

Fawad seeks more time
F.P. Report
ISLAMABAD: Former federal minister Fawad Chaudhry on Tuesday sought time from the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) in a contempt case against him. Nisar Durrani-led commission conducted hearing of Fawad Chaudhry's ECP contempt case. The commission asked Chaudhry to submit his response as the case had been pending for the last two years.

NA, Senate passes bill to negate SC reserved seats ruling

F.P. Report
ISLAMABAD: The Senate on Tuesday passed the Election Act Amendment Bill by a majority vote despite protest by the opposition Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI). As the session started with Yousuf Raza Gilani in the chair, Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) Senator Talal Chaudhry presented the Election Act Amendment Bill. The opposition members stood on their seats and started protest.
The amendment provides that "a candidate who does not submit the party certificate before obtaining the election symbol will be considered an independent candidate. If the list of candidates for reserved seats is not submitted within the specified period, no political party will be entitled to those seats." It also provides that any candidate's declaration of affiliation to a political party will be irrevocable.
Earlier, the National Assembly passed the Election Act Amendment Bill by a majority vote amid an uproar by the opposition. As the session started with Speaker Ayaz Sadiq in the chair, Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) MNA Bilal Azhar Kayani and Zeb Jaffar tabled the Election Act Amendment Bill. The opposition members stood on their seats and sloganeering.
They came in front of the speaker's dais and tore the copies of the bill and raised slogans "bill rejected", "attack on judiciary and democracy rejected" and decried the government. Sahibzada Sibghatullah of the Sunni Ittehad Council (SIC) suggested an amendment to the proposed bill but Law Minister Azam Tarar opposed it and the house rejected it by a majority vote.
PTI's Ali Muhammad Khan also proposed an amendment to the Election Act, which was rejected by the house when the law minister opposed it. Later, addressing the house, Ali Muhammad Khan termed the amendment to Election Act unconstitutional and said how the party can be deprived of its right given by the Supreme Court.
"The Election Act Amendment Bill is a politically motivated attempt to deprive the PTI of reserved seats," he added. The Supreme Court recognised the PTI as a political party and our right [to reserved seats], he said and continued that he raised the issue before the Standing Committee. The symbol [bat] of the PTI was removed from the ballot papers but even then the masses voted for the party, he stated. Ali Muhammad said the PTI would move the Supreme Court against the legislation, which would reject it because this bill is not a legislation but a manifestation of fascist approach of a political party. He said parliament was used to attack the Supreme Court through this law.
Law Minister Tarar said that 81 members took oath as members of the SIC. But now they are saying that they are members of another party. He advised them to stick to a point. The minister said the purpose of the amendment is to bring clarity in the election law. PTI Chairman Barrister Gohar Ali Khan termed the legislation against the constitution and law. Through a conspiracy election symbol of the PTI was taken away.
He said that the PTI won with two-thirds majority. They have formed government by tampering with Form 45, he added. They are the losers; even Nawaz Sharif cannot present his Form 45 and say I have won. The PTI chief said that this is the ninth legislation being passed in this house. They are trying to usurp reserved seats, he continued.
Barrister Gohar said that the incumbent government would meet the same end like that of Hasina Wajid [of Bangladesh]. He suggested Shehbaz Sharif to call Hasina Wajid and ask her how to flee [the country]. The house also adopted a resolution against India who deprived Kashmiri people of special status by amending the Constitution unanimously. The Narendra Modi-led government had on Aug 5, 2019, revoked Article 370 to deprive Kashmir of special status and annexed the valley under its illegal occupation.

PTI's Raoof released from Adiala Jail

F.P. Report

RAWALPINDI: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Information Secretary Raoof Hasan has been released from Rawalpindi's Adiala Jail after he secured bail from an anti-terrorism court (ATC) in Islamabad on Tuesday.
The ATC issued mandamus (robkar) for Hasan's release after approving his bail plea in a terror financing case earlier in the day. His counsels Shaista Khosa and Raja Yasir Rauf received him outside the Rawalpindi prison.
Earlier, ATC Judge Tahir Abbas Sipra approved the PTI politician's bail petition against surety bonds worth Rs200,000. Hasan was named in the case in light of the statement of co-accused PTI International Media Coordinator Ahmed Waqas Janjua for his alleged role in providing financial support to terrorists. The court, on August 3, had dismissed the bail plea of Janjua.
Meanwhile, the PTI secretary general was sent on a 14-day judicial remand at the Adiala Jail after court orders on Saturday in the aforementioned case. On July 22, the politician and others were taken into custody by the Islamabad Police and subsequently handed over to the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA). Hasan was not initially named in the terrorism FIR but was arrested based on Janjua's statement — alleging he gave him Rs300,000 to spread terror — on July 31.
Bukhari contended that physical remand was unnecessary for recovering the money. At the hearing today, Hasan was being represented by his lawyer Ali Bukhari and party lawyer-turned-lawmaker Ali Zafar, while Prosecutor Raja Naveed was also present at the court. At the outset of the case's hearing, Hasan's lawyer said that his client was not named in the case and that his name was later added to it.
Addressing the Counter Terrorism Department (CTD) investigating officer of the case, Judge Sipra asked: "Was the third suspect arrested?" The officer responded saying that the third accused had not yet been arrested. Meanwhile, PTI leader Ali Zafar lamented the filing of cases by opponents for political vengeance. Prosecutor Naveed told the court that Hasan was named in the case immediately after Janjua's statement was recorded.

We are thankful to Qatar for their continued efforts: US

Jalil Afridi
WASHINGTON, D.C: In a press briefing on Monday, US State Department spokesperson Matthew Miller disclosed that Secretary of State Antony Blinken has been actively communicating with several world leaders, including the Presidents of Egypt and Sudan, in an effort to address and de-escalate the volatile situation in the Middle East.
Miller emphasized that the US has been acutely aware of the potential for a wider conflict since the tensions escalated on October 7. "Escalation is in no one's interest," Miller stated, reinforcing the US stance on promoting stability in the region.
During the briefing, Miller addressed inquiries about the US defense department's recent comments on a "posture change," describing it as part of a broader strategy aimed at restraint. This shift underscores the US commitment to preventing further escalation. Miller also provided updates on the US travel advisory for Lebanon, which remains at level 4, indicating a strong recommendation against travel to the country. He urged US citizens currently in Lebanon to leave immediately due to the heightened risks. When questioned about the inevitability of a wider war, Miller pointed to Iran's critical role, stating, "It is a decision for Iran to make," and reiterated the US's unwavering support for Israel. "The US will defend Israel at all costs," he affirmed, while also noting that the US does not seek to escalate tensions further. Despite the recent death of Hamas's chief mediator Sulaiman Haniyah, Miller confirmed that Qatar remains committed to facilitating peace talks. "We are thankful to Qatar for their continued efforts," he said. Miller declined to comment on reports that Iran had sent a threatening message to Israel through a third country, opting not to discuss the matter further.
In response to a question about Ukraine, Miller stated that the US has sanctioned Ukrainian attacks on Russian military installations within Russia, reflecting a significant policy stance amidst the ongoing conflict. Addressing rumors about Bangladeshi Prime Minister Hasina Wajid seeking asylum in the US after fleeing to India, Miller stated that he was not aware of any such request. This briefing highlighted the complex and multifaceted nature of US foreign policy as it navigates multiple global crises, emphasizing diplomacy and strategic defense measures to maintain international stability.

CJP donates land to Balochistan government

F.P. Report
QUETTA: Chief Justice of Pakistan Justice Qazi Faiz Isa and his family has announced to celebrate the 77th Independence Day of Pakistan by gifting 31,680 square feet of land from his ancestral property to Balochistan government for establishment of an Environmental Centre.
A letter, duly signed by the chief justice of Pakistan and his family member Qazi Azmat Isa, reads as "We own land measuring 31,680 square feet which lies adjacent to the Quaid-e-Azam's Residency in Ziarat (the Land) which we want to donate free of charge for public purpose and use as an environmental centre, which would sensitise people to the uniqueness of the Juniper forest, impart learning and the principles of environmental conservation."
It may be recalled that Chief Secretary Balochistan, through a letter written to the provincial revenue authorities, had sought land adjacent to the Quaid-e-Azam's residency for setting up of the environmental center. In response to public interest, and part of Independence Day celebrations, CJP announced to donate the ancestral land.
"Pakistan is approaching 77 years of Independence and, if the government agrees, we would want this gift for the people to take effect on the auspicious day of 14 August 2024," the letter read.
The letter further declares that the Land shall only be used for the said public purpose in perpetuity. The Government of Balochistan (the Licensee) is licensed to undertake the stated public purpose on the Land, which has been handed over to the Licensee. It may be mentioned here the copies of the letter, have also been dispatched to the president, prime minister, governor and Chief minister of Balochistan.

Govt has come up against a brick wall on IPPs, laments Hafiz Naem

F.P. Report
RAWALPINDI: Jamaat-e-Islami (JI) Ameer Hafiz Naem said on Tuesday that the government wasn't taking any steps instead only making announcements despite our multiple calls.
Speaking to media, the JI emir said that they expected the government to resolve the issues of inflated bills, adding that the capacity payments given to the Independent Power Producers (IPPs) were unacceptable to the people and that the government was not serious in reforming this sector. He demanded forensic audits of all the IPPs, suggesting that chairman of the Water and Power Development Authority (WAPDA) should also be a member of the forensic committee.
He deplored that people living in rented houses were paying more electricity bills than their house rents. "The JI's Peshawar sit-in will be historic. We will also announce strike after Aug 14. We want to give you a message that we don't accept this bill."
The tax net shouldn't be increased unnecessarily. The government has included those people in the committee who are responsible for the problem. We don't want committees and announcements rather actions. Our committee can fight the case of 250 million people. We won't retreat as we plan to move towards the Murree Road on Aug 8", he announced.



DHAKA: Members of army clearing an entrance of Ganabhaban, the Bangladeshi prime minister's residence, a day after the resignation of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina.

Baloch rights group calls for independent inquiry over allegations

F.P. Report

QUETTA: The Baloch Yakjehti Committee (BYC) on Tuesday rejected the label of "proxy of terrorist organisations and criminal mafias" used for it recently by the military and called for an independent inquiry of all allegations against the group.
The BYC kicked off a protest in Gwadar on July 28, following arrests and deadly clashes with security forces, against alleged human rights violations and exploitation of the province's resources. Prominent leaders were arrested in the ensuing days, prompting widespread protests. The BYC signed an agreement with the provincial government on August 2 and agreed to end the protest following the fulfilment of its demands, including the release of all those arrested.
However, distrust between the government and BYC leadership deepened after fresh recriminations over the killing of a protester in Noshki and demonstrations by the group are still ongoing. A day ago, the military spokesperson denounced the rights movement and alleged that the "proxy" was tasked to defame and spread propaganda against law enforcement agencies, as well as make development projects in the province controversial.
"The method of action is through gathering a mob through foreign funding and a foreign stance, persuade innocent citizens around that mob, challenge the state's writ ... and feign innocence when the state responds," the spokesperson had said. In a rejoinder to the allegations issued today, the BYC rejected the label and said the military spokesperson's press conference against the group only served to vindicate and endorse the BYC's stance.
The BYC called for the military to set up an inquiry committee through a neutral third party or human rights organisation to investigate the allegations against the group, saying it would present itself before any court if the claims were proved correct. It alleged that it was the practice of the army to silence dissent and suppress regional political movements through various monikers and labels.
The BYC maintained that it was a peaceful political movement of the people with strong popular support, strength and power throughout Balochistan. The group made it clear that it would not retreat from its public struggle or buckle down due to any pressure but would further organise and intensify its campaign against the myriad human rights issues in the province such as extrajudicial killings and abductions.

President dissolves BD parliament, frees Khaleda

DHAKA (Reuters, AFP): President Mohammad Shahabuddin of Bangladesh has dissolved the Parliament following the resignation and subsequent departure of former Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina. After Hasina's resignation and her fleeing the country, the student movement rejected any military-backed or military-supported government.
The student leaders issued an ultimatum, demanding the dissolution of Parliament by 3 PM. Leaders of the student movement, Nahid Islam, Asif Mahmood, and Abu Bakr Mazumdar, released a video message proposing a framework for an interim government led by Nobel laureate Dr. Muhammad Yunus. Nahid Islam, one of the key organisers of the movement against Hasina, in a video on Facebook with two other student leaders, had set a 3pm deadline for the dissolution of the parliament and had called on the "revolutionary students to be ready" if that did not happen.
The decision to dissolve the parliament was taken following meetings with the heads of defence forces, leaders of political parties, student leaders and some civil society representatives, the presidential statement said. Bangladesh's Army Chief General Waker-Uz-Zaman was due to meet student leaders to discuss the formation of an interim government that is expected to hold elections soon after it takes over.
It was not immediately clear if the meeting had taken place and if the students' deadline to dissolve parliament came after the meeting. General Zaman, on Monday, had announced Hasina's resignation following days of violent protests which have seen around 300 people being killed. The general also announced the formation of an interim government.
The country's ex-prime minister Khaleda Zia has been released from years of house arrest, Bangladesh National Party (BNP) spokesperson AKM Wahiduzzaman told AFP. Zia's release, also confirmed by the president's office, comes as student leaders have already proposed the name of Nobel Peace laureate Muhammad Yunus as the interim government's chief adviser. Yunus, 84, and his Grameen Bank won the 2006 Nobel Peace prize for work to lift millions out of poverty by granting tiny loans of under \$100 to the rural poor of Bangladesh but he was indicted by a court in June on charges of embezzlement that he denied.
Known as the "banker to the poor" flirted briefly with a political career, attempting to form his own party in 2007. But his ambitions were widely viewed as having sparked the ire of Hasina, who accused him of "sucking blood from the poor". In 2011, Hasina's government removed him as head of Grameen Bank, saying that at 73, he had stayed past the legal retirement age of 60. Thousands of Bangladeshis formed a human chain to protest his sacking. In January this year, Yunus was sentenced to six months in prison for violations of labour law. He and 13 others were also indicted by a Bangladesh court in June on charges of embezzlement of 252.2 million taka (\$2 million) from the workers' welfare fund of a telecoms company he founded.
Although he was not jailed in either case, Yunus faces more than 100 other cases on graft and other charges. The Nobel laureate denies any involvement and said, during an interview with Reuters, the accusations were "very flimsy, made-up stories". Yunus is currently in Paris undergoing a minor medical procedure, his spokesperson said, adding he has agreed to the request of students who led the campaign against Hasina to be the chief adviser of the interim government.

Punjab has every right to pass its own laws: Tarar

F.P. Report
ISLAMABAD: Minister for Information, Broadcasting, Culture and National Heritage Attaullah Tarar objected to the discussion on the Punjab Defamation Act by the Senate Standing Committee on Information and Broadcasting, presided over by Senator Syed Ali Zafar on Tuesday.
According to the minister, Punjab had every right to pass its own legislations that could not be discussed at the committee forum in accordance with the constitution and law. Such a practice could encourage interference of one institution in the domain of the other, he added.
Defending the legislation, Attaullah Tarar said that those who had resources could file defamation suit abroad to seek swift action against the accused persons, but the situation in Pakistan was otherwise. The minister said that in the past some Chinese companies were accused of kickbacks and case in this regard had been going on for six years.
The Punjab government has passed a law which would apply in that province alone and could not be discussed here, he stressed. Senator Irfan Siddiqui also opposed the view to the review of the committee on a legislation passed by Provincial Governments, as the matter fell under the ambit of Provincial Governments following the 18th Amendment.
Senator Syed Ali Zafar opined that the primary objective of this agenda was to conduct a comparative analysis of defamation laws currently prevailing worldwide. He emphasised that purpose of the law should be to balance fundamental rights and freedoms, rather than to diminish one at the expense of the other. The Committee decided to hold an exclusive session to discuss the impact of defamation acts on society and freedom of expression.
Meanwhile, the information minister briefed the committee on Right of Access to Information (Amendment) Bill 2023, Protection of Journalists and Media Professionals (Amendment) Bill 2022. The minister informed the committee that managers and supervisors type jobs in media houses were considered in non-journalist category.
This category, he added, was completely separate, but these two things were read together within the present law. The minister informed that Journalists Protection Commission was functioning under the Ministry of Human Rights but Information Ministry was ready to take over that commission.
He informed the Senate Standing Committee that funds were allocated and available for protection of journalists. He said the bill was pending in the House at the time of dissolution of the National Assembly in 2023. A letter has been written to the Ministry of Human Rights for bringing this into the bill form, he added.
The information minister said his Ministry was ready to follow the procedure for the appointment of the chairperson of the commission. It was a matter between two ministries and there was a delay in its implementation, he added. The minister requested the Standing Committee to determine the timeline regarding this bill and the panel supported this proposal of Attaullah Tarar.
He told that the bill regarding Digital Rights Protection Authority has been postponed for consultation with stakeholders and a cabinet committee has been formed in this regard which will consult with all stakeholders. He said that social media platform "X" has all kinds of content and crimes were being committed within the digital domain.
"People's lives are at risk within the digital domain and it cannot be allowed that someone lose life because of a post", said the minister. The Senate Committee deliberated on the Private Member Bill titled "The Protection of Journalists and Media Professionals (Amendment) Bill, 2022." Senator Saleem Mandviwalla, the bill's mover, stated that the purpose of the bill was to protect journalists, their families, and their properties.



Punjab, World Bank forge historic agreement for development

LAHORE (APP): Under the directives of Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif, the Punjab government has reached a historic agreement with the World Bank.

The World Bank has expressed its support for a public-private partnership with the Punjab government, aimed at poverty reduction, economic and social development, environmental improvement, and smog eradication.

This agreement was discussed in a meeting chaired by Senior Provincial Minister Maryam Aurangzeb and attended by ministers from the education, health, industry, agriculture, local government, and irrigation departments. During the meeting, terms were finalized in discussions with a high-level World Bank delegation led by Country Director Najy Benhassine. The delegation explored areas of cooperation and reviewed various possibilities.

Maryam Aurangzeb remarked that the 'Country Framework' is the World Bank's international program that collaborates with partner countries or provincial governments to achieve rapid development in various sectors, including agriculture, health, and education. The objective of participating

in this special program for 2024-2027 is to accelerate overall development, covering sectors like agriculture, health, education, IT, youth employment, and skills development. Efforts will be made to provide world-class healthcare facilities, address malnutrition in mothers and children, improve health standards, promote family planning education, and collaborate in other sectors in Punjab, she noted.

Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif has launched the largest and most comprehensive program to date to improve Punjab's health system. This initiative includes upgrading 300 health centers and 250 basic health units in rural areas to international standards, the minister added. She emphasized that the provision of doctors, medicines, medical staff, and equipment at every government health facility, whether in villages or cities, will be ensured. The program to provide global-standard IT training and skill development for millions of youths is progressing rapidly.

The chief minister's primary goal is to ensure significant and visible improvements in governance and various sectors for equal development in rural and urban areas, Maryam

Aurangzeb said, adding that by providing laptops to the youth, the IT revolution is transforming their lives and opening doors to education and employment. Similarly, the Kisan Card has liberated agriculture and farmers from middlemen's exploitation, and the program to transition agricultural tube-wells to solar power is being implemented, she added.

The senior minister mentioned that the chief minister is diligently implementing a comprehensive plan to make Punjab's population healthier, educate the youth, and improve the province's economic condition and environment over the next five years.

