD (APP): Leader of Opposition, Senator Syed Shibli Faraz on Wednesday called the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), as a lifeline for Pakistan's development and future growth.

He remarked, while addressing the Third Plenary Session of the 20th Central Committee of the Communist Party of China.

The event was organised by the Pakistan-China Institute. Senator Syed Shibli Faraz praised China's policy of Reform and Opening-Up, which has propelled it to become the world's second-largest economy and stressed the

relevance of these principles for Pakistan's economic and social development.

Emphasising the deep-rooted and enduring friendship between Pakistan and China, highlighting it as a model of bilateral relations built on mutual respect and shared goals, he reaffirmed the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf's (PTI) commitment to this vital relationship, noting its importance not only in terms of bilateral cooperation but also as a cornerstone of Pakistan's foreign policy.

Acknowledging China's pivotal role in global affairs, particularly within the Global South, and expressed support for

China's vision of a multipolar world, he highlighted China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) as a transformative project with the potential to reshape global trade routes and foster the economic cooperation.

Senator Syed Shibli Faraz reiterated PTI's commitment to strengthening Pakistan-China relations and working closely with Chinese counterparts to explore new avenues of cooperation. He extended best wishes to the Pakistan-China Institute for its continued efforts in fostering mutual understanding and collaboration between the two nations.

Ashrafi condemns recent violence in Balochistan

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chairman, Pakistan Ulema Council, Hafiz Tahir Ashrafi on Thursday condemned recent incidents of violence in Balochistan, resulting in the loss of innocent lives.

Ashrafi, in a news conference, extended his condolences to the family of the late Maulana Qazi Abdul Rasheed and emphasized the importance of unity within the country.

He stated that the people of Balochistan are as patriotic as those from other provinces and condemned the silence of individuals and groups who claim to advocate for human rights.

The council chairman announced that the days from September 1 to September 10 would be celebrated as Defense, End of Prophethood, and Defense of Pakistan, promoting unity and solidarity within the country.

Ashrafi urged the state to take strict action against elements spreading unrest in Balochistan, alleging an external agenda behind the recent incidents.

He further asserted that the whole nation stands united against terrorism, pointing to the alleged involvement of Israel and India in terrorist activities within Pakistan.

Authorities launch crackdown on illegal vehicle modifications

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Excise and Taxation Department of Islamabad has intensified its crackdown on vehicles violating excise laws in the Federal Capital, targeting illegal modifications and unpaid taxes.

According to the spokesman of Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) administration, the Excise and Taxation Department has launched an extensive operation against vehicles with fancy number plates, tinted windows, unauthorized police lights, and those not paying the required token tax.

Excise officials are

actively conducting operations across major highways, busy markets, and other key locations in Islamabad. As part of today's operation, action was taken against 66 vehicles with tinted windows and 99 vehicles without registration plates.

In addition to these actions, the registration of 53 vehicles was suspended for various violations of excise laws. Three vehicles illegally using police lights had these lights removed, and the vehicles were seized by authorities. Furthermore, token taxes were collected from 200

vehicles, with fines imposed for non-payment.

Director of Excise and Taxation, Bilal Azam, has urged citizens to remove non-standard number plates and tinted windows from their vehicles to avoid penalties. He also advised against using HD lights in public vehicles and called on vehicle owners to immediately pay any outstanding token taxes and register any unregistered vehicles.

The Excise Department remains committed to enforcing excise laws in Islamabad, ensuring that all vehicles comply with the regulations.

River Indus still runs in medium, low flood: FFC

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Federal Flood Commission (FFC) has said that at present, River Indus is experiencing "Medium Flood" at Kotri barrage and "Low Flood" at Tarbela and in Guddu-Sukkur reach while other major rivers in the Indus River System i.e. Jhelum, Chenab, Ravi and Sutlej are discharging normal flows.

According to the daily FFC report on Wednesday, Tarbela Reservoir has been maintained at its Maximum Conservation Level of 1550.00 feet since August 19, 2024. At present, water level in Mangla Reservoir is 1217.50 feet against its MCL: 1242 feet (25.42 % storage still left). Present Combined Live Storage of Tarbela, Chashma & Mangla Reservoirs is 11.484 MAF (86 % of the total live storage

capacity of 13.354 MAF).

According to Flood Forecasting Division (FFD), Lahore, yesterday's deep depression over North Gujrat (India) has shifted and now lies over Northwestern Gujrat (India) and adjoining Southeastern Sindh (Pakistan). Meanwhile, the low-pressure area earlier over Jharkhand (India) has weakened into trough. Yesterday's trough of Westerly Wave over Northeastern Afghanistan lies over Northern Pakistan with Seasonal Low persisting over Northwestern Balochistan. Light to moderate moist currents from the Bay of Bengal are penetrating into upper catchments of all major rivers while strong moist currents from both the Bay of Bengal and Arabian Sea were penetrating into Southern Sindh

and adjoining areas up to 10,000 feet.