Najy Benhassine remarked that the Chief Minister's Green Credit Program is part of this initiative. The World Bank delegation praised Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif's comprehensive vision for economic, social, and environmental development and assured full cooperation.

They expressed a desire for strong, lasting, and comprehensive collaboration with Pakistan. Collaborative efforts to solve common issues are the right strategy. The meeting at the P&D Complex also included secretaries and senior officials.



Sindh decides to move all bus stations outside city

F.P. Report

KARACHI: Delivering great news to the people and passengers of Karachi, the government of Sindh has made a significant decision to move all bus stations outside the city and provide free shuttle service to the passengers.

Sindh Senior Minister and Provincial Minister for Information, Transport, Excise, and Taxation Sharjeel Inam Memon announced that a free shuttle service will be available for passengers from the old bus stands to the terminal starting on August 14.

A high-level meeting was held in Karachi under the chairmanship of Sindh Senior Minister Sharjeel Inam Memon. Secretary Transport Asad

Zaman, Commissioner Karachi Hassan Naqvi, Karachi Police Chief Javed Alam Odhu, DIG Traffic Ahmed Nawaz Cheema, and others participated in the meeting.

During the meeting, Senior Minister Sharjeel Inam Memon issued instructions to prioritize shifting the bus stands outside the city immediately.

Speaking at the meeting, Senior Minister Sharjeel Inam Memon stated that the citizens of Karachi are facing hardships due to heavy vehicles, which also increases pressure on the roads. All bus stands are being shifted outside the city, and more modern facilities are being provided for passengers at the Karachi Bus Terminal.

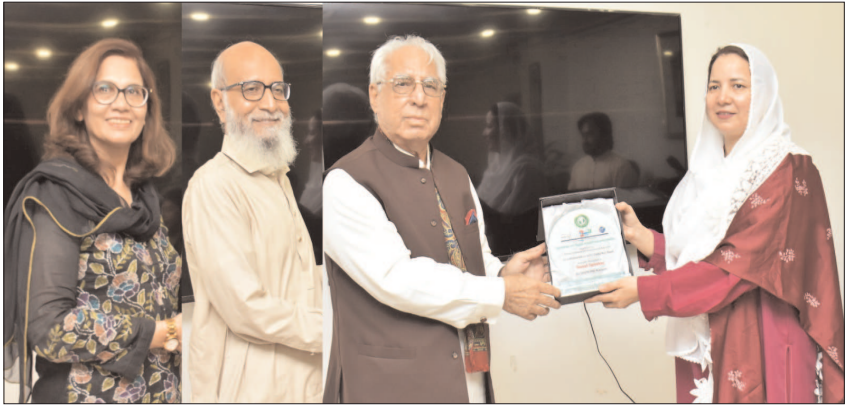
He said that the shuttle service is

being started from Cantt Station, Sagheer Shaheed Road, MA Jinnah Road, and Al-Karam Square. Through this service, passengers are being provided with free transportation from the old bus bases to the terminal.

Senior Minister Sharjeel Inam Memon instructed that efforts should be made to ensure that the citizens and travelers of Karachi do not face any inconvenience or problems. Measures should be taken with the interests of all stakeholders in mind.

He said that measures should be taken to ensure that transporters are not harmed and that passengers can also benefit. A police check post is being established at the Karachi Bus Terminal to ensure the safety of passengers.

Former diplomats, scholars discuss impacts of Articles 35A, 370



F.P. Report

KARACHI: To commemorate revocation of articles 35A and 370 from Indian constitution, which deprived IOJK from maintaining its special status, Press Information Department Karachi M/o Information and Broadcasting, held a seminar on 06 Aug 2024 at Karachi.

The seminar was addressed by Former Diplomat Ambassador (R) Zaffarullah Shaikh, Dr. Uzma Shujaat, faculty member at University of Karachi, Senior Journalist Maqsood Yousufi while it was attended by students of University of Karachi and officers of MoIB.

While addressing the seminar, Mrs. Erum Tanveer, Director General Public Relations PID Karachi welcomed speakers, participants and said that 5th Aug 2019 was a dark day in the history of human rights when people of IOJK were deprived of their basic right of autonomy and indigenous nation. She termed such revocation as a clear of violation of international law when India imposed its hegemonic design over the people of IOJK and called upon inter-

national community as well as all stakeholders to highlight such atrocities and collectively strive for the emancipation of Kashmir.

Speaking to the audience, Dr. Uzma Shujaat unveiled Indian nefarious design of implementing "Akhand Bharat" plan derived from RSS ideology. She identified rising hindu majoritarian fundamentalism that is targeting its minorities especially muslims. She said that India is no more a secular state rather it has become a Hindu extreme rightist state which is haunting the peace of the region. Moreover, she highlighted Indian non serious attitude to resolve Kashmir issue and called upon international community including United Nations and OIC to play their role in resolving Kashmir issue. In addition, she urged policy makers to revisit old policies and strategies to meet renewed Indian aspirations.

Ambassador (R) Zaffarullah Shaikh, while addressing the seminar, highlighted Kashmir issue and confluence of Indian and Britishers in illegal occupation of Kashmir. He mentioned that Pakistan always wanted to have dialogue and

peaceful resolution of Kashmir but Indian Government never showed interest in peaceful resolution of the issue. He termed Kashmir strategically important and praised Armed forces for defending it. He also endorsed that foreign policy needs to be revisited with input from Think tanks, bureaucrats, academia, armed forces and other relevant stakeholders.

Maqsood Yousufi, a veteran Journalist, deplored gross human rights violation of India in IOJK and said that occupied Kashmir has become a jail for Kashmiris and they (Kashmiris) are left with nothing but armed resistance. He also termed Kashmir vital for Pakistan's survival and called upon UN and OIC to hold India accountable for its atrocities and injustices.

Mr. Khalid Mairaj Abbasi, Director PID Karachi, thanked speakers and participants for becoming part of the seminar and joining call for holding India accountable for its atrocities in IOJK. As the seminar delved into the conclusion, Guest Speakers were presented with a memento by Mrs. Erum Tanveer DGPR PID Karachi.

Governor lauds FIA's role in crime prevention

KARACHI (APP): Governor Sindh Kamran Khan Tessori praised the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) for its significant role in crime prevention, particularly in combating cyber crimes.

He expressed these views during a meeting with the Director, FIA Sindh, Nauman Siddiqui, at the Governor House on Tuesday. He emphasized the importance of acquiring modern technology to tackle these issues, viewing it as a positive step.

During the meeting, they discussed a range of topics, including the prevention of cyber crimes, the curbing of illegal activities and anti-corruption measures.

The Governor Sindh highlighted that preventing illegal activities was essential for economic prosperity. Director Nauman Siddiqui assured that the FIA was committed to preventing illegal activities through the use of modern technology.

Govt to resolve labour issues: Minister

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Minister for Labor and Human Resources Faisal Ayub Khokhar stated that the Punjab government is committed to addressing labor issues.

He expressed these views while chairing a meeting with the directors of PESSI in head office on Tuesday. Vice Commissioner PESSI Mr. Zulfiqar Ali Kharal, DG PESSI Azhar Minhas and field Directors were present on this occasion.

The minister ensured that all medical and financial benefits, which are the workers' rightful entitlements, are provided promptly. He said that Punjab Employees Social Security Institution's field directors had shown tremendous performance, under the supervision of Commissioner PESSI, Nadia Saqib, in last financial year as they had collected historical recovery of contribution after fourteen years.

Faisal Ayub Khokhar directed all directors to enhance the target of workers' contribution and to register new workers so that no worker could be deprived of the entitled benefits. He also said that it is his foremost desire to ensure the provision of medical and financial benefits to all laborers for which all officers should work as a team and no negligence will be tolerated in this regard. He also announced to formulate special teams for random checking of field staff and said that proper media campaign would be initiated in the province to create awareness among the stakeholders about benefits of registration to workers.

He further said that he himself would visit chamber of Commerce offices across the Punjab and will listen the problems faced by factory owners and workers.

LDA's Rs96.16 billion budget approved

LAHORE (APP): The governing body on Tuesday approved the Lahore Development Authority (LDA)'s budget for the fiscal year 2024-25 worth Rs 96.16 billion.

The meeting held here at LDA office was chaired by LDA Vice Chairman Mian Marghoob Ahmed and Provincial Assembly Members Hassan Riaz, Naem Saifdar, Sultan Ahmed Bajwa, Technical Member Abdul Hannan, and Akbar Sheikh.

LDA Director General Tahir Farooq briefed the governing body members on the meeting's agenda. The body approved the budget for the fiscal year 2024-25, with a total allocation of Rs96.16 billion for LDA and its subsidiary agencies.

The budget comprises Rs59.18 billion for the LDA Urban Development Wing, Rs34.5 billion for WASA and Rs2.49 billion for TEPA. Additionally, the governing body gave provisional approval for the classification and reclassification (commercialization) of eight major roads in Lahore.

Key decisions included the approval of amendments to the LDA Transfer of Properties Regulation 2023 and the Management of Properties of Lahore Development Authority Lease Rights Regulation 2024. The meeting also sanctioned the establishment of the Directorate of Marketing and Business Development and the implementation of reforms and recruitment in the Strategic Policy Unit.

Development projects under the Sustainable Development framework in the Gulberg scheme were approved, alongside urban regeneration and modeling of MM Alam Road. Planned improvements for MM Alam Road include underground wiring, expanded parking, pedestrian walkways, cycling lanes, and asphalt work.

In the Gulberg scheme, development will feature

rainwater harvesting systems, footpaths, pedestrian walkways, cycling lanes, solar lights, green belts, park structure enhancements, restoration, and other infra-



DIRECTORATE GENERAL HEALTH SERVICES KHYBER PAKHTUNKHWA PESHAWAR

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FINAL ABSENCE NOTICE

The following doctors are absent from duty from the date noted against each. Absence notices were served upon them on their home addresses through registered letters with the directions to resume duty but they failed to comply with the directions. Through this press notice they are now finally directed to report for duty at their place of posting within 15-days of the publication of this notice explaining the reasons of their wilful absence. In case of failure ex-parte action will be taken against them under the relevant rules which may lead to their removal from service. This notice is issued with the approval of the Competent authority: -

S #	NAME OF DOCTOR/FATHER'S NAME/DESIGNATION/PLACE OF LAST POSTING	DATE OF ABSENCE
1.	Dr. Balqees D/O Jamal Shah MO BS-17 attached to DHQ Hospital Charsadda	15.07.2022
2	Dr. Haroon Ahmad S/O Sher Muhammad MO BS-17 attached to HMC Peshawar	30.11.2023
3	Dr. Hashmat Ara Nasib D/O Nasib Dar Muhammad WMO BS-17 attached to Health Department	03.11.2022
4	Dr. Hina Iqbal D/O Muhammad Iqbal WMO BS-17 attached to Women & Children Hospital Rajar Charsadda	08.03.2023
5	Dr. Hira Khan D/O Hamid Ullah Khan WMO BS-17 attached to MTI-KTH Peshawar	31.01.2021
6	Dr. Hussain Jan Abbasi S/O Shahid Abbasi MO BS-17 attached to KMC Peshawar	since long
7	Dr. Jalal Ahmad S/O Khalid Ahmad MO BS-17 attached to DHO Mardan	01.03.2019
8	Dr. Maryam Rahsid D/O Abdur Rashid WMO BS-17 attached to DHO Peshawar	17.01.2023
9	Dr. Mehwish Zeb D/O Muhammad Chanzeb WMO BS-17 attached to DHO Nowshera	July, 2022
10	Dr. Muhammad Asif Jan S/O Saeed Ullah Jan MO BS-17 attached to DHQ Hospital Charsadda	08.04.2023
11	Dr. Muhammad Zeeshan S/O Amir Rehman MO BS-17 attached to DHO Mardan	25.10.2021
12	Dr. Sekandar Zaman S/O Muhammad Zaman MO BS-17 attached to DHQ Teaching Hospital KDA Kohat	16.08.2021
13	Dr. Shah Zeb S/O Aurang Zeb MO BS-17 attached to DHQ Hospital Mardan	01.05.2023
14	Dr. Shahid Ayub S/O Ayub Khan MO BS-17 attached to DHQ Hospital Charsadda	01.10.2023
15	Dr. Sher Azim Shah S/O Khapray MO BS-17 attached to District jail Swat	01.07.2023
16	Dr. Sidla Rehman D/O Saif-ur-Rehman WMO BS-17 attached to DHO kohat	22.03.2023
17	Dr. Sundas Tariq D/O Mahmud Tariq WMO BS-17 attached to Health Department	13.01.2022
18	Dr. Umair Khan S/O Fazal Tawab MO BS-17 attached to Women & Children Hospital Rajar Charsadda	15.06.2023
19	Dr. Yasir Ayaz S/O Muhammad Ayaz MO BS-17 attached to Health Department	01.02.2024

DIRECTOR GENERAL HEALTH SERVICES
KHYBER PAKHTUNKHWA PESHAWAR

INF(P) 1846/24

Commissioner reviews Chehlum, Independence Day preparations

LAHORE (APP): Lahore Divisional Commissioner Zaid-bin-Maqsood, during a meeting here on Tuesday, reviewed the preparations and arrangements for the Chehlum of Hazrat Imam Hussain (RA) and Independence Day celebrations.

The meeting reviewed detailed plans for Chehlum processions and routes throughout all districts in the Lahore Division.

The Commissioner emphasized that all districts should convene meetings of their respective District Peace Committees and Intelligence Committees to ensure smooth Chehlum observance. He directed that all preparations be completed for the Independence Day float traveling from Rawalpindi, which will enter the Lahore Division via Mureedke.

The commissioner directed all districts to submit their schedules for Independence Day events by today to the Commissioner's Office. Activities commemorating Pakistan's Independence will continue across all departments until August 14. Buildings will be decorated with green and white lights to mark the occasion.

PROJECT DIRECTORATE, EST. OF INSTITUTE OF PEACE & CONFLICT STUDIES University of Peshawar

Corrigendum/Addendum

The correct bidding schedule of the NIT, advertised in Daily Frontier Post and & Daily AAJ on 1st & 2nd Aug, 2024 respectively may be read as under:

Issuance of Bid Documents	Pre-Bid Meeting	Submission of Bids	Opening of Technical Bids
From the date of advertisement Upto Fri 23rd Aug, 2024	On Thur 15th Aug, 2024, 10.00am in the IPCS	Upto Fri 23rd Aug, 2024, 10.00am by post/hand	On Fri 23rd Aug, 2024, 10.30am in the IPCS

Further, for the Solarization Work at S.No.1 of the NIT, a condition at S.No.9 has also been added that "Electrical Contractors/Firms/Companies, duly licensed by the Provincial Board of Licensing of the Electric Inspectorate, Govt of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Energy & Power Dept Peshawar"

Sd/-
Prof. Dr. Jamil Ahmad
Project Director

PHC asks response on ban against sugar’s export till 15th Aug

Humayun Khan

PESHAWAR: A two-member bench of Peshawar High Court (PHC) comprising Justice Syed Arshad Ali and Justice Muhammad Ijaz Khan Sabi sought a response from the provincial government and the Sugarcane Commissioner by 15th August in a case challenging the ban on sugar exports imposed by the provincial government, on Tuesday.

The petition filed by Al Maueez Sugar Mill Dera Ismail Khan while Ishaq Ali Qazi advocate argued the case before PHC. The lawyer informed the court that the petitioner is the largest sugar producer in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, employing thousands of people and contributing significantly to the province's economy.

The counsel Ishaq Ali Qazi advocate argued that the provincial government's ban on sugar exports is causing losses to sugarcane farmers and may result in significant foreign exchange losses. He stated that the federal government had allowed the export of 1.5 lakh metric tons of sugar in April 2024, following a request from the Pakistan Sugar Mills Association.

However, the provincial government has not implemented this decision, despite the Economic Cooperation Committee's approval.

The Sugar Advisory Board and the federal cabinet had approved the export of sugar, subject to certain conditions, including a price limit of Rs. 140 per kilogram, the lawyer added. The petitioner's lawyer argued that the provincial government's actions are in violation of the law and the Constitution, as the federal government has the sole authority to regulate imports and exports.

The counsel further stated that the provincial government's decision has caused immense losses to the sugar mills, and if the exports are not allowed, the mills will suffer further losses.

He added that the federal government's permission for sugar exports was conditional upon the distribution of the exported amount among the farmers.

The sugar exports are continuing from other provinces, but Khyber Pakhtunkhwa is being denied an opportunity to export sugar worth \$90 million, the counsel stated. The petitioner's lawyer argued that this is causing discrimination against the province and its farmers.

After hearing the initial arguments, PHC issued notices to the provincial government and the Sugarcane Commissioner, seeking their response by 15th August.



PESHAWAR: Zahid Chanzeb, Advisor to the Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa for Tourism, Culture, Archeology and Museums chairing a meeting.

9m tourists visited KP during last three months: Chanzeb

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Zahid Chanzeb, Advisor to the Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa for Tourism, Culture, Archeology and Museums, has said that more than 9 million tourists have turned to different tourist spots of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa in the last three months. He directed that all tourism authorities should ensure provision of all possible facilities to tourists in the province.

He was chairing a joint meeting of all Tourism Authorities of khyber Pakhtunkhwa at the conference room of KPCTA in Peshawar.

Tourism and Culture Muhammad Bakhtiar Khan, Director General Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Culture and Tourism Authority Tashfeen Haider, DG Galyat Development Authority Sharukh Khan, DG Kaghan Development Authority Shabir Khan, DG Special Purposes Kalash Development Authority Minhasuddin, DC Swat and DG Upper Swat Development Authority Shahzad Khan, DG Kumrat Valley Development Authority and other relevant authorities participated in the meeting.

The Tourism and Culture Advisor said that witnessing a record number of tourists arrivals at different hill stations just in three months was the proof of the overwhelming confidence in the govt of KP and Tourism Authorities.

Zahid Chanzeb clearly directed that all tourism authorities should ensure the arrangements for various tourism and cultural activities in the province in order to further promote tourism in the province. He revealed that cultural activities will be started soon at Nishtarhal Peshawar.

In the meeting, all the authorities gave a detailed briefing to the Advisor on Tourism and Culture about tourism activities and recommended measures to promote tourism.

Zahid Chanzeb also issued orders to ensure registration of stakeholders relating to tourism industry including Adventure Tourism, hotels, restaurants and rent a car services with the Tourist Services Wing. Similarly, he also directed that all authorities must implement Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Government Rest Houses and Tourism Properties (Development, (Management and Regulation) Act 2020. He directed that all the authorities should upload their data on the website and mobile APP of KP Tourism Authority so that tourists could easily get latest information about it.



PESHAWAR: A garment vendor selling beautiful outfits for tiny Patriots with big style on upcoming celebrating Independence Day, 14th August, at Qissa Khawani Bazar. — APP photo

WAPDA team to visit Iqbal Khalil’s hujra to facilitate public

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Water and Power Development Authority (WAPDA) team will be available at Hujra Iqbal Khalil on Thursday (Tomorrow) for facilitation of public from 10am to 2pm.

According to details, due to the continuous efforts of social worker

Usman Khalil, the WAPDA team will be present at Hujra Iqbal

Khalil Abdera from 10 am to 2 pm on Thursday to facilitate the people of the area. On this occasion, Usman Khalil has appealed to the people of the area to come forward and pay their outstanding electricity bills so that the electricity supply can be restored.

The WAPDA team will be available at the aforementioned location to address the issues of the locals and provide them with the necessary assistance to clear their dues and get their electricity connections restored.