For the next 72 hours, FFD, Lahore has predicted, scattered thunderstorm rain of Moderate Intensity with isolated Heavy Falls over Islamabad, Punjab (Rawalpindi, Sargodha, Gujranwala, Lahore, Faisalabad & Sahiwal Divisions) and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa including upper catchments of all major rivers of IRS. Widespread thunderstorm rain of Heavy to Very Heavy intensity with isolated Extremely Heavy Falls may occur over Southern Punjab (D.G.Khan, Multan & Bahawalpur Divisions), Sindh and Balochistan (Zhob, Loralai, Sibbi, Nasirabad, Kalat & Makran Divisions) up to 31st August 2024.

MoEW and PMS sign MoU

KABUL (BNA): The Ministry of Energy and Water (MoEW) signed a memorandum of understanding with Project Management Support Japan (PMS) for the maintenance of 11 irrigation canal projects in Nangarhar province. Acting Minister Mullah Abdul Latif Mansoor signed the agreement with Didar Mushtaq, the engineering head of PMS Japan. Under the agreement, PMS Japan will undertake the maintenance projects over the next three years at a total cost of \$710,000.

The Frontier Post

Safar 23 1446 — Thursday, August 29, 2024

No reports of monkey pox

KABUL (Ariana News): The Ministry of Public Health has announced that no suspected or positive cases of monkey pox have been registered in Afghanistan. After receiving reports about two suspected cases of monkey pox in Kabul and Paktia, officials say that no suspected or positive cases of this disease have been registered in Afghanistan. Spokesperson of Ministry of Health said that the ministry will announce it if there is a suspected or positive case of monkeypox.

Flooding in Kunar causes casualties

KUNAR (TOLOnews): The flooding in Kunar has not only caused human casualties but has also resulted in substantial financial losses. Local officials of the province report that with the help of aid organizations, initial assistance has been provided to some of the flood victims, and efforts are ongoing to deliver further aid. Najibullah Hanif, the local director of information and culture in Kunar, said: "According to information, there have been 5 casualties so far. The floods have swept away agricultural lands, and also damaged roads and small bridges. Yesterday, the road was blocked, but it has been cleared by the municipality."

Residents of the area say that the floods have inflicted significant financial damage on them. Zahidullah, a flood victim from Kunar, said: "There were severe floods yesterday, which damaged and destroyed our homes. All our clothes were swept away and ruined by the water." Those affected say the floods have taken all their possessions, and they are now facing many challenges. Ibrahim, another flood victim, said: "There were severe floods yesterday and today, which have ruined our homes and rooms. Nothing in the house is left intact; everything has been destroyed." The affected families are calling on the interim gov-

ernment officials and aid organizations for immediate assistance. Hazrat Gul, who was affected by the floods, said: "The fields and crops have been ruined, causing financial and human losses. The government and charitable organizations need to help us." Shah Wali, another flood victim, said: "The harvest has been lost. We request urgent assistance from the institutions and government." This comes amid reports that, due to floods last week, ten people have lost their lives, eight others have been injured, and a hundred residential houses have been either completely or partially destroyed in several provinces of the country.

Ministry launches exhibition in Paktia



PAKTIKA (BNA): The Ministry of Industry and Commerce has inaugurated an Afghan Products Exhibition in Paktia, which will run for three days at the University of Paktia. The opening ceremony was attended by representatives from the Ministry of Industry and Commerce, the Deputy Governor, the Police Chief, heads of Economy, the Chamber of Industries and Mines, the Department of Vice and Virtue of Paktia, along with several dignitaries from the Islamic Emirate and the private sector. During the event, Mawlawi Qabel Mohammad Abid, the head of the exhibition organization at the Ministry of Industry and Commerce, emphasized the purpose of such exhibitions is to introduce domestic products to fellow citizens. He highlighted that Afghan products have found their place in global markets and are now exported to major countries around the world. Mawlawi Abid further urged traders and investors to invest within Afghanistan, encouraging them to contribute to the country's economic growth by supporting local industries.

Phase 2 of gas to electricity project: Bayat power in talks with Afghan officials

KABUL (Ariana News): Bayat Power officials say they are hoping to start work soon on Phase 2 of Bayat Power-1 in northern Jawzjan province in order to increase electricity production output for Afghanistan. Company officials said Tuesday they have started discussions with relevant government departments to start the project. Mohammad Shoaib Sahibzada, the technical head of Bayat Power, said that once Phase 2 is complete, electricity production will increase from 40 to 100 megawatts. Sahibzada said Bayat Power's natural gas to electricity generation project will eventually produce up to 250 megawatts of electricity once Phase 3 is complete. "Currently, it has a production of 40 megawatts, and in the second phase, it will produce 100 megawatts. Bayat Power is in contact with the relevant officials regarding the start of the second phase, the discussions are ongoing," said Sahibzada. Bayat Power has produced one billion kilowatt hours of electricity in under five years after starting commercial operations in late 2019. Sahibzada said that over the past five years, the company has also worked on capacity building of its technical employees.

After 40 years, Bayat Power is the first private company to produce electricity from natural gas in the country and the multi-million dollar plant uses Siemens Energy's SGT-A45 mobile gas turbine for its economic efficiency, flexible deployment, and power density. Currently providing electricity to hundreds of thousands of end-users and generating more than 300 million kWh annually, the project was structured as an innovative public-private partnership between Bayat Power, Siemens Energy, and Afghanistan government entities such as the Ministry of Mines and Petroleum, the Ministry of Energy and Water, and the General Directorate of Afghan Gas Corporation Company, Da Afghanistan Breshna Sherkat (DABS), and international partners. The Bayat Group is the largest private investor in Afghanistan and Bayat Power is currently the only gas-powered plant in the country. The Siemens Energy's SGT-A45 mobile gas turbine used by the company is the only one in operation in the world. The former head of DABS Amanullah Ghalib said this week that Bayat Power was a good example of Afghanistan being able to implement big projects. "To achieve self-sufficiency, one of the most important resources for Afghanistan is natural gas. Afghanistan has a lot of natural gas resources in the north and northeast, from which it can become self-sufficient for electricity production and reduce its dependence on its neighbors," said Ghalib. "Bayat Power project is one of the very effective and good examples that Afghanistan can use its experience and implement bigger projects in the future," Ghalib added.

Over a thousand artifacts restored and registered

KANDAHAR (TOLOnews): A team of archaeologists from the Ministry of Information and Culture has restored and registered more than a thousand historical artifacts in the Kandahar Museum over the past two months. According to the archaeologists, these historical items belong to the Bactrian, Kushan, Bronze, and Islamic periods and will be displayed in the new building of the Kandahar Museum. Ainuddin Sadaqat, the Director of Museums at the Ministry of Information and Culture, stated: "More than a thousand historical artifacts have been registered, cataloged, restored, identified, and recognized." Meanwhile, the residents of Kandahar, in addition to preserving historical artifacts, are also calling for the restoration and reconstruction of historical monuments. Abdul Bari, a resident of Kandahar, said: "There are historical artifacts in other countries as well. They should not be destroyed, and they need to be given attention and preserved." Abdul Wali, another resident of Kandahar, stated: "Most of our historical places are very valuable and reflect the culture of our ancestors." Mandigak, Naranj Palace, Ahmad Shahi City, Nader Fortress, and Shamshir Mountain are considered important historical sites in Kandahar, with some of these monuments dating back thousands of years.

Iran departs over 50,000 Afghan migrants

KABUL (Khaama Press): Mojtaba Abdollahi, the governor of Alborz Province on Wednesday has announced that over the past year, more than 59,000 "illegal" Afghan migrants have been deported from this province alone. IRNA news agency reported on Wednesday, quoting Mr. Abdollahi, stating that there has been significant activity on social media related to "Afghan phobia," which does not reflect the actual situation. The governor of Alborz Province Mojtaba Abdollahi emphasized that the presence of foreign migrants in Alborz Province must comply with the laws. Meanwhile, reactions to the expulsion of Afghan migrants continue from countries such as Iran and Pakistan. Previously, Iran's Interior Minister, Abdolreza Rahmani Fazli, also emphasized the expulsion of Afghan migrants from the country, adding that "illegal residents" must leave Iran by the end of the Solar year 1403. According to statistics from the Ministry of Refugees and Repatriations, the Taliban, in the past year, more than 1,799,000 people have returned to Afghanistan from Iran, Pakistan, and other countries. The ongoing expulsion of Afghan migrants from neighbouring countries raises concerns about the humanitarian situation faced by returning refugees. Many returnees find themselves in dire circumstances, lacking basic amenities and shelter amidst Afghanistan's ongoing challenges with security and economic stability. Upon their return, Afghan migrants often struggle to find adequate employment opportunities due to the country's fragile economy and limited job prospects. This exacerbates their integration and livelihood challenges, underscoring the need for international support and sustainable development initiatives to address these issues. Meanwhile, migration policies and enforcement efforts respond to regional dynamics, and the humanitarian needs of Afghan returnees must be prioritized to ensure their well-being and successful reintegration into society.

Coordination meeting held for upcoming 60m yuan Chinese aid shipment

KABUL (BNA): A planning meeting for the second shipment of aid from China was held on Wednesday, chaired by Mawlawi Mahmood ul-Haq Ahadi, Head of Planning and Policy at the Ministry of Refugees and Repatriation. According to the Ministry, the meeting was attended by Ma Chenguang, Economic and Trade Advisor, and Xu Chengyi, Third Secretary of the Economic and Trade Section at the Chinese Embassy, as well as heads of various departments including Refugee Affairs Coordination, Finance and Administration, and NGO Coordination. During the meeting, the Head of Planning and Policy expressed gratitude for China's first shipment of aid worth 40 million yuan, which was distributed transparently to address the immediate needs of the most vulnerable individuals. He highlighted China's effective coordination in providing aid and emphasized that the Ministry aims to prioritize the distribution of the second shipment to those in need. According to the source, the second shipment, valued at 60 million yuan, is expected to be delivered to the Ministry in the near future.