The residents paid thanks to XEN Khyber circle along with other staff for their commitment to resolve public grievance at the doorsteps.

KPTMA calls for abolition of ACD on raw material

PESHAWAR (APP): Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Textile Mills Association (KPTMA) has called for the abolition of additional customs duty (ACD) on the raw material of the textile to harmonize the tariff structure and grant exemption to critical raw materials.

In separate letters dispatched to Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue, Muhammad Aurangzeb and Member National Tariff Commission, Imran Zia here on Tuesday, the Chairman, KPTMA Muhammad Kamran Shah has called for the abolition of the additional customs duty of 2% imposed on the import of Acrylic Tow, Viscose Staple Fibre, Polyester Stable Fibre, Flax, raw or retted, Polyester (Textured Yarn), Elastomeric Yarn (spandex yarn0 and others (Lyocell & PVA Yarn) as per the finance budget 2024.

But, the government has granted exemption for cotton and other man-made fibres. He said that many export and local yarn orders require the blending of Acrylic and Viscose with cotton or polyester and the imposition of the additional customs duty on these materials is causing significant disruptions and jeopardizing these orders.

Justice ignored and oppression legitimized: A brutal tale of Kashmir

Syeda Kausar Fatima

Y O U M - E - I S T E H S A L reminds us of the grave consequences of India's illegal and unilateral actions of 5 August 2019 vis-à-vis Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK). Since 5 August 2019, India has embarked upon a ceaseless campaign to alter the demographic structure and political landscape of IIOJK. Issuing domicile certificates to outsiders, registering temporary residents in the voters' lists, gerrymandering assembly constituencies, and modifying land and property ownership laws are some of the key features of this campaign. All these measures are in blatant violation of the United Nations Security Council resolutions and international law, including the 4th Geneva Convention.

India has given a "carte blanche" to its occupation forces to unleash a reign of terror in the besieged territory. In the last 77 years, India has tried different methods to perpetuate its illegal rule in Jammu and Kashmir. However, an intensified campaign to 'Indianize' Kashmir, and transform Kashmiris into a disempowered community in their own land, has been in full swing since 5 August 2019. Today, in IIOJK, efforts are being made to silence the genuine leadership of the Kashmiri people and muzzle the media. The number of political prisoners remain in thousands, while 14 political organizations have been outlawed. Through its August 2019 actions, India is trying to consolidate the occupation and impose what it ominously refers as "Final Solution" to the occupied territory through a mix of legal, administrative, demographic and electoral measures.

A key element of India's so-called "Final Solution" is to transform Kashmir from a Hindu majority State to a Hindu majority territory in blatant violation of the Fourth Geneva Convention and the relevant resolutions of the Security Council. It has issued over 4.2 million domicile certificates to non-Kashmiris; seized Kashmir lands; allowed non-Kashmiris to buy real estate and register on electoral rolls. This settler colonial project of the Hindutva inspired BJP government amounts to a war crime in international armed conflicts. The aim of the project is to disempower and disenfranchise Kashmiris and alter the Muslim identity of Kashmir.

All the pro-freedom Hurriyat leaders, the genuine voice of Kashmiri people, remain incarcerated for past several years. Several have died in suspicious circumstances in Indian custody. Mr. Yaseen Malik, leader of the All Parties Hurriyat Conference, who was awarded life sentence over a fabricated terror financing case, is now facing a death penalty trial. Over 13,000 young Kashmir men have been abducted and many of them tortured. Hundreds of innocent Kashmiris are extra-judicially killed each year with impunity in fake "encounters" and "cordon and search" operations.

History has proven, time and again, that durable peace in South Asia remains contingent upon the settlement of the Jammu and Kashmir dispute. In the interest of lasting peace and security in South Asia, India must move from dispute denial to dispute resolution. For the past seven decades, the Kashmiris have waited for the United Nations to fulfil its solemn commitments. It is crucial that the international community urges India to end its human rights violations in IIOJK and implement the relevant UN Security Council resolutions.

Pakistan stands in solidarity with the people of Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK), advocating for peace, justice and their right to self-determination. It always calls upon the international community to hold India accountable for its crimes against Kashmiris and demand that India reverses its illegal and unilateral actions of 5 August 2019, revoke draconian laws, cease all human rights violations, and stop its state-terrorism against the people of IIOJK.

AGDA delegation meet health minister

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: A delegation of All Government Drivers Association (AGDA), Civil Secretariat met with Minister for Health Syed Qasim Ali Shah for redressal of their demands, on Tuesday.

The delegation led by Manzoor Khan, Chairman AGDA while Farooq Ahmed, Provincial President AGDA, Shah Jahan, General Secretary AGDA and other members were present in the meeting.

AGDA demanded repatriation of drivers of the Health Department who are performing duty/assigned to Rescue 1122 should be immediately sent back to the Health Department, as they are being severely affected, i.e., their seniority is being affected, their allowances are being affected, etc.

The Minister assured the delegation and directed the relevant authority to take necessary/appropriate action.

PMS aspirants demand age relaxation

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: The aspirants of Provincial Management Services (PMS) have demanded that the Chief Minister of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa immediately resolve the issue of age relaxation in the Public Services Commission exam, so that the future of millions of youth in the province can be secured, enabling them to contribute to the development of their country and nation.

Sayed Haris, President, and Engineer Zakaria, Vice President, of the representative organization of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa PSC aspirants, stated that they have been meeting with provincial ministers and other high officials for several months regarding the issue of increasing the age limit for the PSC test to 35 years for general candidates and 37 years for government employees.

The provincial assembly has also passed a resolution in this regard, but the issue of age relaxation has not been finalized yet.

They tried to meet with the Chief Minister but were unable to do so. They demanded that the issue of age relaxation be resolved as soon as possible, and that the Chief Minister grant them time for a meeting so that they can present their issue to him.

Anti Corruption establishment KP 24 complaints registered in Khuli Kachari

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: In the light of the instructions of Special Assistant to the Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa for Anti-Corruption establishment Brigadier (R) Muhammad Mossadeq Abbasi, second monthly Khuli Kachari of the Anti-Corruption Establishment was held at the Directorate of Anti-Corruption Establishment Peshawar and Regional Offices on Tuesday.

The concerned officials including Director Anti-Corruption Establishment participated in the Khuli Khachari and heard the complaints of Citizens in detail.

According to the statistics released by the Anti-Corruption Establishment KP, Khuli Kacharies were held in Peshawar in addition to eight regional offices of the Directorate, in which more than 240 people participated. While a total of 24 complaints were registered.

Regional Office Kohat registered maximum eight complaints while Peshawar registered seven complaints. Complaints were registered in these Khuli Kachery regarding Revenue Department, Rescue 1122, Municipalities, Health and Education, C&W, on the occasion citizens while appreciating the holding of the Khuli Khachari said that distance between the department and the people is reducing by regularly holding the Khuli Khachari.

Seminar, walk held to mark breastfeeding awareness month

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: In collaboration with UNICEF, the World Food Programme, Benazir Noshonuma Programme, the World Health Organization, and the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Department of Health, an awareness seminar and walk were held at the DHO Office in Hashtnagri under the title 'Global Breastfeeding Awareness Month (August 2024).'

The event was chaired by National Program Coordinator for Lady Health Workers, Dr. Muhammad Haroon Nazir, and District Nutrition Program Manager Peshawar, Afshan Fawad. The seminar was overseen by Deputy Director Nutrition Program Dr. Samira Saeed, with DHO Muhammad Idris as the Guest of Honor. Other notable attendees included MS Molvi Ji Hospital Akram Shah, District Prediction Officer Dr. Wajeeha Taj, Information Management Nutrition Program representatives Akbar, Latif, ADC Fauzia Sultan, and others. Over a hundred assistant nutritionists, lady health supervisors, and lady health workers from District Peshawar were also present in large numbers.

The seminar commenced with the recitation of the Holy Quran, followed by Dr. Muhammad Haroon and Afshan Fawad enlightening the participants on UNICEF's efforts regarding the first thousand days of mother and child health, the significance of positive individual and social behaviors, maternal and child nutrition, and steps for better health and a good life.

Guest of Honor DHO Muhammad Idris, in his address, emphasized that it is crucial to benefit both the rich and poor without discrimination, and it is our responsibility to ensure everyone receives our attention in this matter. He stressed that this initiative is not just for this month but should be continued in the future. Awareness materials will be provided to help convey this message to others and ensure its implementation.

During the seminar, the concerns of lady health supervisors and other district representatives were addressed. Dr. Samira Saeed, Dr. Wajeeha Taj, and others also spoke at the seminar. At the end of the seminar, all participants, led by Deputy DHO Samira Saeed, MS Akram Shah, and Dr. Haroon, participated in an awareness walk.

Solution to drainage problem top priority: Dy Commissioner

PESHAWAR (APP): Deputy Commissioner Peshawar Sarmad Saleem Akram emphasized the urgent need to address drainage problems on roads during a meeting with administrative officers, relevant department officials, and municipal authorities.

The Deputy Commissioner highlighted the importance of a comprehensive strategy to enhance the drainage system, aiming to alleviate public hardships during the rainy season.

The meeting reviewed ongoing projects and discussed future plans to improve the city's infrastructure.

He directed all departments to ensure mutual cooperation and effective communication to resolve drainage issues promptly.

He reiterated the government's commitment to public welfare, stating that improving the drainage system is a key part of these efforts.

The Deputy Commissioner urged the public to keep the city clean and refrain from throwing garbage and plastic bags into drains.

He called for community support in enhancing the drainage system and emphasized the collective responsibility to develop Peshawar and address public concerns.



In brief

Mobile network restored

AWARAN (PPI): Deputy Commissioner Awaran, Aaisha Zehri, said on Tuesday that the mobile network shut down by heavy rains and floods had been restored in district Awaran of Balochistan province. In a statement, she said that Awaran-Bela Road, which had been blocked at different points, including Duraski, Ched Kor, Sead Kor, Nal Jahoo Kor, Lak, Landandari and Machhi areas, had been cleared for traffic. Ms Aaisha further said that recent rains and floods had not caused any loss to human lives, however, survey was underway to assess the damages caused by floods in district Awaran.

Man found dead in Quetta

QUETTA (PPI): An unidentified man was found dead at Samungli area within the precincts of Sadar Police Station on Tuesday. According to rescue sources, the body of the man, seemed to be a drug addict, was lying in Samungli area of Quetta. It was shifted to Sandeman Provincial Hospital Quetta for the completion of necessary codal formalities and identification. Further investigation was being conducted by the authorities.

Three injured as roof collapses

FAISALABAD (INP): Three persons including a woman were injured in a roof collapse incident, here on Tuesday. According to Rescue-1122 spokesperson, a dilapidated roof of a house in Chak No 200, Lathianwala collapsed. Resultantly, three persons identified as Shahid (32), Hanif (65) and Uzma (32) were buried under the debris. The injured were rushed to Allied Hospital.

Resident hold protest F.P. Report

KARAK: The people of Karak (Gargri) and Teri held a protest in front of the house of MPA Circle PK 97 to start work on Gurgri Road, which entered the darkness of the night. That is, while going to Swabi Jalsa yesterday, Khurshed Khattak MPA assured that the work on Gurgri Road will be started before August 14. Despite this, the people of Gurgri Orteri staged a dharna at the MP's house, but MPA Khurshed Khattak The way the father of the former Nazim Sharif Khattak politely and patiently explained to the people present in the dharna and spoke to them gently is admirable.

New vegetable markets F.P. Report

MARDAN: Mayor Mardan Himayat Ullah Mayar said that no decision has been taken to transfer the vegetable market; the provincial government wants to build more vegetable markets for the convenience of the citizens, on Tuesday. This he said while addressing a delegation meeting led by Anjuman Tajran Vegetable Market President Waqar Ali Bacha, Chairman Haji Shah Gee, Fruit Market President Jamal Khan and Patron in Chief Mufti Zia ul Islam. The delegation apprised the Mayor about the concerns of the traders regarding the Charsadda Road vegetable market, speaking to the delegation; Mayor Himayat Ullah Mayar said that currently there is no intention to move any vegetable market anywhere. Traders should continue their commercial activities in the existing vegetable market but cooperate with TMA in providing sanitation and other necessary facilities.

KP young teachers demand regularization

F.P. Report

LOWER DIR: Hundreds of the young teachers on Tuesday took to the street against the abolishment of their pension and ad hoc recruitment in education department. The teachers gathered outside the Timergara press club and chanted against the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government for its failure to regularize the ad hoc teachers in the province.

The protesting teachers threatened to stage a protest sit-in outside the chief minister house in DI Khan if their demand was not accepted by Aug. 11. They threatened to stage a decisive sit-in outside the Adiala Jail on August 19, 2024 if the Cm failed to resolve the grievances.

The rally was addressed by the Young Teachers' Association (YTA) provincial president Attaur Rehman, district president Muhammad Tufail, district general secretary Muhammad Jamal Shah, tehsil president Zakir Khan and others.

They said the YTA would never accept the illegal abolishment of pension and including the 34000 teachers in the contributory pension (CP) fund. They said that due to the negligence of the District Education Officers 10 thousand teachers had been deprived of teachers' Regularization Act 2022.

"It is illegal to abolish the pension of those employees who have completed less than 9 years and 6 months of service and are already pensionable employees and put them into CP fund", Attaur Rehman said, adding the Chief Minister of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa should hold an urgent meeting with the YTA leadership to solve these problems in the Chief Minister's Secretariat.

Rehman said that the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Teachers Regularization Act 2022, which was passed on September 12, 2022, the provision of CP fund was abolished by the provincial assembly and according to the Act, all the teachers were regularized from the initial date of appointment and pay and allowances including seniority were also given from the initial date of their appointment.

He alleged the AG office in the caretaker government sent an illegal and self-imposed notification to the account officers on 15th August, 2023 that all the teachers recruited under the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Teachers Regularization Act, 2022 after 8th March 2017 were included in the CP fund. He said the AG office order was against the law passed by the provincial assembly.

He said the Secretary Education sent a detailed letter to the Secretary Finance on 28 December 2023 and again on 19 January 2024, a reminder, but till now the Finance Department had not removed that illegal circular of the AG Office.

Pukhtoon tribe to cooperate in maintaining peace in Malakand: The Bahadar Shah Khail tribe of Pukhtoon has announced that its tribesmen will play

their active role in defending the restive areas in Maidan, Barawal and Bajaur. The announcement was made during a gathering held at the hujra of Ameen Ghaffar Khan in Bandai Maidan here on Tuesday with Jan Alam Khan in the chair. Mr Ameen Ghffar Khan was nominated as chairman of the tribe.

The members of Bahadar Shah Khail from Lower Dir, Upper Dir, Malakand and Bajaur attended the function. The gathering was addressed by the tribe's elders including Ghaffar Khan, retired principal Tahir Khan, Jan Alam Khan, Ismail Khan, Jigar Ali Khan and others. The speakers said that border areas in the Lower Dir, Upper Dir and Bajaur districts had been at stake where the Bahadar Shah Khail tribesmen lived in large numbers.

They said the tribe would play its active role in maintaining peace in these areas. The speakers said the event was aimed to unite the tribe under a single platform. The speakers also informed the young generation about the deeds and sacrifices rendered by elders of the Bahadar Shah Khail tribe. They said that without unity no tribe in society could survive.

PPP re-organization: The newly appointed district president of the Pakistan Peoples Party Ahmad Zeb Khan has said that all disgruntled party workers will be persuaded to strengthen the party in the Lower Dir district. Talking to local journalists at Timergara he said that he would soon meet the PPP central leadership and Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Kundi to apprise them of the issues faced by party workers.

The PPP district president said the party would be reorganized and he would try his best to keep the workers satisfied. Condemning the culture of hatred and violence by political activists against the rival politicians on social media, Mr Zeb said the youths should be guided to avoid disgracing leadership of other political parties.

Government contractors: The All Government Contractors' Association Malakand divisional president engineer Ikrumullah and general secretary Imran Takur on Tuesday threatened to launch an agitation drive if the personal ledger account (PLA) was not opened immediately. Speaking at a news conference at the Timergara press club they complained the PLA had been dysfunctional for the last four years in order to tease the government contractors by the tehsil municipal administration and other government departments.

They said the account was opened for two day in a month only for drawing salaries of the concerned officials. The contractors' representatives said the closure of PLA caused difficulty to the contractors. They said the concerned high ups had been contacted but to no avail. They demanded the district administration to take notice of the matter and keep open the personal ledger account in the district.



HYDERABAD: People enjoying pleasant weather at Indus River.

LG members flay unavailability of drinking water in Buner

F.P. Report

BUNER: The monthly meeting of Tehsil Council Daggar held at District Secretariat under the chairmanship of Convener Imran Khan Buner in which Nazim Haji Rozi Khan along with members participated, on Tuesday.

In the meeting, members Zaitoor Khan, Dost Muhammad Khan, Taj Muhammad Khan, Zia ur Rahman and other members presented the problems and difficulties faced by the people of their respective villages. The members discussed electricity load-shedding, lack of clean drinking water, absence of

teachers in girls' and boys' schools and hiring less educated and untrained youths to teach on behalf of them. They added that in some girls schools washing machines were placed by female teachers in the schools to do laundry besides opened shops too.

In the meeting, complaints were raised by the members like over load shedding, sending bills without meter reading and taking off the meter of the consumers after failing to pay heavy bill sent without proper check. In the meeting, lack of clean drinking water, broken pipes, damaged machine of tube well

and absenteeism and arbitrariness of the operator were also raised.

In the meeting, a resolution has also been passed to conduct an inquiry into the disappearance of air-conditioners and curtains, lack of electricity and lack of cleanliness and to take strict action against the elements involved in this looting. The officers of the government departments present in the meeting gave immediate clarifications on certain and necessary complaints and questions of the members. While AAC assured to bring the questions and complaints raised to the notice of the Deputy Commissioner.

Haniyeh's struggle to be written with golden words

F.P. Report

TOBA TEK SINGH: Former City President Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf, Chaudhry Kamran Ahmad Nusrat said that the mission of the martyred leader of Hamas, Ismail Haniyeh will continue and the martyrdom of the entire family including Ismail Haniyeh will not

go in vain.

Chaudhry Kamran added that Ismail Haniyeh played a dignified and courageous role for the freedom of Palestine with great sincerity. Despite the worst genocide, the Palestinians are not ready to give up their right to freedom, they will continue to resist until the Doomsday. The heartbreaking inci-

dent of the killing of Hamas leader Ismail Haniyeh is enough to shake the world. He said that there were tears in the eyes of the ladies and gentlemen who participated in the funeral prayer of world hero Ismail Haniyeh. Ismail Haniyeh, the head of Hamas, was not a guest in Tehran, but he called Iran his second home.



QUETTA: Chairman, Ruet Hilal Committee, Maulana Syed Abul Kabir Azad addressing during Ulema Mashaikh and Istehkam-e-Pakistan conference.

Roadside explosives detonated

Fazal Haq

MARDAN: A major detonation plan near Charsadda Road Kamran Kali was foiled by roadside pressure cookers detonated before detonation, children of the village informed about the stockpiled explosives.

As soon as the incident was reported, district police officer Mardan, DSP Takhtbhai Circle, SHO Saroshah Shah and Inspector in-charge of Bomb Disposal Squad reached the spot who quickly defused the explosives stored in the pressure cooker and foiled the major sabotage plan.