Two medical centers open in remote areas of Jawzjan

JAWZJAN (TOLOnews): The construction of two medical centers in the Qarqin and Mangjec districts of Jawzjan has been completed and they have been officially inaugurated. Mohammad Ishaq Sahebzada, the Deputy Minister of Finance and Administration of Afghanistan at the Ministry of Public Health, assured during the inauguration ceremony of these two medical centers that efforts are being made to appoint specialist doctors and to equip medical centers with advanced facilities. Sahebzada stated, "We are striving to attract skilled personnel and specialists to hospitals in Afghanistan and provide them with work opportunities. The goal of the Ministry of Public Health of the Islamic Emirate is to continuously increase and better equip its health centers." Zabiullah Hosseini, the head of public health in Jawzjan province of Afghanistan, said, "We are surveying vulnerable and underserved areas that lack access to healthcare services." These medical centers, which have cost over 31 million Afghanis, have been funded by an international organization. Residents of the Qarqin and Mangjec districts of Jawzjan, while welcoming the completion of these two medical centers, have called on authorities to provide more facilities in the healthcare sector. Abdul Khaliq, a resident of Qarqin district, Jawzjan, said, "Our village was very far from the district clinic, and it was impossible to transport patients and children to the center." Abdullah, a resident of Qarqin district, Jawzjan, said, "We are very happy that a clinic has opened here now." According to information from the Jawzjan province Public Health Directorate, this is the fourth medical center to be inaugurated in remote districts of this province in the past two days.

1,000 kg of drugs confiscated in Badakhshan operation

BADAKHSHAN (TOLOnews): The Badakhshan Police Command reported that counter-narcotics forces have discovered and seized a vehicle carrying over 1,000 kilograms of drugs during a special operation. The provincial police chief said that this quantity of drugs was found in the Argo district of the province, and two individuals were arrested in connection with the case. Azizullah Omar, the head of the security department in Badakhshan, said: "We arrested two drug traffickers along with 1,196 kilograms of opium while they were transporting it from Argo district." Shafiqullah Hafezi, head of the counter-narcotics department of the Badakhshan Police Command, added: "In the past week, the counter-narcotics management has arrested eleven drug traffickers and dealers and handed them over to the authorities." Meanwhile, some drug addicts receiving treatment at addiction recovery hospitals are urging the interim government to prevent the cultivation, sale, and trafficking of drugs. Abubakar, a drug addict, said: "The government should take action against drug traffickers. They are currently the main source of corruption, and in the previous government, eighty percent of them were mafia." Ahmad Khan, another drug addict, said: "The government should decide to eradicate opium poppy cultivation from the land." The counter-narcotics department in Badakhshan Police Command reported that in the past week, their forces have arrested eleven individuals related to drug trafficking and sales from the province's center and districts.

German Chancellor says more migrants will be deported to Afghanistan

KABUL (Khaama Press): Following criticisms of Germany's immigration policy, Olaf Scholz announced on Wednesday that more migrants will be deported to Afghanistan and Syria. After the deadly attack on Friday, August 23, the German government faced strong criticism from opposition parties and public pressure. In this attack, carried out by a 26-year-old Syrian with a knife at a festival in the western city of Solingen, three people were killed, and eight were injured. Scholz emphasized that criminals with serious convictions do not have the right to stay in Germany. He stated in an interview with ZDF Germany on Wednesday evening that he does not intend to make fundamental changes to asylum laws but supports the return of more migrants to Afghanistan and Syria. Scholz emphasized that border controls will be strengthened but the government does not intend to reject Afghan and Syrian asylum seekers without evaluating their applications at the border. Following the recent incident, Friedrich Merz, the leader of the opposition to the German government, called for a halt to the acceptance of Afghan and Syrian migrants and emphasized the need to change asylum laws. According to German asylum law, migrants can apply for citizenship after five years of residence in Germany. In response to the request to stop accepting Afghan and Syrian refugees, the Prime Minister stated, "It is absolutely clear that we will not violate international agreements that Germany has signed. We will adhere to EU laws and our constitution." He also stressed, "We ensure the possibility of returning to Afghanistan and want to do this for Syria. Criminals with serious convictions have no right to stay here." Scholz also commented on gun laws, stating that the government has a strict plan in this regard but warned that it should not be expected that all violent incidents will be stopped with these laws. On August 24, ISIS claimed responsibility for the attack in a statement, declaring that one of its members carried out the act "to avenge Muslims in Palestine and other places."

Kabul residents' dissatisfaction with drinking water shortage

KABUL (TOLOnews): Some residents of Kabul are once again complaining about the shortage of drinking water. They are urging the authorities to pay serious attention to this issue and address the water shortage in the capital. Mir Zarif, a resident of Kabul, said: "We are facing a lot of problems because of the water shortage. Look at the children, some of them do not have water and have to go to Bala Deh and Payan Deh due to the water shortage." The lack of water has made their daily lives challenging, they say. Khair Mohammad, another resident of Kabul, stated: "Their economic situation is very poor, they cannot buy water, and there are very few wells. There is only one well from which people fetch water, both from the upper and lower valley. Our request to the government is to dig another well for the people." At the same time, officials from the Kabul Water Supply Zone say they have been able to increase water supply services in different parts of Kabul city over the past year by drilling water wells and implementing water projects. Shafullah, the head of the Kabul Water Supply Authority, said: "The Bagrami project, which is one of our production projects, has 11 active wells providing services. Our plan is to transfer water from this source, which has abundant water, to Khushal Khan, as the Alaudin project is drying up. Our plan is to make the intermittent water supply 24-hour." The head of the Kabul Water Supply Zone said they have plans for the upcoming year as well. The shortage of drinking water is not a new challenge for the residents of the capital; it has persisted for years, but this problem has not yet been fundamentally resolved





ISLAMABAD: Chairman PPP Bilawal Bhutto Zardari and MNA Bibi Aseefa Bhutto Zardari visit residence of senior PPP leader Senator Mian Raza Rabbani to offer condolences on passing of his sister

Edu dept officials helpless before political pressure, observes PHC

Humayun Khan

PESHAWAR: Justice Ijaz Anwar observed has said that the education department officials are helpless in the face of political pressure and are transferring low-grade officers to administrative posts without any legal justification or presence in the rules.

He made these remarks during the hearing of a writ petition filed by Najm-ul-Hasan before Peshawar High Court (PHC) divisional bench comprising Justice Ijaz Anwar and Justice Khurshheed Iqbal, on Wednesday.

PHC expressed its displeasure over the practice of transferring teaching cadre officers to management posts and asked the deputy secretary to explain the legal basis for such transfers. The deputy secretary education department Naveed Ullah Shah informed the court that there were 44 vacant posts of grade 17, 27 posts of grade 18, and 19 posts of grade 19 in the management cadre, and due to the shortage of officers in the management cadre, they were forced to transfer teaching cadre officers to these posts because some officials denied performing their duties in hard like tribal belt.

Justice Ijaz Anwar remarked that if someone is not performing their duties, they should be sent home instead of transferring them to other posts. He also asked why the education department was taking such actions and why they were not taking actions against those who were not performing their duties.

Meanwhile, Khalid Rehman advocate argued that all details are available in similar petition fixed for hearing on 18th September in the Peshawar High Court.

PHC adjourned the hearing of the case till 18th September and directed the education department to provide a detailed report on the number of teaching cadre officers transferred to management posts and the number of management officers working on management posts while ordered to cliff identical petition.

PHC seeks response in Service Structure plea by SSIT: A two-member bench of Peshawar High Court (PHC) comprising Justice Ijaz Anwar and Justice Khurshheed Iqbal has sought a response from the Finance Department on a writ petition filed by 450 Subject Specialists of Information Technology (SSIT) teachers seeking service structure.

The writ petition filed by Irfan

Ullah Marwat along with 450 other applicants, who argued that they were appointed as SSIT teachers in 2004 after a regular test and interview, but despite 20 years having passed, they have not been promoted, whereas teachers appointed in other disciplines have reached grade 19 and 20.

This is an injustice to the petitioners as they are not being given a service structure, and if they were given a regular service structure, they would be promoted to different scales every year and their seniority would be equal to that of other teachers, the writ pleaded.

Additional Advocate General and Section Officer Finance were also present in the court. The court directed them to find a solution for this issue. The petitioners' lawyer told the court that the Education Department and Establishment Department are willing to promote them to the next grade, but the Finance Department's stance is that there is a regular procedure for the process which hasn't followed in the case.

PHC once again directed the provincial government to take steps to redress the issue and sought a response from the relevant authorities while adjourned further hearing to date to be fixed accordingly.

Russia faces 'difficult fight' to retake Ukraine-held area, says top US spy

BETHESDA (Reuters): Russian President Vladimir Putin will mount a counteroffensive to try to retake territory in the Kursk region captured by Ukrainian troops, but Russian forces will encounter "a difficult fight," Deputy CIA Director David Cohen said on Wednesday.

Cohen told a national security industry conference that the significance of the Ukrainian incursion, which has overrun some 300 square miles (777 square km) of the Russian province, remained to be seen. Ukrainian forces crashed through Russia's western border into the Kursk region on Aug. 6 in a surprise offensive that is continuing.

While Kyiv has said it has no intention of annexing the area it has captured, Ukrainian troops are building defensive lines and it appears that they intend to retain "some of that territory for some period of time," Cohen told the Intelligence and National Security Summit. "We can be certain that Putin will mount a counteroffensive to try to reclaim that territory," Cohen said. "I think our expectation is that that will be a difficult fight for the Russians."

Putin, he said, "is not only going to have to face the fact that there is a front line now within Russian territory that he's going to have to deal with, he has to deal with reverberations back in his own society that they have lost a piece of Russian territory." Ukraine's success in Kursk "has the potential to change the dynamic" of the conflict "a little bit going forward," he continued without elaborating.

Ukraine has claimed the capture of 100 settlements in its incursion into Russia's Kursk region, while Russian forces continue to inch forward in the eastern Donetsk region. Cohen said that Russia has been

making those gains "at extraordinary cost" in troops and equipment and "may or may not" capture the key Ukrainian logistics hub city of Pokrovsk.

"But at the end of the day, none of it is a game changer in a strategic sense" for the Russians, he continued. On Tuesday, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said the war with Russia would eventually end in dialogue, but that Kyiv had to be in a strong position and that he would present a plan to U.S. President Joe Biden and his two potential successors. Putin has said any deal needs to start with Ukraine's acceptance of "realities on the ground," that would leave Russia with possession of substantial chunks of four Ukrainian regions as well as Crimea.