According to the sources, the weight of explosive material is said to be 04 to 05 kg. The bomb disposal squad team took possession of the explosive material and started a high-level investigation into the incident. After the incident, DSP Takhtbhai Circle, SHO Saroshah along with a heavy police force started a search operation in the area.

DC hold 'kuli Katcheri': Deputy

Commissioner held 'Kuli Katcheri' at Tehsil Complex Katlang to solve the problems of the people at their doorstep under the Awani Agenda of Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Assistant Commissioner Katlang Attaulah Khan, Tehsil Chairman Katlang Riaz Khan, Tehsildar Katlang, officers of district departments, elected local body representatives and a large number of local elders participated in the open katchery.

Grievances/problems faced by the people about various government departments were presented by the participants. After hearing the problems, DC Mian Behzad Adil ordered to solve many problems related to various departments on the spot while ordered the concerned departments to solve many others problems immediately.

Furthermore, the Deputy Commissioner, while expressing his views, said that open katcheries were meant to provide facilities to the people at their doorsteps and it does not mean that the people should not come to the government offices.

Ongoing uplift schemes inspected F.P. Report

HAFIZABAD: Deputy Commissioner Hafizabad Sundas Irshad visited subdivision Pinidi Bhattian and checked pace on work on different ongoing development schemes, schools, library and hospitals. AC Pindi Bhattian Ishfaq Ahmad, Deputy Director Development Hafizabad Tassawar Abbas and other officers were also accompanied by the DC.

During the visit, DC inspected Basic Health Units Kot Nawan and Kot Sarwar and checked attendance of staff, record of medicines and provision of treatment facilities to patients in the health units. Sundas Irshad also inspected under construction new building of Police Station Sadar Pindi Bhattian and road from Kot Sarwar to Dera Khokhran. He directed the officers of building department and district council to ensure use of quality material in execution of the schemes and to complete according to stipulated period.

Monsoon tree plantation drive inaugurated

F.P. Report

KARAK: Khushal Khan Khattak University Karak, launched its Monsoon Tree Plantation Drive, led by Vice Chancellor Prof. Dr. Muhammad Naseer Ud Din. The inauguration took place on the main campus of the University, marking a significant step towards environmental sustainability.

Prof. Dr. Muhammad Naseer Ud Din, accompanied by Registrar Dr. Ghani Ur Rehman, other esteemed faculty members, and Focal Person PM Green Youth Movement

Shad Muhammad, performed the inauguration ceremony. The Vice Chancellor took the opportunity to inspect the newly constructed academic block, emphasizing the importance of integrating green practices into the university's growth.

Speaking on this occasion Prof. Dr. Naseer Ud Din underscored the need for tree plantation in today's world. "Plantation is not just an activity; it's a responsibility towards our future generations. Trees



are vital for a sustainable environment, and it is imperative that we all contribute to this cause," he remarked.

The Vice Chancellor further informed about the forthcoming academic session in the new building, highlighting the University's commitment to providing a conducive learning environment. The new academic block, now complemented by the ongoing tree plantation initiative provides the University's dedication to fostering both

educational excellence and environmental care.

The Monsoon Tree Plantation Drive is a part of Khushal Khan Khattak University, Karak sustainability efforts, aiming to enhance the campus's green spaces and contribute positively to the local ecosystem. Khushal Khan Khattak University, Karak invites students, faculty, and the local community, to actively participate in planting trees for a greener and healthier future.

Mazhar Iqbal assumes charge of DPO Khyber

F.P. Report

JAMRUD: Mazhar Iqbal assumed charge of District Police Officer (DPO) Khyber here in police line, Shahkas, Jamrud on Tuesday. The new appointed DPO, Khyber was warmly received by the Superintendent Police (investigation) Rohul Amin, Deputy SP (headquarter) Hikmat Khan Afridi and Station House Officers (SHOs) of all police stations of the district. A smart contingent of police presented a guard of honor.

The district police head visited the memorial of police martyrs, laid a floral wreath on it and saluted it. Later on, the DPO introduced to the subordinate police officers. Speaking on the introductory meeting with the police officials DPO Mazhar Iqbal said that restore of durable peace in



the area, wipe out narcotics smugglings, infra-structure of police force and welfare of the heirs' martyred police were among his top priorities.

He maintained that tribal elders would be engaged to settle long lasting disputes among the tribesmen. Tribal elders will be taken onboard on every important matter and negligence of

police force while executing their duties will not be tolerated, he added.

The district police chief said that the police officials who perform their duties honestly will be rewarded and vice versa, the district police chief said. With support of the Khyber police officers, policing will be made a pro-tribal and role model of the department.

Govt establishes chain of uplift projects: Mir Hassan

F.P. Report

HUB: Provincial Advisor for Industries and Crafts and senior leader of Pakistan Peoples Party Mir Ali Hassan Zehri while addressing the gathering said that I have come to work for Hub and it is determined to take the path of development and provide all the facilities that are available in other big cities by making it a city of lights. Mir Ali Hassan Zehri also said that the city is changing, the deprivations of the past forty years are going to end. Hub is beginning to shine; no one can stop the people of Hub from developing now. He said that the people who were imposed in the previous periods worked only for their personal interests and were proud of their power.

Those anti-people elements imposed on the Hub publicly said on the assembly floor that Imran Khan gave me 100 billion rupees; even a hundred rupees out of the billions have not been invested on the Hub. Due to these reasons, the hub city turned into ruins and the people here were deprived of even the basic amenities.

given for you and work is going on for more big projects.

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Man should not be proud, Allah does not like proude. I am a humble person, I don't talk big, but I must say one thing that if you all brothers, elders, mothers, sisters, friends and colleagues are with me, then for the sake of Hub, we all can do a lot of good and improve together and will continue to do so, Inshallah.

On this occasion, Mir Ali Hassan Zehri said that the vegetable market has been established, which will promote economic activities in the area. A modern 100-bed hospital is being started in Kund Malir, which will reduce the health problems of the area to a great extent. Since we have come, factory owners stopped receiving "Bhatta Parchi". The contract system has also been abolished from the factories, which will give the workers their legitimate rights and bring prosperity to the people. Addressing the Jalsa, Mir Ali Hassan Zehri said that if you stay with me, the Hub will be developed, and we will definitely be successful in the mission of creating lights.



Pakistan Embassy in Damasus observes Youm-e-Istehsal Day

F.P. Report

DAMASCUS: Under the patronage of Mr. Umer Hayat Khan, Charge d' Affaires (a.i) Embassy of Pakistan, Damasus observed Youm -e- Istehsal regarding Kashmir on 5th August, 2024 in the Embassy premises to voice support for the suppressed people in Indian illegally occupied Jammu and Kashmir.

During the event, Cda briefed the audience about the background of the day and the disputed territory of Kashmir and the atrocities perpetrated by the indian army in the occupied



IIOJK. He also read out messages of the President and Prime Minister of Pakistan on this occasion. The event was attended by officers/staff of the

embassy and Pakistan international school of Damasus, syrian dignitaries and large number of Pakistani Diaspora residing in Syria.

Family of killed Nigerian protester demand justice

ABUJA (BBC): The family of a 24-year-old tailor, Abubakar Adam Abdullahi, is demanding justice after accusing police of killing him in the northern Nigerian city of Kaduna during nationwide protests against the high cost of living.

Local police deny playing any role in his death, and a spokesman for the governor of Kaduna state says they are not aware of any deaths resulting from protests there. This is contested by rights group Amnesty International - which says three people have been killed in Kaduna alone.

Speaking on behalf of the family, Abubakar's brother Ismail told the BBC the tailor was shot in the chest by police on Thursday before dying in Yusuf Dantsoho hospital. "All we want is justice for our brother," says Ismail. Across Nigeria - in the five days since the demonstrations began - police say at least seven people have been killed, 700 have been arrested, and elite officers have arrested one of the protest leaders. Despite warnings by President Bola Tinubu, thousands of Nigerians joined the protests - worried about the escalating cost of living,

and inspired by the success of young Kenyans whose rallies have won key concessions from government. The protesters included Abubakar. The youngest of 14 children, he was living at his parents' home in Kaduna with big ambitions for his career, and hoping to start a family of his own.

But rising costs kept pushing that future further from his reach, and he decided to join the protests. "As a tailor, money for the materials he was using had all gone up - food too - and he also has to pay increased rent. Everyone is affected by this economic crisis," says Ismail. Video footage filmed at the time of Abubakar's death seems to shows him in a group of young men shouting animatedly at police before trying to run away as if being chased. According to Abubakar's brother, who has spoken to witnesses, they were close to the office of the governor of Kaduna, Uba Sani, at the time. Abubakar then told his friends he was tired and wanted to go home. Moments later police opened fire on the protesters, witnesses say. Video footage then shows Abubakar falling to the ground. His friends can be heard shouting "officer

stop" and "they shot him" in the Hausa language. "It was shocking when we got a call to come to the hospital after he was shot because we know he wasn't violent," Ismail tells the BBC.

He cannot comprehend how this could happen to the kind, caring and hard-working brother he knew. "We later saw videos of him sitting or talking to friends during the protest which also proved he wasn't misbehaving," he adds. Kaduna state governor spokesman Mohammed Lawal Shehu says the reason why they have not acknowledged any death from the protest is because they are relying on the police - who say they were no deaths. "According to the police there wasn't any death from the protests and we rely on them for information."

Amnesty International is calling for an investigation into the deaths of 23 protesters it says have been killed across the country, including three in Kaduna. Ismail says his family will not rest until they get answers about his brother's death. "He was in high spirits when he went out with his friends to the protest. He was concerned by the state of things in the country."

Rebels in Indonesia kill NZ pilot in second plane attack

PAPUA: Separatist fighters in Indonesia's far eastern region of Papua have shot dead a helicopter pilot from New Zealand, according to police. The rebels attacked the helicopter as soon as it landed in Alama, a remote village in the Mimika district of Central Papua province, said Faizal Ramadhani, who heads the joint security peace force in Papua.

The attackers released the four Indigenous Papuan passengers who were on board the aircraft, operated by private aviation company Intan Angkasa Air Service. "It is confirmed that there was a hostage situation and murder carried out by the armed criminal group," Ramadhani said, naming the pilot as 50-year-old Glen Malcolm Conning. The motive for the killing was not immediately clear. It comes nearly 18 months after the abduction by separatists of another pilot from New Zealand, Phillip Mehrtens, who remains a captive.

A spokesperson for New Zealand's Ministry of Foreign Affairs said it was aware of the report and that its embassy in Jakarta was seeking information from

authorities, declining to comment further. Conning was from Motueka in the north of New Zealand's South Island and an experienced pilot, who had flown missions earlier this year to fight bushfires near Christchurch. The New Zealand Herald reported. "[Glen] was greatly loved by the Motueka community and was a great family man," close friend Kerry Gatenby told the paper.

A battle for independence has been rumbling for decades in Papua, a resource-rich region that is the location of one of the world's biggest gold and copper mines. The conflict has escalated since 2018 when separatist fighters attacked a group working on a major road project, killing 19 Indonesian construction workers. Mehrtens was captured in February 2023 after fighters from the West Papua National Liberation Army (TPN-PB) ambushed a small commercial plane when it landed in the remote, mountainous area of Nduga. They said they would release him only when Papua got its independence from Indonesia. Police said the TPN-PB

were also behind attack. The group is the armed wing of the Free Papua Movement (OPM) and in 2021 was designated a 'terrorist' organisation by Indonesia.

TPN-PB spokesman Seby Samborn told news agencies that he had not received reports from the group's fighters about the killing. "But, if that happens, it was his own fault for entering our forbidden territory," Samborn was quoted as saying by the Associated Press news agency. "We have released warnings several times that the area is under our restricted zone, an armed conflict area that is prohibited for any civilian aircraft to land." Papua, whose people are ethnically and culturally distinct from Indonesia, occupies the western half of the island of New Guinea - just 200km (124 miles) north of Australia - and shares a land border with Papua New Guinea (PNG). A former Dutch colony, the territory was incorporated into Indonesia in 1969 after a controversial United Nations-backed referendum in which only about 1,000 Papuans were able to participate. — Aljazeera

UN staff fired over possible links to 7 October attack

NEW YORK (BBC): Nine staff members at the UN agency for Palestinian refugees, UNWRA, may have been involved in the 7 October Hamas-led attack on Israel, the United Nations says. All nine would have their employment terminated, said UN deputy spokesperson Farhan Haq. He said the UN had completed an investigation following allegations by Israel that UNWRA staff were involved. About 1,200 people were killed

and 251 others were taken back to Gaza as hostages in the unprecedented assault last autumn. Since the attack, the Israeli military operation in Gaza has killed more than 38,400 Palestinians, according to the Hamas-run health ministry. Mr Haq did not specify what the men's precise involvement may have been.

"For us, any participation in the attacks is a tremendous betrayal of the sort of work that we are supposed to be doing on

behalf of the Palestinian people," he said. An Israeli Defense Forces spokesperson said the report showed UNWRA had hit a "new low". The UN investigated 19 members of UNWRA staff in all, after Israel alleged that 12 took part in the attack. Israel later claimed that more than 450 UNWRA staff were members of terrorist groups, but a UN review published in April found Israel had not provided evidence for its claims.

13 killed and 300 evacuated after deadly landslide

ADDIS ABABA (AP): A landslide triggered by heavy rains in southern Ethiopia's Wolaita area killed at least 13 people and the number of fatalities is expected to rise, a local official said. Samuel Fola, zone chief administrator of Wolaita, said more than 300 people have been evacuated from the area in Kindo Didaye district and that the number of those unaccounted for remains unknown.

"Children are among the dead," said Fola. "We have now evacuated more than 300 people as a precaution and in anticipation of yet another likely major landslide." A frantic rescue effort was underway in the Wolaita area, according to the regional government.

Landslide appeared to be less deadly than one that occurred last month in another area in southern Ethiopia where more than 200 people were killed. Landslides are common during Ethiopia's rainy season, which started in July and is expected to last until mid-September. With little infrastructure, the mountainous areas of Wolaita have been prone to such accidents. In 2016, more than 41 people died and hundreds were displaced in the same area after heavy rains triggered a deadly mudslide. Last month, in neighboring Gamo Gofa, a major mudslide claimed the lives of more than 229 people. The United Nations Office for Human Rights (OCHA) said the toll could be as high as 500. Deadly mudslides often occur in the wider East African region, from Uganda's mountainous east to central Kenya's highlands. In April, at least 45 people were killed in Kenya's Rift Valley region when flash floods and a landslide swept through houses and cut off a major road.

US Supreme Court refuses to halt Trump's sentencing

WASHINGTON: The US Supreme Court has declined to halt Donald Trump's upcoming sentencing for his conviction in state court in New York on felony charges involving hush money paid to a porn star and a related gag order until after the upcoming presidential election.

Decision by the justices has come in response to a lawsuit by the state of Missouri claiming that the case against Trump infringed on the right of voters under the US Constitution to hear from the Republican presidential nominee as he seeks to regain the White House. The Supreme Court's order was unsigned.

Conservative Justices Clarence Thomas and Samuel Alito indicated they would have allowed Missouri Attorney General Andrew Bailey, a Republican, to file the suit, though not grant his push to quickly lift the gag order and delay sentencing. Bailey argued that the New York gag order, which Missouri wanted stayed until after the election, wrongly limits what the GOP presidential nominee can say on the campaign trail around the country, and Trump's eventual sentence could affect his ability to travel. "The actions by New York have created constitutional harms that threaten to infringe the rights of Missouri's voters and electors," he wrote. While the Supreme Court typically hears appeals, it can act as a trial court in state conflicts. Democratic New York Attorney General Letitia James argued that appeals are moving through state courts and there's no state-on-state conflict that would allow the Supreme Court to weigh in at this point. "Allowing Missouri to file this suit for such relief against New York would permit an extraordinary and dangerous end-run around former President Trump's ongoing state court proceedings," she wrote. Trump was found guilty in May of falsifying business records to cover up a \$130,000 payment to porn star Stormy Daniels in exchange for her silence before the 2016 US election about a sexual encounter she has said she had with Trump. — Aljazeera

Lebanese grapple with fear and tough choices as war looms

BEIRUT: On July 27, Loubna El-Amine was waiting to board a connecting flight from Romania to Lebanon's capital Beirut, having travelled from her family's home in the United Kingdom. As boarding started, El-Amine received news that a projectile had killed 12 Druze children and young people in the Israeli-occupied Golan Heights.

Israel blamed the Lebanese armed group Hezbollah, which denied responsibility for the incident. Fearing how Israel would respond, El-Amine, a Lebanese-American, discussed with her husband whether to board with their three children or not. Moments later, they got on the plane. Shortly after they arrived in Beirut, Israel assassinated one of Hezbollah's top commanders, Fuad Shukur, by launching a rocket into a residential building in Dahiyeh, a district in southern Beirut. They then killed Hamas's political chief Ismail Haniyeh in Iran's capital Tehran during the inauguration of President Masoud Pezeshkian.

Both assassinations have pushed the region to the brink of an all-out war. Iran and Hezbollah have both vowed to retaliate against Israel, likely via a coordinated attack alongside other Iranian-allied armed groups in the region, analysts have previously told Al Jazeera. The shadow of a major war has compelled El-Amine and her husband to cut their trip short and book a flight to Turkey for August 10, while some commercial flights are still available. "Even if there doesn't end up being direct danger, we had to think if we really wanted to put our children through this level of stress," El-Amine, 40, told Al Jazeera from a cafe in Hamra, a bustling district in Beirut. El-Amine is one of millions of Lebanese civilians wrestling with life-and-death decisions as they wait anxiously to see if a major conflict with Israel will devour their tiny country, which has under six million people and lies to Israel's north. Many are trying to live day-to-day despite the growing fear that a broader conflict is imminent, while also holding faint hope that regional tensions won't boil over.

"The tensions feel different this time [since the Israeli assassination]," El-Amine said, in resignation. "But a part of me hopes that maybe there will be a ceasefire tomorrow, somehow." Since October 8, Hezbollah has engaged Israel in a low-level conflict in a stated attempt to "reduce pressure" on Hamas in Gaza, where Israel has killed about 40,000 people and displaced nearly the entire 2.3 million



population. Israel's war on Gaza began after a Hamas-led attack on Israeli military outposts and communities on October 7, in which 1,139 people were killed and 250 were taken captive. Hezbollah has repeatedly promised to stop attacking Israel if a ceasefire is secured in Gaza, but despite negotiations ongoing for months, no deal has been agreed. In Lebanon, the blame for that is largely placed on Israel, with the perception that Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's government does not actually want an agreement, and wants to continue the war in Gaza, and expand it to the wider region.

In light of that, many Lebanese civilians see continued Western support for Israel as a moral failure and cannot bring themselves to escape to Europe or North America. "I do not want to go and pay taxes to these murderers," said Majd Akaar, a software engineer working from a cafe in Hamra. "It would also feel very wrong on a fundamental level to leave right now, as if I'm abandoning Lebanon and my people."

Akaar acknowledged that he has some trepidation about what could befall Lebanon in a regional war. He described a recent traumatising call with a friend in south Lebanon, which has suffered the brunt of Israel's attacks since October. They were on a video call when his friend showed him an ordnance that fell near his home and then suddenly exploded. "I remember just hearing her screaming. I panicked until she called me back 10 minutes later," recalled Akaar, 36. In a small bedding and furniture store on the corner of Hamra Street, Sirine Sinou said that her family can't possibly leave Lebanon or else they will lose their business.