Ukraine says it controls more than 1,200 square km (463 square miles) of the Kursk region. Meanwhile, a Ukraine drone attack sparked a fire at an oil depot in Russia's southern Rostov region, while drones also attempted to attack the Kirov region, some 1,500 km (930 miles) northeast of the border with Ukraine, authorities said on Wednesday. "There are no casualties," Rostov governor Vasily Golubev said on the Telegram messaging app about the attack in the Kamensky district. "Firefighters are extinguishing the fire."

Russian air defence units destroyed four drones over the region overnight, the Russian defence ministry said, without mention of an attack on the depot. Earlier, the Baza Telegram channel, which is close to Russia's security services, said three tanks were burning at the Kamensky oil depot after two drones fell on the area. Videos posted on Russian social media showed what looked like large tanks

ablaze at night. Reuters was able to identify one of the videos as having been taken in Rostov's Kamensky district.

There was no immediate comment from Ukraine. A fuel storage depot in the Kamensky district was attacked in early August as well. Wednesday's attack came while tanks were still on fire at another oil depot in Rostov's Proletarsk district, about 10 days after a Ukrainian attack.

Separately, drones attacked an oil products depot on Wednesday in the town of Kotelnich in Russia's Kirov region, regional governor Alexander Sokolov said. Sokolov said the attack did not result in any casualties or fires at the depot. He said two drones were shot down, while three fell on the territory of the depot, caught fire but were quickly extinguished. The fire did not reach the fuel stores.

Alexander Gusev, the governor of Voronezh, which borders Ukraine, said debris from a Ukraine-launched drone over the region had sparked a fire "near explosive objects" but that there had been no detonation. The fire was doused, Gusev said on Telegram, and residents were returning to homes in two settlements from which they had been evacuated.

The Russian defence ministry said eight attack drones were destroyed over the Voronezh region, but gave no details. Russian officials often do not disclose the full extent of damage inflicted by Ukrainian attacks. Both sides deny targeting civilians in the 30-month-old war launched by Russia's full-scale invasion of its smaller neighbour. Kyiv says its air attacks aim to destroy energy, transport and military infrastructure key to Moscow's war effort.

Harris, Walz kick off Georgia bus tour as Democrats' hopes rise

WASHINGTON (Reuters): Democratic presidential candidate Kamala Harris and her running mate Tim Walz will campaign together on Wednesday in Georgia, a state that Democrats narrowly won in 2020 and could play a decisive role in this year's election.

The 2024 race has changed dramatically since Harris became her party's candidate last month, and she hopes to galvanize Black voters who make up about one-third of Georgia's electorate and will be crucial in the effort to win there. Harris and Walz will take a bus through southern Georgia, home to some of its largest Black populations and where the campaign has added staff and opened field offices.

Before President Joe Biden dropped his reelection bid last month and endorsed Vice President Harris, opinion polls showed Republican candidate Donald Trump with a clear lead in Georgia, and some Black voters were disillusioned with Democrats. Since then, however, Harris has steadily gained ground in national polls and has been boosted by well over \$500 million in donations.

The latest polls compiled by FiveThirtyEight show Harris just behind Trump, 46.0% to 46.6% in

Georgia, compared with about a 5-percentage point lead for Trump before Harris entered the race on July 21. A new Reuters/Ipsos poll on Tuesday showed that Harris has eroded Trump's advantage on the economy and crime.

Before the 2020 race, Georgia last backed a Democrat for president in 1992. If elected, Harris will be the first female president in U.S. history. As a Black and South Asian woman, she is seeking to shore up support for Democrats among Black voters and motivate new groups of voters. In Boston earlier on Wednesday, Walz made a pitch to the 350,000-member International Association of Firefighters, which has not joined other large unions in endorsing Harris. She has pledged support for labor rights and cutting taxes for the middle class, he said, while Trump blocked overtime benefits and opposed efforts to raise the minimum wage.

"We're going to need you with us to win that fight," Walz said. "Sisters and brothers in labor, it's time for you to step up to the plate." Harris is expected to focus on the economy and abortion rights during the Georgia trip, including a pledge to lower consumer costs, a campaign official said. The tour

will culminate with a Harris rally in the Savannah area on Thursday.

"Campaigning in this part of the Peach State is critical as it represents a diverse coalition of voters, including rural, suburban, and urban Georgians — with a large population of Black voters and working class families," the Harris campaign said. It is Harris's second Georgia trip since she became the Democratic candidate. A rally in Atlanta earlier this month featured hip-hop star Megan Thee Stallion and drew more than 10,000 people.

Harris, 59, pledged then that Democrats will win the state, which has 16 Electoral College votes and is one of several swing states that can lean either to Republicans or Democrats. Democrats won it by less than 12,000 votes in 2020. Republicans have dramatically ramped up spending in Georgia and the Republican-controlled state election board added a new rule that voting rights advocates say could delay certification of the vote in November. Trump, 78, said in a social media post last week that winning Georgia "is so important to the success of our Party, and most importantly, our Country." He is expected to campaign in the state several more times before Election Day on Nov. 5.

AC adjourn hearing against Elahi

F.P. Report

LAHORE: An accountability court on Wednesday adjourned the hearing of a corruption reference related to Gujrat development projects against former chief minister Punjab Chaudhry Parvez Elahi and others till September 10.