She added that her husband and

two children are not taking major precautions - such as buying food or house supplies in bulk - in case a larger war breaks out. "We did that during the coronavirus [COVID-19 pandemic] and then we ended up throwing out so much stuff," she told Al Jazeera. "Whatever is written [our fate], is going to happen." In the event that Israel begins bombing neighbourhoods and civilian structures in Beirut - a strategy Israel calls the "Dahiya doctrine" in reference to the Dahiyeh/Dahiya neighbourhood, and which it used in the 2006 war against Hezbollah - then Sinou and her family may head to their small ancestral village in north Lebanon, which is far from the capital. Assad Georges, 21, is another who says he is staying put in his hometown of Zahle - which is about 55 kilometres (34 miles) from Beirut - if a major conflict erupts. He spoke to Al Jazeera while waiting with his girlfriend to have lunch with his parents in Hamra. They held hands as Georges spoke about the terrifying sounds of war that he frequently hears in his town.

"There is nothing too serious happening in Zahle now, but we do often hear bombs and sonic booms hitting towns to the west of us," he told Al Jazeera. Minutes before his parents walked into the restaurant, Georges said that civilians have been on edge for months due to the cycle of tensions mounting and then simmering down. However, he does believe that a wider conflict now looms over Lebanon. "With the US and UK sending warships [to the coast of Israel], it feels like they are preparing for something to happen," he said, clapping his girlfriend's hand. "Now that Israel is almost finished in Gaza, I think their next plan is to try and get rid of Hezbollah."

Aung admits pressure after Myanmar anti-coup forces claim base

YANGON: Myanmar's army chief and coup leader Senior General Min Aung Hlaing has acknowledged his troops are under pressure after anti-coup fighters claimed to have taken control of a key military base in the northeastern town of Lashio.

The Myanmar National Democratic Alliance Army (MNDAA), part of a powerful alliance of ethnic armed groups fighting to remove the military from power, said it had overrun the headquarters of the army's Northeastern Command at the weekend. Min Aung Hlaing did not directly address the situation in Lashio but indicated that in northern Shan State, "security forces withdrew their positions" for security reasons and because they were concerned about the safety of people living there.

The army chief, whose comments were published in full in Tuesday's official Global New Light of Myanmar, accused anti-coup forces of abuses, attacking civilians and military hospitals and working with "stooges at home and abroad" to demoralise the population. Their weaponry, including drones, was also becoming more sophisticated, he said. The military seized power in February 2021 from the elected government of Aung San Suu Kyi and her National League for Democracy party.

The coup led to mass protests that evolved into an armed rebellion when the military responded with force. Nearly 5,500 civilians have been killed in the fighting while some 20,715 are in jail for criticising the military, according to the Assistance Association for Political Prisoners, which has been tracking the situation. Rights groups have also said the military should be investigated for potential war crimes over attacks on civilians. Lashio lies about 110km (70 miles) south of the Chinese border and has been an MNDAA target since it launched the second phase of Operation 1027 in early July. It took the border

city of Laukkai, notorious as a hub for criminality and the capital of the Mandarin-speaking Kokang region, in January.

The armed alliance, which also includes the Ta'ang National Liberation Army (TNLA) and Mandalay People's Defence Force (PDF), had already claimed recent advances, taking areas including Mogoke, known for its lucrative ruby mines, and the northern Shan State towns of Kyaukse and Nawnghko.

On August 2, the MNDAA said it had completely captured the Northeast Command headquarters and defeated the remaining army units in the city. "The regime's loss of the Northeast Command is the most humiliating defeat of the war," said Morgan Michaels, a Singapore-based analyst with the International Institute of Strategic Studies who runs its Myanmar Conflict Map project. "Without Lashio, it will be extremely difficult for the regime to hold onto

its final outposts in the theatre."

The MNDAA is part of the Three Brotherhood Alliance which also includes the TNLA and the Arakan Army, which is fighting the military in western Rakhine state. The MNDAA initially claimed the capture of the Northeast Command and Lashio on July 25, but the army continued to fight. Major General Zaw Min Tun, the spokesperson for Myanmar's ruling military council, said in an audio statement on state-run MRTV television that it had lost contact with commanders of the Northeast Command headquarters. He did not address MNDAA's claim of capturing the base.

Myanmar's military has 14 regional commands across the country and soldiers in at least 10 of them are currently engaged in fighting established ethnic minority armed groups or the newer PDFs. The fall of the Lashio HQ marks the first loss of a regional command centre. — Aljazeera

Why is a pro-Israel lobby targeting US Congress member Cori Bush?

WASHINGTON: On Tuesday, a progressive Democrat will fight to save her seat in the United States Congress - against a threat from within her own party. That Democrat, Cori Bush, faces a punishing primary challenge from county prosecutor Wesley Bell, as they both compete to represent Missouri in the House of Representatives.

But experts say their battle boils down to one central issue: how to approach Israel's war in Gaza. Bush, a member of the progressive "squad" in Congress, has been vocal in her opposition to Israel's military offensive, which has claimed more than 39,600 Palestinian lives. She maintains that the primary challenge she faces is part of a larger effort to silence critics of Israel, a longtime US ally - and sow division among Democrats. "This is only the beginning," Bush told the Associated Press in an interview published last week. "Because if

they can unseat me, then they're going to continue to come after more Democrats." Political observers have also noted that Bush's rival, Bell, has the backing of powerful pro-Israel lobbies. Their race is the latest Democratic primary to see a massive injection of cash from the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC) and its affiliated super PAC, the United Democratic Project (UDP). Those two organisations have poured \$8.4m into backing Bell's bid for Congress. In this explainer, Al Jazeera breaks down the issues at stake in the Missouri race - and what the outcome could mean for the future of the Democratic Party. The Democratic primary is taking place on Tuesday, August 6. It will determine which Democratic candidate will proceed to the general election on November 5, for a chance to represent Missouri's First

Congressional District. That district includes the city of St Louis, a major metropolitan area on the Mississippi River, near the border with Illinois. It is considered a solidly Democratic area, though Missouri as a whole tilts to the right. Bush, a 48-year-old nurse and pastor, rose to fame as an activist following the police killing of Michael Brown, a Black teenager, in the city of Ferguson, Missouri, in 2014. She credits the horror of Brown's death - and the protests that erupted afterwards - with propelling her to enter politics. Initially, she made two failed bids for Congress, losing a Senate race in 2016 and a race for the House in 2018. But in 2020, her fortunes changed. She unseated 20-year veteran Lacy Clay in the Democratic primary that year and ultimately won the race to represent Missouri's First Congressional District. Her election was part of a wave of progressive victo-

ries across the country, including Jamaal Bowman's upset win in New York. Other prominent progressives, including Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez and Rashida Tlaib, successfully defended their seats that year too. Bush became the first Black woman to represent her district in Congress.

Wesley Bell has been the prosecuting attorney for St Louis County since 2018. He is the first Black man to hold the office. Like Bush, Bell was also active during the Ferguson protests, working "directly to calm tensions between residents and the police", according to his campaign website. He worked on a council that liaised with the US Department of Justice to create a plan to reform the criminal justice system in Ferguson. But like his predecessor in the prosecutor's office, Bell faced criticism for declining to bring charges against the officer involved in Brown's killing. — Aljazeera

Palestine is a glimpse of the dystopic future that awaits us

PUTTING my two girls to bed is a daily ritual for me. I lie down in their bed and have one by each side. We read a story, and they play around, tease each other, tease me. Finally, I ask them to go to bed firmly, and they fall asleep in a second.

Recently we had particularly intense weather here in Oslo, with loud thunderstorms disturbing our routine. The girls were scared of the deafening sound that sometimes seemed so close that it even scared me, but I kept it together for them.

As they curled closer to me, I reassured them with the same words my own parents used when I was a child to calm me and my siblings down: that we were safe and that God is the most merciful, so not to worry.

Still, the girls asked a million questions as children often do: Who sends the thunder? Why does God do this to us? Doesn't God see and hear everything?

As I struggled to answer amid the thunderstorm, I thought about Gaza. At that moment, somewhere in the ruins of a home or in a tent, a Palestinian father was also hugging his two daughters and struggling to answer similar questions.

My thoughts raced. What was he telling his children? That it is not God, the most merciful, making the scary, thunderous sounds, but a kid in a military uniform behind a screen, playing god and making decisions about who lives and who dies with a touch of a button? How do you explain a high-tech genocide to a child? How do you tell them that they are living in an extermination campaign of the future?

As I lay there with my two scared girls, I thought about what Gaza is and what it tells us about our own future and the future of our children.

I am somewhat of a sci-fi buff. Over the past three decades, I have consumed hundreds of science fiction movies, series and comic books. As I read the news and watch videos of the reality the people of Palestine face today, I cannot but get constant *deja vu* of scenes, concepts and scenarios that I have seen repeatedly in the dystopia genre.

The ongoing genocide in Gaza is perhaps the most technology-enabled in the history of humanity. Every aspect of the extermination is powered by technology: the bombs, the shooting, the decisions on who lives and who dies.

The trendy “Artificial Intelligence” (AI) is of course all over it. An AI program called *Lavender* has the names of nearly everyone in Gaza and churns out suggestions for people to attack based on “data inputs”, such as

social media use. Another system called “the Gospel” generates endless numbers of “military targets”, including residential buildings. A third AI invention called grotesquely “Where’s Daddy?” checks if a “suspect” is at home so they can be bombed – which usually kills their families and neighbours as well.

What is going on in Gaza really sounds like a plot of a Hollywood movie about AI going rogue. But it is more than

Khalid Albaih

diers willing to go along with genocide – some appearing to even enjoy it.

Israel’s genocidal AI technology has been empowered and fed by another major high-tech sector: surveillance. Israel’s tremendous progress in surveillance technology has been driven by the need to control the population it occupies.

In what Amnesty International calls “automated apartheid”, the

crowded Palestinian enclave. “Sometimes I have to put the pillow on my head so I don’t hear its buzz,” she added.

Back then, Israel would fly drones above Gaza for 4,000 flying hours every month – the equivalent of having five such aircraft permanently in the sky.

In the occupied West Bank and East Jerusalem, the situation has been no better. There, Israel has deployed vast networks of security cameras,

The ongoing genocide in Gaza is perhaps the most technology-enabled in the history of humanity. Every aspect of the extermination is powered by technology: the bombs, the shooting, the decisions on who lives and who dies. The trendy “Artificial Intelligence” (AI) is of course all over it. An AI program called Lavender has the names of nearly everyone in Gaza and churns out suggestions for people to attack based on “data inputs”, such as social media use. Another system called “the Gospel” generates endless numbers of “military targets”, including residential buildings. A third AI invention called grotesquely “Where’s Daddy?” checks if a “suspect” is at home so they can be bombed – which usually kills their families and neighbours as well. What is going on in Gaza really sounds like a plot of a Hollywood movie about AI going rogue. But it is more than that. It is also what war will look like in our near future: humans will hide behind screens and let technology carry out the killing. The Israelis are doing that quite extensively already. The use of drones and quadcopters to shoot at civilians even in their homes has been well-documented. Fearing Hamas’s tunnels, they have also deployed dog-shaped robots to explore the underground. Seeing images of these reminded me of Metalhead, an episode of the British sci-fi series, Black Mirror, in which AI-powered robot dogs hunt people. Another aspect of the use of AI and other high tech is that it brings the Israeli campaign of dehumanising Palestinians to a grand finish. There is nothing that says more clearly “We do not consider Palestinians human” than allowing technology to kill them indiscriminately. Indeed, the Israelis have perfected dehumanisation. They do not need to implant their soldiers with neurochips – like in the Black Mirror episode Men Against Fire – so they do not feel remorse. The extensive brainwashing in Israeli schools and society has rendered the majority of Israeli sol-

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Israeli authorities have deployed such sophisticated surveillance mechanisms – and so many of them – that Palestine today looks like a much worse version of George Orwell’s 1984.

In Orwell’s novel, an omnipresent regime watches every move of its subjects, its surveillance and repression penetrating and destroying the most intimate, the most precious aspects of human life. The Israeli apartheid regime works in similar ways.

There is not a Palestinian cry, not a Palestinian sigh that the Israeli colonial regime does not know about. It knows everything about everyone. By using powerful technological tools – from drones, to various hacking software, high-tech cameras and special facial recognition instruments – it has gained access to all Palestinian public and private spaces.

“[T]he drone is constantly with me in my bedroom – worry and fear don’t leave our homes,” a Palestinian teenager told the AFP in 2022, a year before the war started.

She said she had trouble sleeping and concentrating because of the constant buzzing sound of Israeli military drones

many pointed directly at the windows of Palestinian homes, closely watching family life.

It is also extensively using facial recognition technology. There have been media reports of the so-called Blue Wolf program, in which soldiers are encouraged to take photos of Palestinians, including children and the elderly, to feed a database, with prizes awarded to the units that gather the most.

The psychological toll of feeling constantly watched can be immense. Indeed, it is akin to the oppressive atmosphere in Orwell’s dystopian world.

But the impact of surveillance goes beyond instilling anxiety and fear. Just like in 1984, Israel’s surveillance monster machine uses information about Palestinians’ private affairs against them.

It is one of its most destructive methods of recruiting informants and collaborators, which undermines internal cohesion and solidarity among Palestinians and destroys families and friendships.

There is one more aspect of Orwell’s novel that I see in the Israeli genocide of the Palestinians: the propensity for double-speak.

Genocide is “self-defence”; Palestinian civilians are “terrorists” or “not innocent”; resistance fighters are “terrorists”; colonialism and land theft are “making the desert bloom”.

Talking about “making the desert bloom” – this is among the spin Israel is putting on its genocidal campaign in Gaza as well. In May, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu’s office released information about its Gaza 2035 plan, which has the strip looking like a high-tech, prosperous city of the future, with a port, a railway and glitzy residential buildings. This is what Gaza will look like 10 years after the genocide – its survivors enjoying the sweet life of economic progress, bestowed upon them by their Israeli genocidaires.

It sounds almost like a plot taken out of The Matrix trilogy, where the oppressors force the oppressed into a virtual reality of an easy life to blind them to their reality – a life of slavery and exploitation.

But promises of material prosperity have not dissuaded Palestinians from giving up on their homeland before. This ruse will not work in the future, either.

There is an iconic scene in The Matrix illustrating a very human choice between obedience and resistance. Neo has to choose between a blue pill, which maintains the illusion, and a red one – which breaks it. The Palestinian people have made that choice long ago; for them, the blue pill has never been an option.

The question now is what choice we will make in the face of the very real possibility that what we see in Gaza today will become the new normal in the very near future. Do we ignore it, and swallow the blue pill? Or do we wake up with the red one?

For many people in the world, the genocide in Gaza may seem like a faraway tragedy – one that cannot happen to them. But these killing and surveillance technologies Israel is testing on the Palestinians are up for sale. And many governments and non-state actors have their eyes on them.

“Just as Israel’s technological revolution provided the world with breathtaking innovation, I am confident that AI developed by Israel will benefit all of humanity,” Netanyahu said ominously at the United Nations General Assembly in September 2023, less than three weeks before his army launched a genocidal war.

As I lay next to my two sleeping girls, I fear for their future. I fear that not enough of us are willing to see reality for what it is and take a stance now before it is too late, before the whole world slips down the path towards Gaza.

The victory of Bangladesh’s student movement should not surprise anyone

Jennifer Chowdhury

TWENTY-FIVE-YEAR-OLD Abu Sayed, the son of a farmer and one of nine children, was a successful scholarship student at one of Bangladesh’s finest universities. He dreamed of one day securing a government job that would guarantee economic stability, and perhaps propel his family into upward mobility. But when the government introduced a new quota system that awarded the descendants of “freedom fighters” – the people who liberated Bangladesh from Pakistan in 1971 – a shocking 30 percent of these highly coveted government jobs, his dreams were dashed.

Sayed knew that there are 18 million unemployed young people in Bangladesh at the moment, and he did not want to be part of this damning statistic once he graduated. So he became a lead coordinator in a countrywide movement to reform the quota system, which came to be known as “Students Against Discrimination”.

At one protest, he stood some 15 metres (50 feet) away from the Bangladesh police and stretched his arms out in defiance.

They shot him dead.

The video of this blatant extrajudicial killing was shared like wildfire online, igniting a fire that brought hundreds and thousands of students across the country into the streets. Educators, lawyers, parents and rickshaw pullers joined them in solidarity, in anger and mourning over the death of Sayed and more than 200 other protesters who died at the hands of government-aligned student activists and armed forces.

Their efforts, and the real risks they took, were not in vain.

The High Court revised the quota system, assigning just seven percent of the jobs to the descendants of freedom fighters.

But even this massive concession did not prove enough to end the unrest.

The violence inflicted on it had drastically changed the student movement. The students now wanted to achieve much more than merely fixing the quota system. They wanted meaningful, systemic change. They wanted a new government, and they wanted Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina to resign.

To the shock of much of the world, their demands were met earlier today.

Recognising that she would not be able to break the resolve of the student movement – a movement that represents the very future of Bangladesh – Sheikh Hasina resigned from her post and hastily left the country in a military aircraft. A student movement, led by idealistic youths like Abu Sayed, managed to get an autocrat who ruled the country with an iron fist for 15 years to escape without looking back after five short weeks.

The success of this movement is the strongest proof that Bangladeshi people are no longer content with economic progress at the cost of human rights, free speech and democracy.

Indeed, in the past decade, Bangladesh under the leadership of Sheikh Hasina and her Awami

League flourished economically. But as the economy went from success to success, the government assumed that this meant it could trample on the civil rights and freedoms of the population with impunity, ban opposition parties and rule as it wished, with no respect or consideration for the country’s laws and global democratic norms.

Indeed, for 15 years, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina boasted at every chance she got about how she had slashed poverty in half in the least developing country, and used the country’s economic successes to divert attention from the large number of journalists and activists who were killed, jailed or disappeared for the sole crime of daring to criticise her government.

But Hasina’s attempt to present human rights abuses, oppression, corruption and inequality as an inevitable price that needs to be paid for economic prosperity was an attempt that massively backfired. In the last decade or so, as a new generation came of age in what is repeatedly described as a “prosperous country that is on the rise”, something started to change in the psyche of the nation.

Since Bangladesh secured its independence from Pakistan in 1971, youths in the country, traumatised by the violence inflicted on them and their elders by the Pakistani army, have largely been responding to the political imbalances and injustices that took hold in the newly founded republic in two ways: by trying to work within the system, or leaving.

Indeed, a large number of Bangladeshis in my parents’ generation left the country in droves in the 80s and 90s for the United States, United Kingdom, Europe and even the Middle East in search of better futures. The ones who remained largely kept their heads low and refrained from resisting the government’s excesses.

But in recent years, Gen Z Bangladeshis coming of age began to gravitate towards a third option. Unlike their parents, their dream and ambition was not to leave for the West, or stay and work the system. Their dream was to stay and reform the country. They were not willing to accept the human rights abuses of a corrupt government as the price they needed to pay for economic progress.

Between 2018 and 2020, I interviewed dozens of young people while working as a foreign correspondent in Bangladesh. Almost all of them were incredibly proud of the country’s rapid economic and technological progress, but were in despair over the declines in human rights and democracy. They loved their country, and they wanted to show their love by making things better, not staying silent.

At first glance, it seems the students miraculously toppled Hasina’s all-powerful government in five short weeks, but this revolution was years in the making. Those who participated in the student protests this year – those who gave up their lives –

grew up watching the country prosper as the government became more and more authoritarian and abusive.

Many had spent almost all their young lives looking for ways to decouple economic progress from democratic degradation. In 2018, after a bus lost control and killed two teenagers, the road safety movement was born. Students demanded safer streets by taking over the streets for five days, checking licenses and directing traffic which is notoriously difficult to navigate in Bangladesh. That same year, a student movement successfully led to the overturn of the quota system. In 2019, they took to the streets in droves after a student was killed by pro-government activists for his Facebook post criticising the government.

Throughout all these movements, students saw for themselves how the government often blamed opposition parties for the violence perpetrated against protesters, even though government’s own student wing was often responsible for it. They also saw how their elders and those in power pointed to economic successes of the nation as a reason to be supportive of the current government’s actions and policies.

Time and again, their revolutionary spirits were disheartened. Yet as they went from teenagers to young people in their mid 20s, they expanded their knowledge and maturity while managing to keep their passion alive. They wanted to free Bangladesh from its suffocating government and help it reach its true potential – as a democratic nation that respects and protects the rights of all its citizens.

Today, after five weeks of bloodshed, pain, fear and heartache, they achieved their dream. Young Bangladeshis are now in charge of the country and perhaps for the first time in their lives, they have reason to be hopeful for the future.

Sure, there will now be a caretaker government overseen by the Bangladeshi army. Some people are worried about this prospect, as in the past, such governments proved not ideal for protecting human rights and furthering democracy. But student leaders, who brought us to this moment, have already vowed that they will make sure this interim government will not be like any the country has seen before. They promised they will make sure this new government does not step out of line and does not take power away from the people. And I know they will hold to their word, because this is their country, their future, and their lifelong dream that they risked all they ever had to achieve.

This revolution is a clear message from youths to those who have long held on to and abused power, not only in Bangladesh, but across the world. Your time is over. Members of a new generation – not willing to give up on their rights, and ready to fight for justice at great personal cost – are now in charge. Change is now inevitable. We must all get on board, or get off the train.

It isn't just Netanyahu the US should point fingers at for the Middle East conflict

Dr James Zogby

WHY – in the midst of critical negotiations to implement US President Joe Biden’s plan to bring about a ceasefire in Gaza, release Israelis held captive by Hamas and a significant number of Palestinians held by Israel, and move towards a negotiated permanent end to the conflict – would Israel decide to assassinate the chief Hamas negotiator while he was visiting Iran?

And why – while the US says it was working to de-escalate tensions with Lebanon’s Hezbollah – would Israel choose to up the ante by assassinating Hezbollah’s number two? We know the answers to both questions: Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu is clearly not interested in peace. He doesn’t appear to want a negotiated deal to release hostages and end the war on Gaza. He doesn’t want

to de-escalate the conflict in Gaza or in the north with Hezbollah. And he most certainly doesn’t want a “two-state solution” that would grant the Palestinian people independence in a sovereign state of their own.

There are two things Mr Netanyahu does seem to want, and at this point, both are perversely connected.

Above all, he desperately wants to remain in office, because should he lose his post as Prime Minister, the prosecution of the corruption charges against him will continue in full force. As the charges are so serious and the evidence so clear, he will probably be convicted and humiliated. This is not speculation – it’s widely discussed in Israel and was even hinted at by Mr Biden in a May 28 interview with Time magazine. When he was asked, “Is Netanyahu prolonging the war for political reasons?”, Mr Biden

responded: “There is every reason for people to draw that conclusion.”

The second reason is that Mr Netanyahu wants the war to continue and even be accelerated. He made this clear in his remarks before US Congress and in an address to the Israeli public a few days ago. He seeks “total victory”, which he defines as more than the military defeat of Israel’s enemies.

Without acknowledging any Israeli culpability, he charged that the Palestinians had created a hate-filled culture which in the post-war period would require massive de-radicalisation – the outcome of which would seemingly have Palestinians accepting Jewish hegemony in Israel and understanding their place as a conquered and subordinate people. This is the messianic Zionist vision that has long driven Mr Netanyahu and which he now sees as possible, but

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mies – meaning Mr Netanyahu’s Palestinians resisting

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occupation, Iran and its surrogates – are brought to heel. And this can only be realised if Israel can involve the US in their

regional conquest.

Mr Netanyahu’s worldview raises several

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additional questions that must be considered. If we know that Mr Netanyahu has never accepted the terms of the Biden plan,

why has the US President continued to maintain that it was “Israel’s plan” and placed the burden on Hamas to accept it?

And if we know that Mr Netanyahu is unwilling to make any peace agreement for fear of losing his other extremist coalition partners (who have threatened to abandon his government should he accept any terms leading to peace), why do we continue to dance around that fact?

Why hasn’t the administration condemned the assassinations in Beirut and Iran when it knows that it will surely sabotage the efforts of negotiators?

Why, when we know that Mr Netanyahu has no intention of completing a deal to release those held captive, do we continue to allow him to exploit the pain of their families, pretending that negotiations are close to completion when we know they aren’t? And why, when we

know that the demands and actions of Mr Netanyahu’s extremist coalition partners are wreaking havoc in the West Bank and Jerusalem – terrorising the Palestinian population, annexing more land, building more settlements and erasing the possibility of Palestinian self-determination – has much of the international community been so passive and tolerant in response?

Let’s be clear: Hamas and Hezbollah are not good actors. The former was born of the brutal and sustained Israeli occupation of Palestinian land. It was nurtured by Israel to create division in the Palestinian ranks and fuelled by Israel’s ruthless, decades-long strangulation of the population of Gaza.

Hezbollah was born of Israel’s invasion of Lebanon and by that country’s corrupt sectarian system that denied the Shiite community ade-

quate representation and resources. It was fuelled by Israel’s decades-long occupation of Lebanon’s south and massive devastation of the country’s infrastructure in 2006. To be sure, both have engaged in condemnable actions. But to criticise only them, while absolving Israel of its far greater crimes, is hypocrisy at best.

If the US were serious about ending conflict in the region, instead of turning a blind eye to Israel’s behaviour that is deliberately designed to provoke more war, international stakeholders need to stop playing games and get serious about holding Israel accountable.

This leads to one final question: why, when the US continues to massively supply Israel with weapons and block all efforts to sanction their deplorable behaviour, does Washington expect that anything will change?



Governor SBP launches NIBAF Pakistan

F.P. Report

KARACHI: The Governor of the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP), Jameel Ahmad, emphasized the importance of developing skills and setting high standards for the financial sector in the country. He addressed the audience at the launch ceremony of NIBAF Pakistan; a new entity formed by the merger of the National Institute of Banking and Finance

(NIBAF) and the Institute of Bankers Pakistan (IBP).

Governor, Ahmad stated that NIBAF Pakistan will leverage the combined expertise of NIBAF and IBP to offer a wide range of training programs, certifications, qualifications and assessment services tailored to needs of the financial industry.

He praised the hard work of the team involved in the merger, highlighting the improved efficiency and

new opportunities that will come from this union.

He shared his vision of making NIBAF Pakistan a leading institute for learning and development in banking and finance, with a focus on innovation and adopting global standards.

Ahmad also noted that this merger aligns with national goals of advancing professional development, promoting best practices and supporting economic development

initiatives. He encouraged banks and financial institutions to actively collaborate with NIBAF Pakistan and utilize its resources for positive change and building a strong financial sector.

The launch event took place at the NIBAF Pakistan Karachi Office and was attended by leaders from the finance and banking sectors, corporate sector, development agencies, and academia.



KARACHI: Governor State Bank of Pakistan Jameel Ahmad addressing audience at launching ceremony of NIBAF Pakistan.

EveryWater brings clean drinking water to underserved areas

F.P. Report

KARACHI: EveryWater, in collaboration with notable partners, has successfully facilitated the provision of convenient and sustainable water purification solutions to flood-affected communities in Chitral, Pakistan.

Earlier in February this year, over 200 units of EveryWater's innovative and easy-to-use water filtration devices were distributed among as many households, helping them meet their safe drinking water needs for two years.

Govt urged to promptly solve taxpayers' problems

LAHORE (APP): The Lahore Chamber of Commerce and Industry (LCCI) has expressed deep concerns regarding the steep charges imposed for electronic compliance as stipulated under SRO 428(I)/2024.

According to the LCCI spokesman here Tuesday told media here Tuesday that in a letter to Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, LCCI President Kashif Anwar said that these charges would be placing more burden on the business community.

The LCCI President said that the business community in Pakistan is facing severe economic challenges including inflation, rupee devaluation, high energy costs and high interest rate.

Kashif Anwar conveyed deep concerns regarding the exorbitant charges quoted by the sole license holder for integrating electronic invoicing systems with the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) as mandated by SRO 428(I)/2024 dated March 22, 2024.

He said that the business community has already been adversely affected by recent amendments to the Finance Act 2024, as well as certain SROs including SRO 350(I)/2024 and SRO 1842(I)/2023.

This effective solution, comprised of storage units fitted with EveryWater's innovative high-flow filter, addresses the challenge of readily accessing safe drinking water, especially in the aftermath of flash floods in the region.

Addressing this thoughtful initiative, Syed Javed, Chief Executive Officer of EveryWater, remarked, "Our efforts are centered around the wellbeing of all people. We are humbled to have played a part in ensuring safe, drinkable water for the hard-hit community of Chitral, where we have witnessed a drop in incidents of ailments from 23% to under 1% in one month."

He expressed his desire to continue working with institutions supporting the cause of containing the spread of waterborne diseases in the future as well.

Previously, in partnership with large corpora-

tions, the company met the safe drinking water needs of over 50,000 households in South Punjab, Sindh, and Baluchistan during the 2022 floods.

EveryWater is on a mission to restore the basic human right of ready access to safe drinking water, bring convenient water purification solutions to the masses, and significantly limit the proliferation of waterborne diseases.

In this endeavor, EveryWater seeks like-minded public and private entities for identifying and collaborating in the implementation of impactful interventions, especially in the underserved regions of Sindh and Baluchistan, where access to clean water and other essential resources remains scarce for most people.

Under the Hashoo Group umbrella, EveryWater commits its efforts to the

Sustainable Development Goals set by the United Nations, particularly goals number 6 (Clean Water and Sanitation) and number 3 (Good Health and Well-being). By facilitating seamless access to healthy water, EveryWater aims to ensure enhanced well-being for all citizens.

EveryWater provides a variety of innovative water purification solutions, suitable for personal, community, and municipal use.

Hashoo Group is Pakistan's premium conglomerate, with a diversified business portfolio spanning both national and international markets. The Group owns and operates the Pearl-Continental Hotels & Resorts, PC Legacy, and Hotel One brands in Pakistan and has business interests encompassing the information technology, investment, travel & tourism, and real estate sectors.

Lucky Core Industries announces financial results — 330% final cash dividend announced

F.P. Report

KARACHI: The meeting of the Board of Directors, Lucky Core Industries Limited (the "Company") announced its financial results for the year ended June 30, 2024.

Financial Highlights: The Company reported strong growth across all key metrics. On a consolidated basis (including the result of the Company's subsidiary Lucky Core PowerGen Limited), the Company reported a Net Turnover of PKR 120,635 million for the year under review, representing a 10% increase over the same period last year (SPLY).

The consolidated Operating Result stood at PKR 17,254 million, which is higher by 17% in comparison to the SPLY.

On a consolidated basis, the Profit After Tax (PAT) for the year under review at PKR 11,163 million is 37%

lower than the SPLY, whereas Earning Per Share (EPS) attributable to the owners of the holding company at PKR 120.73 is 37% lower than the SPLY. Excluding the impact of the one-off gain from the partial divestment of shares of NutriCo Morinaga (Private) Limited in the SPLY, PAT and EPS attributed to the owners of the holding company would have been higher by 37% and 41% respectively.

On a standalone basis, the PAT and EPS for the year under review at PKR 11,140 million and PKR 120.62 respectively, is 19% lower than the SPLY. Excluding the impact of a one-off gain from the partial divestment of shares of NutriCo Morinaga (Private) Limited in the SPLY, PAT and EPS would have been higher by 41% mainly on account of higher Operating Results and Other Income derived from

short-term investments.

The Board of Directors has recommended a Final Cash Dividend in respect of the financial year ended June 30, 2024, at a rate of 330% (i.e. PKR 33/- per share of PKR 10 each). This is in addition to the 270% Interim Cash Dividend (i.e. PKR 27/- per share) already paid.

LCI's Chief Executive Mr. Asif Joona said, "Despite navigating a challenging economic environment this fiscal year, Lucky Core Industries Limited has demonstrated remarkable resilience and growth. Our steadfast focus on excellence and forward-thinking strategies has driven significant achievements across our diverse business segments, reinforcing our mission of 'Improving Lives.' As we move forward, we remain dedicated to creating value for our stakeholders and shaping a prosperous future."

OGDCL announces discovery of gas condensate

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Oil and Gas Development Company Limited (OGDCL) on Tuesday announced the discovery of gas condensate in the Razgir-I exploratory well, in the Tal Block, located in the Kohat, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

The Razgir-I exploratory well was spudded-in on January 9, 2024, and has been successfully drilled down to a depth of 3774 meters True Vertical Depth (TVD). Based on the interpretation results of wireline logs data, the Kawagarh-I formation (Exploratory Target) was tested successfully at a rate of around 16.4 Million Standard Cubic Feet per Day (MMSCFD) of gas and 159 Barrels per Day (BPD) of condensate.

This was achieved at a choke size of 40/64" and a Wellhead Flowing Pressure (WHFP) of 1874 Pounds per Square Inch (Psi).

This significant discovery in the Tal Block de-risked further exploration play in the area, leading to new upside opportunities. The newfound hydrocarbon reserves will play a crucial role in enhancing the indigenous supply of hydrocarbons, thereby contributing to the country's energy security.

Oil and Gas Development Company Limited (OGDCL) is committed to exploring and developing the country's hydrocarbon resources efficiently and sustainably.

Shipping activity at PQ

KARACHI APP): Eight ships, TSS Amber, Dimitris-Y, San Diego Bridge, MSC Antonia, Singapore Bulker, Rakan-5, Leader and Clipper Eris scheduled to load/offload Container, Cement, Rice, Gas oil and Chemicals, berthed at Container Terminal, Multi-Purpose Terminal, Grain Terminal, FOTCO Oil Terminals and Engro Vopak Terminal respectively on Monday.

Meanwhile four more ships, Solar Catie, Khairpur, Jag Padma and Jipiro Neftis Palm oil, Mogas and Chemicals are also arrived at outer-anchorage of the Port Qasim during last 24 hours.

Twelve ships were engaged at PQA berths during the last 24 hours, out of them five ships, MSC Antonia, San Diego Bridge, Dimitris-Y, Clipper Eris and IVS North Berwick left the port on today morning while two more ships, TSS Amber and Corona are expected to sail on same day.

Cargo volume of 159,532 tonnes, comprising 94,137 tonnes imports cargo and 65,395 tonnes export cargo carried in 5,747 Containers (2,725 TEUs Imports & 3,022 TEUs Export) was handled at the port during last 24 hours.

Seven ships at Outer Anchorage of Port Qasim, out of them two ships, Saehan Jasper and Ginga Liger & another ship Maran Gas Asclepius carrying Palm oil, Chemicals and LNG are expected to take berth at LCT, EVTL and EETL respectively on Tuesday.

Meanwhile two more Container ships, MSC Positano and Maersk Cabo Verde are due to arrive at port on Wednesday.

PSX turns bullish, gains 106 points

ISLAMABAD (APP): The 100-index of the Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) turned around to bullish trend on Tuesday, gaining 106.85 points, a positive change of 0.14 percent, closing at 77,191.34 points against 77,084.49 points on the last working day.

A total of 600,896,301 shares were traded during the day as compared to 501,191,841 shares the previous day, whereas the price of shares stood at Rs 17.127 billion against Rs 21.057 billion on the last trading day.

As many as 443 companies transacted their shares in the stock market, 206 of them recorded gains and 176 sustained losses, whereas the share price of 61 companies remained unchanged.

The three top trading

companies were Kohinoor Spinning with 147,513,801 shares at Rs 6.10 per share, Yousuf Weaving with 53,670,089 shares at Rs 4.16 per share and Hascol Petrol with 41,384,191 shares at Rs 6.56 per share.

Nestle Pakistan Limited witnessed a maximum increase of Rs 148.69 per share price, closing at Rs 6,997.21, whereas the runner-up was Sapphire Fibres Limited with a Rs 109.60 rise in its per share price to Rs 1,589.70.

Unilever Pakistan Foods Limited witnessed a maximum decrease of Rs 165.50 per share closing at Rs 17,685.00 followed by JDW Sugar Mills Limited with a Rs 25.78 decline to close at Rs 485.47.

Gold rates dip by Rs500 per tola to Rs256,000
The per tola price of 24

karat gold decreased by Rs.500 and was sold at Rs.256,000 on Tuesday compared to its sale at Rs.256,500 on last trading day.

The price of 10 grams of 24 karat gold also decreased by Rs.428 to Rs.219,479 from Rs. 219,907 whereas the prices of 10 gram 22 karat gold went down to Rs.201,189 from Rs. 201,582, the All Sindh Sarafa Jewellers Association reported.

The price of per tola silver decreased by Rs.50 to Rs.2,850 whereas that of ten gram silver went down by Rs.42.87 to Rs.2,486.28 respectively.

The price of gold in the international market decreased by \$17 to \$2,410 from \$ 2,427, the Association reported.

ICCI organized dialogue on climate regulations by EU

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) on Tuesday organized a dialogue on climate regulations by the European Union (EU) and their impact on exports to highlight the issues and challenges faced by local exporters.

The discussion focused on the EU's stringent new trade regulations, which are part of the European Green Deal, a comprehensive policy initiative aimed at making Europe the first climate-neutral continent by 2050, said a press release issued here today.

The dialogue underscored the urgency of adapting to the EU's new trade regulations and highlighted the critical role of awareness and collaboration between Pakistani businesses, the government, and international partners like the ITC. The discussions paved the way for future cooperation and set the stage for a more sustainable and resilient trade relationship between Pakistan and the European Union.

The event was attended by Escipion Joaquin Oliveira Gomez, Director International Trade Centre,

Robert Skidmore, Chief Sector & Enterprise Competitiveness International Trade Centre, Atif Aziz, Joint Secretary EU Affairs, Ministry of Commerce, Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari, President ICCI and others.

Speaking on the occasion, Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari highlighted the importance of understanding and adapting these new regulations and emphasized that local businesses to proactively align with the EU's environmental standards to maintain their market access and competitiveness.

"Our exports to the EU are crucial therefore we must not only be aware of these changes but also ready to comply with these regulations", he said adding that Pakistan's carbon emissions are significantly lower as compared to the neighboring countries.

Pakistan's share of global greenhouse gas emissions is only 0.93% but is one of the worst sufferers of the impacts, therefore, it deserves the benefit of the situation, he maintained.

He urged the International Trade Centre delegation to visit Karachi, Lahore, Faisalabad, and Sialkot chambers of commerce and Industry to get

the firsthand knowledge of the exporters and industrialists' ambitions to enhance their exports to EU and the difficulties they are confronting in the matter.

Addressing the secession, Robert Skidmore highlighted the support available to Pakistani businesses to help them transition to more sustainable practices.

He outlined Growth for Rural Advancement and Sustainable Progress (GRASP) project of ITC and how this project is supporting SMEs through capacity building and policy initiatives.