Accountability Court Judge Zubair Shahzad Kiyani conducted the proceedings, during which the former principal secretary to the chief minister, Muhammad Khan Bhatti, was produced. The other co-accused also appeared and marked their attendance.

At the start of the proceedings, Elahi's counsel, Amjad Parvaiz, submitted that his client was ill and had been advised bed rest by doctors. He submitted an application requesting a one-day exemption from personal appearance for his client. However, the court observed that it wanted Parvez Elahi to appear so that the indictment could take place.

In response, Amjad Parvaiz submitted that his client would appear at the next hearing, but requested that the necessary documents be provided beforehand. He informed the court that it had previously ordered the National Accountability Bureau and Establishment Department are willing to promote them to the next grade, but the Finance Department's stance is that there is a regular procedure for the process which hasn't followed in the case.

PHC once again directed the provincial government to take steps to redress the issue and sought a response from the relevant authorities while adjourned further hearing to date to be fixed accordingly.

Families get stuck as River Indus bursts

F.P. Report

KARACHI, LAHORE: Dozens of families have been left stranded as water from the River Indus has entered the katcha area near Mehar, Sindh, while, on the other hand, record-breaking monsoon showers continue in large swathes of the country, resulting in urban flooding and swelling of rivers on Wednesday.

The lives of flood victims in Mehar is in jeopardy as rescue and relief activities in the affected areas is still to get underway.

Apart from that, people in the affected area are faced with the food shortage while contagious diseases have also started breaking out. And to make matters worse, the water level in the river is still on the rise.

Meanwhile, torrential rains, lashing large parts of Sindh for the last two to three days, has set off alarm bells ringing as there are fears that these could not only lead to urban flooding but also rise in water levels in the River Indus. On the other hand, fishermen have been advised not to go deep into the sea.

There are reports of intermittent rainfall from different areas of Karachi such as Sharae Faisal, Shah Faisal Colony, Defence, Clifton, Saddar, Kala Pull, Tower and other cities of Sindh. Heavy rains have also been reported from several cities of Punjab.

In Multan 48-year-old record was broken after the city received 147 millimeters of rain in just two hours as a result of which not only low-lying areas were inundated but the water also entered the Social Security Hospital. Showers have also been reported from Lahore and other cities of the province, including Shakargah, Sarai Alamgir, Shahkot and Chiniot that flooded low-lying areas besides resulting in the suspension of power supply to several localities.

Indeed not a good news for the residents of Karachi and other urban centers of Sindh as the Met Office has said that the ongoing spell of rain will continue until August 31. The department has said that a monsoon low that is presently over Gujarat state of India is expected to reach somewhere between Badin and Karachi by tomorrow night, and will then head towards Makran division that could lead to deluge in Sindh, southern Punjab and Balochistan.

Israeli raids across West Bank killed 9

JERUSALEM (AP): Israel launched raids across the occupied West Bank on Wednesday, where its forces killed at least nine Palestinians and sealed off the volatile city of Jenin, according to Palestinian officials.

Israel has carried out near-daily raids across the West Bank since Hamas' Oct. 7 attack out of Gaza triggered the ongoing war there. Palestinian militant groups said they were exchanging fire with the Israeli military. The governor of Jenin, Kamal Abu Al-Rub, said on Palestinian radio that Israeli forces had surrounded the city, blocking exit and entry points and access to hospitals, and ripping up infrastructure in the camp.

The Palestinian Health Ministry in the West Bank said Israeli forces had blocked the roads leading to a hospital with dirt barriers and surrounded other medical facilities in Jenin. The Israeli military confirmed it was operating in the cities of Jenin and Tulkarem but did not provide further details.

Israeli Foreign Minister Israel Katz drew comparisons with Gaza and called for similar measures in the West Bank. "We must deal with the threat just as we deal with the terrorist infrastructure in Gaza, including the temporary evacuation of Palestinian residents and whatever steps might be required. This is a war in every respect, and we must win it," he wrote on the platform X.

Hamas called on Palestinians in the West Bank to rise up, saying the raids are part of a larger plan to expand the war in Gaza and blaming the escalation on US support for Israel. The militant group called on security forces loyal to the Western-backed Palestinian Authority, which cooperate with Israel, to "join the sacred battle of our people." At least 652 Palestinians in the West Bank have been killed by Israeli fire since the war in Gaza began over 10 months ago, according to the Palestinian ministry. Most have died during such raids, which often trigger gunbattles with militants.

Israel says the operations are required to dismantle Hamas and other militant groups and to prevent attacks on Israelis, which have also risen since the start of the war. The Palestinian Health Ministry said

the bodies of seven people were brought to the hospital in Tubas, another West Bank city, and another two were brought to the hospital in Jenin. The ministry identified two killed in Jenin as Qassam Jabarin, 25, and Asem Balout, 39.

Israel captured the West Bank, Gaza and east Jerusalem in the 1967 Mideast war. The Palestinians want all three for a future state. Israel has built scores of settlements across the West Bank, which are home to over 500,000 Jewish settlers. They have Israeli citizenship, while the 3 million Palestinians in the West Bank live under Israeli military rule, with the Palestinian Authority exercising limited control over population centers.

The war in Gaza erupted on Oct. 7, when Hamas-led militants stormed into southern Israel and rampaged through army bases and farming communities, killing some 1,200 people, mostly civilians, and abducting around 250. The militants are still holding some 110 hostages, around a third of whom are believed to be dead, after most of the rest were released during a November ceasefire. Israel responded with an offensive that has killed over 40,000 Palestinians, according to Gaza's Health Ministry, which does not say how many were militants. Around 90 percent of Gaza's population has been displaced, often multiple times, and Israeli bombardment and ground operations have caused vast destruction.

Israeli strikes in Gaza overnight and into Wednesday killed at least 16 people, including five women and three children. Most of the strikes were in or near the southern city of Khan Younis, which has come under heavy bombardment over the last two months. Associated Press reporters at two hospitals confirmed the toll. The United States, Qatar and Egypt have spent months trying to mediate a ceasefire that would see the remaining hostages released. But the talks have repeatedly bogged down as Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has vowed "total victory" over Hamas and the militant group has demanded a lasting ceasefire and a full withdrawal from the territory. There was no sign of a breakthrough after days of talks in Egypt, and the negotiations move to Qatar this week.

Hezbollah targets Israeli troops in response to attacks

BEIRUT: Hezbollah said it launched an "aerial attack with an assault drone on the newly established headquarters of the Israeli army's Western Brigade south of the Ya'ara settlement" on Wednesday that "accurately struck the positions of officers and soldiers."

The group said the assault was a response to an "Israeli attack on Tuesday night against a truck on the Baalbek-Homs international road." The truck was reportedly loaded with ammunition and military logistical equipment. One person was "slightly injured" in that attack, the Ministry of Health's Emergency Center said.

A security source said the vehicle was part of a three-truck convoy but only one was hit by the strike, adding: "The truck caught fire and explosions were heard coming from it." Hezbollah

imposed a security cordon around the scene of the attack and prevented residents from approaching. Many people living nearby left the area temporarily out of fear for their safety.

Less than 10 hours before the attack on the truck, Hezbollah member Mohammed Hassan Taha, from the city of Baalbek, and three Palestinian members of the Islamic Jihad movement were killed by Israeli forces in a combat-drove strike on their vehicle while they were traveling from Syria to Lebanon. The incident happened on the Damascus-to-Beirut road at a checkpoint near Al-Zabadani junction. The Israeli army said it "struck Hezbollah targets deep inside Lebanon," Reconnaissance aircraft and combat drones remain active around the clock each day, hunting for Hezbollah

members.

The drone attack that killed Taha was at least the third Israeli assassination of its kind in the area in the past two months. Previous targets have included Yasser Qarnabesh, a former assistant to Hezbollah's secretary-general, and Syrian businessman Baraa Al-Qaterji. Further evidence on Wednesday of escalating tensions included at least four Israeli airstrikes that targeted areas on the outskirts of Toumat Niha in Western Bekaa, and the launch of rockets toward the Lebanese border town of Aitaroun. Another town close to the border, Markaba, was reportedly hit by phosphorus bombs. Israeli shelling also caused fires in olive groves and other agricultural areas in Al-Jabeen and the Tair Harfa triangle. — Arab News



WEST BANK: Mourners carrying the body of a 40-year-old Palestinian who was killed in an attack by Israeli settlers, during his funeral near Bethlehem.

Traders strike

(Continued from Page 1)

On the other hand, JI in Charsadda have also called for the traders' strike, as all food shops including hotels remain closed. Addressing a presser in Karachi today, JI Spokesperson Qaisar Sharif said that all traders and industrialists support the party's call for a strike. "The public has rejected the government's attempts to stop the strike. If the problems are not resolved, a future action plan will be presented after consultation with traders and industrial organisations," the spokesperson added. Qaisar insisted that the government end the unfair contracts with IPPs and immediately implement the agreement made with JI. Jamaat-e-Islami will not back down from its demands without providing relief to the people."

In Lahore, JI and traders'

organisations are observing the strike as most markets and businesses of the city remain closed for the day. All small and big markets as well as shops including bakeries, ovens, hotels, general stores also remain shut on the appeal of traders in Rawalpindi, where the business community and trade associations including the city's Oil Tanker Association have extended their support for the strike.

A strike was also observed in other cities of Punjab such as Rahim Yar Khan, Dera Ghazi Khan, Rajanpur, Cheechawatani, Sargodha, Choonian, Taxila, Chakwal, Patoki, Changa Manga and Arifwala. In Balochistan, too, traders have kept their shops and business closed in protest across cities including Quetta, Hub, Harnai and Mastung,

among others.

Other KP cities observing the strike include Mansehra, Bajaur, Charsadda, Kirk, Bannu and Malakand. Earlier this week, the religio-political party had announced to observe a shutter-down strike across the country on August 28 (today) to mount pressure on the coalition government to provide relief to the masses. The announcement came after the party postponed its 14-day long sit-in on August 9 following successful negotiations with the government over demands including slashing high power tariffs and reviewing agreements with the Independent Power Producers which have been under the spotlight as people are paying hefty bills blamed on capacity payments being made to independent power producers.