Representative of the Ministry of Commerce Atif Aziz highlighted the government's role in facilitating this transition. He mentioned that the ministry is actively working on developing policies and frameworks to help Pakistani exporters comply with international environmental standards.

Adnan Lodhi from ITC briefed the participants that as a major trading partner, Pakistan's exports, especially in sectors like textiles, agriculture, and manufacturing are expected to be directly affected by these changes.

Tokyo's Nikkei index closes up 10.2 per cent

TOKYO (AFP/APP): Tokyo's key Nikkei index closed more than 10 percent higher Tuesday, bouncing back from a record selloff the previous day on worries over the US economy and a stronger yen.

The benchmark Nikkei 225 index jumped 10.23 percent, or 3,217.04 points, to end at 34,675.46, while the broader Topix index added 9.30 percent, or 207.06 points, to 2,434.21.

On Monday, the Nikkei plunged more than 12 percent, or 4,451.28 points -- the largest points drop in its history. Prime Minister Fumio Kishida said Tuesday it was best to approach the sharp swings with a cool head as analysts predicted that volatility could continue for days.

"The stock market has been moving again today, and I think it is important to

judge this situation calmly," Kishida said at a scheduled news conference.

"We will continue to monitor the situation with a sense of urgency and to carry out economic and fiscal management in close cooperation with the Bank of Japan," he said.

Nomura Securities said the market would likely remain volatile this week. "Today's gain can be explained in one phrase: a technical rebound" after the sharp fall, it said.

IwaiCosmo Securities said concern over the US economy had been partially assuaged by a better-than-market-expected improvement in service-sector business sentiment for July.

"In Japan, real wages in June turned positive for the first time in 27 months, which also brought some relief," the brokerage added.

The yen stood at 145.94

against the dollar, compared with 146.28 in early trade. On Monday the Japanese currency hit 141.70, its strongest value since early January.

A higher yen is a negative for Japanese exporters, and recent rallies were fuelled by central bank policy decisions that reversed months-long trends.

The Bank of Japan last week raised interest rates for the second time in 17 years, with talk of another rate hike to come, while the US Federal Reserve has hinted at a cut as soon as September.

Among major shares in Tokyo on Tuesday, Honda roared 14.70 percent to 1,435.5 yen following a report that it was expected to announce a record quarterly profit.

Toyota spiked 12.81 percent to 2,518 yen and Sony Group jumped 9.12 percent to 12,315 yen.

Mobilink Bank introduces affordable E-bike loans for a greener future

F.P. Report

KARACHI: Dedicated to promoting positive environmental change, Mobilink Bank has recently announced the launch of E-Bike loans. This initiative, aimed at empowering individuals with accessible and eco-friendly transportation options, was formalized through a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with PakZon Electric Motors (Pvt) Ltd., Pakistan's leading electric bike manufacturer. Through this offer, the Bank is extending exclusive benefits to all its customers, including a 6% discount on E-bikes purchased through PakZon dealerships, three complimentary checkups at PakZon 3S dealerships, and a one-year battery warranty for two, three and four-wheelers. These benefits are designed to make E-bike ownership more affordable and convenient.

Mobilink Bank is part of the VEON group, a global digital operator that provides converged connectivity and digital services to nearly 160 million customers in six dynamic markets that are home to 7% of the world's population.

Mobilink Bank's E-Bike Loan is a strategic expansion of its retail lending portfolio, marking a foray into the



growing green financing sector. By offering hassle-free financing solutions, the Bank drives sustainable transportation adoption and enables individuals, particularly women, to make informed choices about their mobility needs.

"As part of our 'Change to Sustain' program, we are committed to reducing our carbon footprint and enabling our customers to do the same," shared Attur-Rehman, Chief Business Officer Mobilink Bank. "Our latest endeavour, the E-Bike loan, offers a practical solution for individuals and the environment. By providing easy financing for electric bikes, we strive to cultivate a culture of

empowerment and self-reliance, particularly among women. This initiative helps us break down gender barriers, promotes equitable access to resources and paves the way for a greener, more sustainable future for all," he added.

Through this initiative, the Bank is dedicated to expanding E-bike adoption, reducing carbon emissions and enhancing urban mobility. By increasing E-bike penetration, particularly in urban areas, the initiative is committed to achieving a 100-metric-ton reduction in CO2 emissions within the next two years.

"This partnership signifies a shared vision for innovation and excellence

in the electric vehicle sector," said Shahzaib Amjad, Managing Director at PakZon Electric Motors (Pvt.) Ltd. "We are confident that this collaboration will pave the way for groundbreaking advancements and mutual growth. Here is to a prosperous and transformative journey together. May our collective efforts drive success and set new benchmarks in the industry," he further added.

The Bank's steadfast commitment to environmental stewardship is further solidified by allocating PKR 2.5 billion to renewable energy financing and solarization of fifteen branches in 2024.



In brief

First-ever blind cricket training camp

ISLAMABAD (APP): The first-ever blind cricket training camp in Afghanistan began in Jalalabad on Tuesday. The initiative to hold the camp for Afghan blind cricketers was taken by Syed Sultan Shah, the chairman of the Pakistan Blind Cricket Council (PBCC) and President of the World Blind Cricket Council (WBCC), said a press release issued here. Besides providing essential training kits and cricket gear, the PBCC has fully funded the camp, including boarding, lodging, and travel expenses of the players. "We're also proud to have sent two legendary international cricketers and coaches of Pakistan - Masood Jan and Sanaullah Khan to coach and mentor the aspiring Afghan blind cricketers," Sultan Shah said. The 11-day training camp will conclude on August 16. This marks another milestone for the PBCC, following the successful development of blind cricket teams in Bangladesh and Nepal in 2006 and 2008. Both nations have since excelled on the global stage, participating in multiple Blind Cricket World Cups. "The PBCC remains committed to nurturing talent and expanding the reach of blind cricket throughout the region," Shah added.

England refuses to host PSL 10 matches

LAHORE (Web Desk): England has refused to host the matches of Pakistan Super League (PSL) 10th Edition. A few months ago, the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) decided to hold the playoff matches and final of PSL 10 at a neutral venue. England was initially considered a strong candidate for hosting. However, when franchise owners inquired about costs and logistics, they were informed that an official would be sent to England to assess the situation. Recent reports indicate that franchise owners have been informed that England has refused from hosting the matches. The England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) cited the unavailability of its grounds as the reason. Some PCB officials have suggested to hold matches in the UAE, though the extreme hot weather of UAE in May minimise the chances of scheduling matches in UAE. The proposed dates for PSL 10 were from April 10 to May 25. During this period, the Indian Premier League (IPL) would also be ongoing, which has raised concerns among franchise owners that key foreign players might be unavailable for the Pakistani league. Additionally, franchise owners had previously sent a letter regarding not receiving their share of profits from the ninth edition and other issues, which has yet to receive a response from the PCB. Recently, a senior official contacted the franchise owners by phone, informing them that a governing council meeting would be scheduled soon.

No Olympic double tilt as Cheptegei pulls out of 5,000m

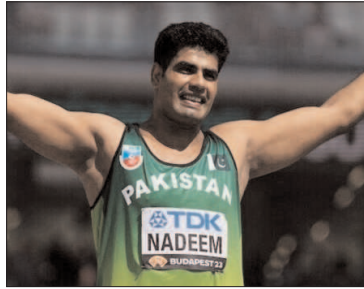
PARIS (AFP): Newly-crowned Olympic 10,000m champion Joshua Cheptegei will not defend his 5,000m title in Paris, he announced on Instagram Tuesday. "I'm so proud of having won Olympic gold in the 10,000m," said Cheptegei, who won silver in the event in the Tokyo Games. "So proud for Uganda. After the world junior 10,000m title, three times the world 10,000m titles, the world 10,000m record, this gold medal in an Olympic record time completes my collection. "After discussing with my team, we've decided it's best not to compete in the 5,000m."

Arshad Nadeem advances to Paris Olympics' javelin final

PARIS (APP): Pakistan's Arshad Nadeem made it to the Paris Olympics' javelin final with a colossal throw of 86.59 metres in his first attempt on Tuesday.

The throw was well ahead of 84 metre minimum qualifying mark for the final showdown. The remarkable feat not only highlights Arshad's incredible talent but also kept alive Pakistan's hopes to win a medal in the quadrennial spectacle.

The 27-year-old athlete from Mian Channu has been the only beacon of hope for Pakistan as the six other athletes, who were representing the country in different disciplines, saw an early exit in the



prestigious event.

Following his qualifying performance, Arshad expressed his determination to make a podium finish. "I am deeply honoured to represent Pakistan at the world's

biggest sports event.

This achievement is the result of years of hard work and support from my coaches, family, and fans. I am focused and determined to give my best in the medal round," he said.

The final is scheduled on Thursday and claiming a medal would not just be a personal accomplishment for Arshad; it would be a historic moment for a country that last won an Olympic medal in 1992 when the national hockey team secured a bronze in Barcelona. Since then, the country has experienced a dry spell in the world's most prestigious sporting arena.

Nick Hockley to quit as Cricket Australia CEO

SYDNEY (Agencies): Nick Hockley, the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Cricket Australia (CA) will relinquish his post in March 2025, the Australian cricketing body confirmed Tuesday.

Hockley was appointed as the interim CEO of CA in June 2020 and then became permanent 11 months later.

He oversaw the affairs of the CA in the tough period of the COVID-19 pandemic. Under his leadership, Hockley guided CA to a new five-year strategy and seven-year media deals with Seven West Media, Foxtel Group and Disney Star in India.

"This was a difficult decision, however following what promises to be a blockbuster summer and with our five-year strategic plan well progressed, this is the right time to pursue another challenge, while giving the Board plenty of time to find its next CEO to build on the strong foundations now in place," said Hockley.

"This is not the time



for goodbyes, as I remain completely focussed on the season ahead and supporting the Board on succession and a smooth transition," he added.

CA Chair Mike Baird further confirmed that Nick Hockley had advised the Board that next summer would be his last as the CEO.

"As CEO, Nick navigated the sport through a period of unprecedented challenge during the pandemic and has delivered significant growth and stability. Under Nick's leadership, several major deals are now in place –

many for the next seven years – and the game is set up for continued success.

"As Nick says, his full focus is on delivering another successful summer for our fans, players, broadcasters, partners and the whole of Australian Cricket and there will be time to celebrate his legacy and achievements when he steps down from the role next year.

"The timing of Nick's decision allows the Board to ensure a smooth transition and we will begin the process of finding and appointing his successor shortly."

Waqar Younis' appointment as adviser to PCB chief challenged in LHC

LAHORE (Web Desk): A petition has been filed in the Lahore High Court (LHC) against the appointment of former skipper Waqar Younis as adviser to the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) chairman.

A citizen, Mashkoor Hussain, moved the high court through his lawyer Nadeem Sarwar. The federal government, PCB and Younis have been made respondents in the case.

The petitioner argued that the appointment was made in violation of law as no advertisement was released for the vacancy.

He has pleaded the high court to declare the appointment of Waqar Younis as adviser to PCB chairman null and void.

Last month, the former captain had assumed charge as adviser to PCB Chairman Mohsin Naqvi. He has been appointed cricket adviser who will handle all matters related to the national cricket team.

However, Naqvi will oversee the administrative affairs of the board.

Faisalabad and TTS win Azadi Cup Hockey League

FAISALABAD (APP): Faisalabad and Toba Tek Singh (TTS) have won the boys and girls competitions of Chief Minister Inter District Azadi Cup Hockey League 2024 respectively.

District Education Authority (DEA) had organized the Azadi Cup Hockey League 2024 in which boys and girls teams from all four districts of Faisalabad division participated.

However, Faisalabad district won first position in the boys competition whereas TTS district stood first in girls matches. Divisional Director Secondary Education Dr Kishwar Naheed Rana and Divisional Sports Officer Tariq Nazir watched the final events as the chief guests and later they distributed prizes and trophies among position holders.

Chief Executive Officer (CEO) DEA Kashif Zia, CEO Education Toba Tek Singh, Tahir Mehmood, District Officer Secondary Education Iftikhar Khan Wardag, Additional Director Secondary Education Muhammad Riaz, Additional Director Elementary Education Arif Bashir and others were also present on the occasion.

Pacers lead Shaheens to win in second 50-over match

DARWIN (APP): A strong bowling performance from the pace attack helped Pakistan Shaheens register an eight-wicket win over Bangladesh 'A' in the 50-over match on Tuesday at the DXC Arena in Darwin.

Shaheens achieved the 79-run target in 17 overs as Usman Khan top-scored with 39 not out off 45 balls with the help of five fours and one six.

Tayyab Tahir returned undefeated on 17 runs off 36 balls, hitting one boundary.

Usman shared a 48-run second-wicket stand with Faseeh and an unbeaten 27-run third-wicket partnership with Tayyab to take Shaheens over the line.

Sahibzada Farhan copped a seven-ball duck as he fell prey to Ripon Mondol in the second over.

Mondol was the lone wicket-taker for Bangladesh 'A' as he dismissed the Shaheens opening batters.

Earlier, after opting to bowl first, the Pakistan Shaheens pacers ran riot

with the new ball striking at regular intervals. Khurram Shahzad dismissed Tanzid Hasan and Akbar Ali while Mohammad Imran Jnr struck from the other end to dismiss Jishan Alam, Parvez Hossain and Afif Hossain within the batting powerplay.

The fast-bowling duo left Bangladesh 'A' in deep trouble at 32-5 after 9.4 overs. Only Parvez, the top scorer, managed to enter double figures (19, 30b, 2x4s, 1x6) among the top five batters.

Mahfuzur Rahman (12, 26b, 2x4s) and Shamim Hossain (13, 23b, 1x4) stitched a 21-run partnership before the wickets started falling again as the Bangladesh 'A' lost their last five scalps for a mere 25 runs. Mubasir Khan dismissed Mahfuzur and Abu Haider Rony (10, 16b, 1x6) in the 16th and 20th overs, respectively.

Jahandad Khan soon joined the wicket-takers column by eking out Shamim Hossain (13, 23b, 1x4) and Ripon Mondol in

21st over. Rakibul Hasan (5 not out, 9b, 1x4) and Mukidul Islam (3, 17b) added 10 runs for the last wicket before Arafat Minhas dismissed the latter as Bangladesh 'A' were bundled out for 78 in 24.3 overs.

Imran Jnr bagged three scalps while Khurram, Jahandad and Mubasir picked up two wickets each. Arafat had a solitary wicket to his name.

Pakistan Shaheens will play their first match in Top End T20 series against Perth Scorchers on 10 August.

Scores in brief: Pakistan Shaheens won by eight wickets

Bangladesh 'A' 78 all out, 24.3 overs (Parvez Hossain 19, Shamim Hossain 13; Mohammad Imran Jnr 3-22, Mubasir Khan 2-9, Jahandad Khan 2-19, Khurram Shahzad 2-24, Arafat Minhas 1-3)

Pakistan Shaheens 79-2, 17 overs (Usman Khan 39 not out, Tayyab Tahir 17 not out; Ripon Mondol 2-30).

Serbia pip Australia in thriller to make Olympic basketball semis



PARIS (AFP): Nikola Jokic led Serbia into the men's Olympic basketball semi-finals on Tuesday as they rallied from 24 points down to edge Australia 95-90 in overtime and set up a potential showdown with the United States.

Patty Mills scored 26 points for Australia, including 14 in a row during a 20-0 run spanning the first and second quarters, but Serbia hung tough and gradually erased the deficit to pull off an epic comeback.

"I thought we threw everything at them, hell of a first half," said Mills. "In international basketball, once you lose that momentum, it's hard to get it back. Maybe not enough in the tank at the end of the day."

"It's heartbreaking to go out this way. We gave ourselves every chance," added Josh Giddey, who finished

with 25 points for Australia. Three-time NBA MVP Jokic tallied 21 points, 14 rebounds and eight assists and received plenty of help from his supporting cast. Bogdan Bogdanovic had 17 points as one of five other players to hit double figures for Serbia.

"They destroyed us at the start of the game. They played so well, they smelled blood. We didn't respond well. We had the right attitude but physically we were not ready to respond," said Serbia's Vasilije Micic.

"We had great players who led us in the last 25 minutes." Australia made it through the group stage despite losing two of three games, whereas Serbia pipped South Sudan to second in their section behind Team USA. Serbia, beaten 110-84 by the US in their tournament opener, could

meet the reigning four-time champions again in the semi-finals if the Americans get past Brazil later on Tuesday.

Australia broke open a tight game early on, fuelled by the hot hand of Mills, the 35-year-old former NBA champion who played sparingly for Atlanta and Miami this season.

Mills drained back-to-back threes as part of a spree that fired Australia in a 44-20 lead early in the second period. But Serbia chipped away at the deficit and slashed it in half by the interval, eventually nudging in front when Bogdanovic hit a short jump shot with 13 minutes to play.

Serbia outscored the Tokyo bronze medalists 25-11 in the third quarter to take back control, but Giddey ensured Australia didn't go away quietly and Mills sent the contest to overtime.

Mills sank a rainbow jumper over Jokic with 1.4 seconds to play to keep Australia alive, but it was the towering centre who had the final say as Serbia led off the final eight points in overtime. Australia led 90-87 after a three from Giddey but Jokic produced a key block under his own basket and then connected with a hook shot and made a pair of free throws to put Serbia ahead for good.

Perfectionist Quan wins third Olympic diving gold at age 17



PARIS (AFP): The 17-year-old diving prodigy Quan Hongchan on Tuesday won her second gold at the Paris Olympics and third of her young career to maintain China's unblemished record in the sport in the French capital.

Quan's first dive was given perfect scores of 10 across the board on the way to sealing a China one-two in the women's 10m platform.

An emotional Quan won with a total of 425.60 points, keeping team-mate Chen Yuxi at bay for silver with 420.70. North Korea's Kim Mi Rae took bronze on 372.10, and promptly also burst into tears.

Quan also won the 10m platform at the Tokyo Olympics, when she was just 14, and then took gold in the women's synchro-

nised 10m platform in Paris with Chen.

"I spent three years that were very difficult. I overcame a lot of things," Quan said afterwards, explaining her tears in victory.

"If I list all of them, we will never finish. I'm very happy to have this gold."

The teenager gave a glimpse of the pursuit for perfection which propelled her to yet more gold.

Quan rated her winning performance as "50 out of 100, except for the first dive". "The rest of the dives, I did not achieve what I wanted." Quan has come a long way to become one of China's elite Olympians and hugely popular back home.

She was one of five children born into a poor rural family. Her father was an orange farmer and

her mother worked in a factory until a road accident left her in poor health.

Quan has previously said that she was motivated to win to pay for her mother's hospital bills.

When she won gold at the pandemic-delayed Games in Tokyo three years ago, it was the first time Quan had competed outside China.

Quan's journey to diving perfection began when she was spotted playing hopscotch with some friends at school and a former diver and coach noticed her jumping ability. She started diving aged seven. The triple Olympic gold medalist has earned legions of fans in China as much for her bubbly personality as her sporting prowess.

A mischievous smile never far from her face, she was asked to describe her overriding feeling after her latest triumph. "Hungry," she replied. "Let's get something to eat." China are the unrivalled superpower in diving and have won all five golds in the sport so far in the French capital.

Three more golds are up for grabs. China's divers won all but one of the eight titles in Tokyo, Britain took the other.

Techstirr national junior tennis championship concludes

KARACHI (APP): The 1st Techstirr Pvt. Ltd. National Juniors Tennis Championships concluded at DA Creek Club Karachi, with Administrator DHA Karachi Brig. Rana Shahzad Shafi as the chief guest and A. Rahim Rafi as the guest of honor.

Brig. Rana Shahzad Shafi lauded the finalists of the Juniors Under 18 Singles and announced Rs. 100,000 for winner Asad Zaman of Lahore and Rs. 50,000 for runner-up Muzammil Bhand of Hyderabad.

He also announced plans to train promising young players under DHA Karachi with the technical expertise of the Sindh Tennis Association (STA).

A. Rahim Rafi expressed gratitude to DA Creek Club for their support and congratulated all winners and runners-up.

Gulzar Firoz, President of the Sindh Tennis Association, thanked the sponsor, Techstirr Pvt. Ltd., for

supporting national junior tennis at the highest level and hoped for their continued patronage of tennis in the country.

Muhammad Khalid Rehmani, Vice President of the Pakistan Tennis Federation, informed the gathering that STA and KTA would hold four more national junior tournaments and two Sindh Ranking tournaments in the remaining five months of the calendar year.

Secretary DA Creek Club Brig. Abrar Hassan offered the club's facilities for healthy tennis activities.

Others in attendance included Rafi Derbari, Shakil Aslam, Asghar Baloch, Ghulam Muhammad, Muhammad Taqi, and others.

Results:
Juniors Under 18 Singles Final:
Asad Zaman (Lahore) beat Muzammil Bhand (Hyderabad) 7-5, 6-3
Girls Under 18 Singles Final:
Natalia Zaman beat Daliah Shazim

6-0, 6-0
Boys Under 14 Singles Final:
Ismail Aftab beat Ali Bachani (Hyderabad) 4-0, 4-1

Girls Under 14 Singles Final:
Romaisha Malik (Pano Aqil) beat Eschelle Asif 4-2, 5-3

Boys Under 12 Singles Final:
Rashid Bachani (Hyderabad) beat Muhammad Junaid (Peshawar) 4-1, 4-2

Juniors Under 18 Doubles Final:
Asad Zaman & Kashan Tariq beat Muhammad Yahya (Islamabad) & Muzammil Bhand (Hyderabad) 8-5

Boys Under 14 Doubles Final:
Ismail Aftab & Hazik Areejo beat Muzammil Bhand & Ruhab Faisal 9-7

Boys Under 12 Doubles Final:
Majid Bachani (Hyderabad) & M. Ibrahim Gil (Lahore) beat Muhammad Junaid (Peshawar) & Tariq Rafi 8-5

Girls Under 18 Doubles Final:
Eschelle Asif & Romaisha Malik beat Natalia Zaman & Daliah Shazim 8-4.



In brief

Fire erupts in plaza

ISLAMABAD (APP): A sudden fire erupted in a plaza in Sector I-9, Islamabad, sparking a swift response from the fire brigade. According to the spokesman of Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) administration, the fire broke out in a plaza located in Sector I-9. The blaze started in a private bank within the building, prompting immediate action from rescue teams. The fire brigade quickly reached the scene and managed to bring the flames under control. Efforts to cool the area are currently ongoing to prevent any re-ignition. The cause of the fire has not yet been ascertained.

Police arrest three bike lifters

RAWALPINDI (APP): Police nabbed three bike lifters and street criminals, members of the Yasir gang, and recovered four stolen motorcycles, Rs 95,000 cash, four snatched mobile phones, and other valuables from their possession, said a police spokesman here on Tuesday. He informed us that a team led by SHO, Saddar Wah Police Station, managed to net three bike lifters, namely Yasir, the ring-leader, Irshad, and Arshad Khan, and recovered four stolen motorcycles, Rs 95,000 in cash, four snatched mobile phones, and other items from their possession. The arrested accused are record-holder criminals and remained jailbirds in snatching and motorcycle lifting cases. A case has been registered against the accused while further investigation is underway. Superintendent of Police, Potohar, Nasir Nawaz, said the accomplices and facilitators of the accused would also be sent behind bars.

IRSA releases 486,600 cusecs water

ISLAMABAD (APP): Indus River System Authority (IRSA) on Tuesday released 486,600 cusecs water from various rim stations with inflow of 532,500 cusecs. According to the data released by IRSA, water level in River Indus at Tarbela Dam was 1537.00 feet and was 139.00 feet higher than its dead level of 1,398 feet. Water inflow and outflow in the dam was recorded as 326,600 cusecs and 298,700 cusecs respectively. The water level in River Jhelum at Mangla Dam was 1206.10 feet, which was 158.10 feet higher than its dead level of 1,050 feet. The inflow and outflow of water was recorded as 28,200 cusecs and 10,000 cusecs respectively. The release of water at Kalabagh, Taunsa, Guddu and Sukkur was recorded as 367,900, 411,300, 255,500 and 185,200 cusecs respectively. Similarly, from River Kabul, a total of 95,100 cusecs of water were released at Nowshera and 55,300 cusecs released from River Chenab at Marala.

Admin intensifies efforts to combat dengue fever

ISLAMABAD (APP): In a decisive move to combat dengue, the Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) administration has kicked off a city-wide dengue surveillance and control operations to tackle the rising threat of dengue fever. On the directions of Deputy Commissioner (DC) Islamabad, Irfan Nawaz Memon, all the Assistant Commissioners (ACs) have intensified operations, highlighting the city's commitment to tackling the dengue threat, said the ICT's administration spokesman. He said that daily inspections for dengue larvae were continued, with several individuals arrested for not following dengue guidelines.

Naqvi assures foolproof security for Chinese citizens

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi on Tuesday assured foolproof security for Chinese Citizens and staff working on projects in Pakistan.

A high-level meeting between Federal Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi and a Chinese business delegation, led by Consul General Zhao Shirin, focused on improving safety measures for Chinese citizens and staff in Pakistan.

The meeting, attended by top officials from law

enforcement agencies, discussed suggestions from Chinese businessmen to enhance security protocols.

Naqvi assured the implementation of feasible suggestions, prioritizing the safety of Chinese citizens.

He announced that online visas for Chinese citizens would be available from August 14, facilitating their business travels to Pakistan. The meeting aimed to review and refine Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for the convenience of Chinese citizens.

Consul General Zhao Shirin expressed optimism about the meeting's outcome, highlighting the "ideal relations" between Pakistan and China. The meeting was also attended by senior officials from Punjab, including the Inspector General of Police and the Interior Secretary.

This development underscores Pakistan's commitment to fostering a secure environment for Chinese investments and businesses, further solidifying the bilateral relationship between the two nations.

Chairman WAPDA, WB team review progress on Tarbela 5th Extension Project

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chairman WAPDA, Engr Lt Gen Sajjad Ghani (Retd) accompanied by a World Bank team headed by Advisor Masood Ahmed and Task Team Leader Gautum Gunjan on Tuesday visited Tarbela 5th Extension Hydropower Project and reviewed construction progress on key components.

After detailed visit of the various sites, the Chairman also presided over a progress review meeting at the Project Office, said a press release. The Project Management briefed the Chairman and the World Bank team about the progress achieved so far on seven key sites of the Project, which included intake, tunnel, penstock and outlet, power house, tail race culvert, tail race canal

and switchyard.

Resource deployment, timelines and implementation plan for completion of the Project were also discussed during the meeting. It was briefed that electricity generation from the Project is likely to commence in 2025-26.

Addressing the meeting, the Chairman emphasized upon timely completion of the Project to cope with the increasing demand of energy in the country through green, clean and most affordable electricity. He urged the Consultants and the Contractors to maximize their efforts so that the Project could be completed by 2025-26.

Member (Power) WAPDA, GM Tarbela Dam Project, PD Tarbela 5th Extension Hydropower Project and representatives

of the Consultants and the Contractors were also present on the occasion.

WAPDA is constructing Tarbela 5th Extension Hydropower Project on Tunnel No. 5 of Tarbela Dam. World Bank and Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank are providing financial assistance for the Project to the tune of US\$ 390 million and US\$ 300 million respectively.

Cumulative generation capacity of the Project stands at 1530 MW with three generating units of 510 MW each. The Project will provide 1.347 billion units of environment-friendly and low-cost hydel electricity to the National Grid every year. With completion of Tarbela 5th Extension, installed capacity at Tarbela Dam will increase from 4888 MW to 6418 MW.

Ethiopian Embassy, SDPI to jointly hold ‘Green Legacy Forum’

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Embassy of the Federal Democratic Republic Ethiopia (FDRE) and Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI) have agreed to forge a mutual collaboration to jointly organize “Green Legacy Forum” to create awareness and mobilize all segments of society for massive plantation of fruits and vegetables, which will not only restore eco-system but also ensure food security and sustainable development.

The collaboration was agreed upon during a meeting between Special Envoy & Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Ethiopia to Pakistan, Jemal Beker Abdula and Dr. Abid Qaiyum Suleri, Executive Director, SDPI here at the Embassy of Ethiopia.

The forum will have participation of Parliamentarians, diplomatic and business community, environmentalists, religious and media fraternity, youth and civil society. It is aimed at sharing success story of Ethiopia with Pakistan in environmental conservation, ecosystem restoration and food security under the Green Legacy initiative of Dr. Abiy Ahmed, Prime Minister of Ethiopia.

Speaking on the occasion, H.E. Ambassador Jemal Beker lauded the services and capabilities of

the SDPI as the premier independent think tank of Pakistan with its core capabilities in niche areas of economics, climate change, food security, human rights, health and social protection.

He underlined the importance of the Green Legacy Initiative which is the flagship project of the government of Ethiopia with the highest-level political leadership and public endorsement that has set an ambitious target of 7.5 billion seedlings to be planted across the country in 2024.

The Ambassador said since 2019, Ethiopia had planted more than 40 billion seedlings of vegetables, fruits and animal feed which had increased its capacity to address climate related challenges and reduced poverty, boosted job creation, and ensured food security.

He underscored the need to rollout massive nationwide campaign in Pakistan to address the growing vulnerability of its masses against climate change as 2022 floods' devastation left its communities bareheaded under the risks and devastation of unprecedented scale. “I have personally witnessed the flood-impacted areas across the country that allowed me to assess the toll paid by masses despite their minimal contribution towards global warming and environmental degradation,” he added.

It is high time for all segments of Pakistani society to join hands to save the planet earth, he said, reiterating his resolve to work closely with them to take green initiatives for Pakistan. On the occasion, Executive Director, SDPI, Dr. Abid Qaiyum Suleri informed Ambassador Jemal Beker that the Institute used to hold an annual development and economic forum that convenes global, regional and local experts and dignitaries to share their valuable insights on critical global issue causing grassroots level impacts across the regions.

He suggested the Ambassador of Ethiopia to forge a bilateral collaboration to host a high-level plenary at the Forum that will not only help engage relevant key stakeholders but also the international experts that could help in spreading the word on promoting Green Legacy and Climate Action. Dr. Suleri who is also the member to the Advisory Committee of COP29 presidency in Baku informed the Ambassador that the SDPI will convene an international jurists plenary at COP29 under the title Green Justice to initiate dialogue among top-level judiciary of the developed and developing countries to build consensus on Climate Justice.



ISLAMABAD: Chairman Pakistan Ulema Council Hafiz Tahir Mehmood Ashrafi addressing to the Paigham e Hajj Conference organized by Pakistan Ulema Council and Int'l Organization of Harmain Sharifain.

Tahir Ashrafi lauds Saudi govt's Hajj arrangements

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chairman of Pakistan Ulema Council Hafiz Tahir Mehmood Ashrafi on Tuesday said the message of Hajj Sermon 2024 was unity and harmony among Muslims.

Addressing the Paigham-e-Hajj Conference here Ashrafi appreciated the Hajj arrangements made by the government of Saudi Arabia. He congratulated the Saudi government for the excellent arrangements and thanked them for their services to Pakistan, Saudi arrangements for Hajj are getting better day by day he

added. He said this year, eleven million people performed Umrah. On the 27th night of Ramadan, 2.6 million people were present in the Haram in Makkah, he added. He said Saudi Arabian government is changing the system, whereas the Hajj companies will also have to follow operations under the same system.

He said at the beginning of this Hajj season, the Saudi government had allowed only two thousand companies to operate

for Hajj services. However, the Saudi ambassador and the Saudi government cooperated and thousands of people were saved from unemployment through augmented services.

On the occasion, Ambassador of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Nawaf bin Saeed Ahmad Al-Malkiy expressed his best wishes for Pakistan and said that there was no relationship between Pakistan and Saudi Arabia other than sincerity. “Pakistan and Saudi are

brothers” he added.

Addressing the Paigham-e-Hajj Conference, Federal Minister of Maritime Affairs, Qaiser Ahmed Sheikh said that the government of Pakistan was grateful to the Saudi Ambassador for the Hajj arrangements. He also extended his gratitude to Federal Minister for Religious Affairs and Inter-Faith Harmony, Chaudhry Salik Hussain who made extraordinary efforts for successful Hajj arrangements.

British High Commission at forefront of floods response in Chitral

ISLAMABAD (APP): The British High Commission has been amongst the earliest organisations to provide relief interventions, following devastating floods in Chitral.

Between 29 July and August 3, Chitral suffered severe damages from torrential rains, flash floods and glacial lake outburst floods. 14 drinking water supply schemes, 15 jeep-able bridges, 55 irrigation channels, 9 link roads, 3 schools building, protection walls (4,000 feet), and 20 local shops have been fully/partially damaged, a news release said.

The British High Commission used their existing presence in Chitral to respond to immediate needs through their partners, Concern Worldwide and the Agha Khan Foundation. They are supporting emergency relief and restoration of infrastructure and livelihoods.

So far, the UK has funded essen-

tial items like kitchen sets, hygiene kits, water storage containers and more for around 300 families. Partners continue to work on immediate restoration of damaged drinking water systems, the restoration of essential irrigation channels, and debris removal to re-enable access and livelihoods. UK support is expected to benefit over 20,000 people in Chitral.

The UK are also considering on longer-term recovery plans for affected areas, in close coordination with government counterparts and humanitarian partners.

Chargé d'Affaires of the British High Commission, Andrew Dalgleish said: "The recent floods in Chitral are devastating. Lives and livelihoods have been destroyed. The UK is here to support Pakistan. These floods are a stark reminder that there is much more to be done to improve Pakistan's climate

resilience."

Floods have already led to 141 deaths, 266 injuries and damage to over 1,000 houses in Pakistan this year. Climate change is a priority for the UK Government. During the devastating floods of 2022, the UK helped over 2.3 million people, dedicating a total of £39 million in UK aid. The British public mobilised, and raised £41.5m as part of the Disasters Emergency Committee appeal. Support included emergency cash assistance, shelter kits, nutritional support, learning kits and infrastructure repair.

The UK's focus is on improving Pakistan's climate resilience long-term, rather than purely responding to disasters. The UK has already helped 1.5 million people improve their resilience to extreme climate events, and aims to support a further 3 million people in the next 4-5 years.

Women, girls' potential for resilience-building largely untapped in DRR: Gen Inam

ISLAMABAD (APP): UNWOMEN Pakistan, Chairman, National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA), Lieutenant General, Inam Haider Malik on Tuesday acknowledged that disasters disproportionately affect vulnerable communities, particularly women and girls, whereas their potential for resilience-building remains largely untapped within formal disaster risk reduction (DRR) and anticipatory action frameworks.

He made these remarks, in his keynote address, at the one-day national dialogue titled "Empowering Women and Girls in Disaster Management" organized by NDMA's Gender & Child Cell (GCC), in collaboration with

UNWOMEN Pakistan, UNICEF Pakistan, Catholic Relief Services, Islamic Relief, Hands, and Welthungerhilfe (WHH) here that spotlighted the critical yet often underutilized contributions of women and girls in disaster risk reduction (DRR) and management.

The Chairman NDMA emphasized the importance of proactive responsiveness and social resilience in disaster management. He stressed the need for adaptive measures to address climate-related challenges. He also highlighted that this platform aims to facilitate the sharing of experiences, identify best practices, and develop actionable strategies.

Chairman NDMA underscored the critical contributions of women and girls, address the barriers they encounter, and advocate for gender-sensitive policies and practices in Pakistan's DRR efforts.

The dialogue brought together key stakeholders, including government officials, humanitarian organizations, civil society groups, and women leaders from disaster-prone communities. Guest speaker Ms. Romina Khurshid, Chair of the Women Parliamentary Caucus, emphasized in her speech, "Women are not just victims of disasters; they are agents of change and resilience."

Their unique perspectives and capacities must

be integrated into our disaster management strategies to build a stronger, more inclusive Pakistan." The event facilitated knowledge exchange on best practices, identified challenges and opportunities for enhancing women's participation in disaster efforts, and developed actionable recommendations for gender-sensitive policies.

This event marked a significant step towards empowering women in DRR, contributing to Pakistan's overall disaster management capabilities. It was funded by NDMA, UNWOMEN, UNICEF, Catholic Relief Services, Islamic Relief, WHH, Federation Handicap International, HANDS, and STEP.

Empowering women with knowledge, financial resources key to community-based disaster resilience: Romina

ISLAMABAD (APP): Coordinator to the Prime Minister (PM) on Climate Change, Romina Khurshid Alam emphasized the importance of promoting gender equality and ensuring active participation of women and girls in all stages of disaster risk reduction (DRR).

She stated that this is crucial for enhancing the effectiveness of DRR strategies and for contributing to resilient communities in disaster-prone countries like Pakistan.

Addressing as chief guest here on Tuesday at a national dialogue on 'Role of Women and Girls in Disaster Risk Reduction', the PM's climate aide highlighted that women, particularly those from rural or

marginalised communities, hold invaluable local knowledge about environmental conditions, traditional practices and risk management. However, she said that their leadership in these areas not only can help improve disaster management strategies but also fosters a more comprehensive understanding of community needs and vulnerabilities.

The day-long event was organized by the National Disaster Management Authority, the Ministry of Climate Change and Environmental Coordination in collaboration with international partner organizations involved in disaster risk reduction activities in the country.

The PM's Coordinator told

the participants of the event that as the world grapples with increasing frequency and intensity of natural disasters, it has become clear that women and girls are not just beneficiaries but pivotal players in DRR. She said that their unique contributions are essential for building resilient communities and ensuring effective disaster preparedness and response.

To fully utilize the potential of women and girls in disaster risk reduction, Romina Khurshid emphasized the importance of increasing their involvement in decision-making and policy implementation at all levels. Additionally, she stressed the need to support and finance women-led disaster risk reduc-

tion initiatives and organizations, promote gender-sensitive approaches in disaster management policies and practices, and ensure that women and girls have access to education and training related to disaster preparedness and response.

"The present government is highly concerned over the suffering of the communities, which are frequently affected by climate change-caused disasters, particularly smallholder farming and marginalized communities with poor resources for post-disaster recovery and committed to building disaster resilience of them by providing them necessary knowledge, skill and resources," Romina Khurshid Alam informed the participants.

She remarked that women and girls often serve as the backbone of their communities, particularly during disasters, particularly floods, cyclones and heatwaves. "When empowered with knowledge, technical and financial resources, they could play a central role in managing household preparedness, disseminating risk information and providing critical support systems", he said.

Their involvement in disaster risk reduction initiatives could also enhance community resilience and ensures that disaster management strategies are both inclusive and effective, Romina Khurshid Alam added.

The PM's aide said further that recent case studies have demonstrated the significant

impact of women-led initiatives in disaster scenarios. From grassroots organizations in various disaster-vulnerable countries to community-based programs in [another region], women have proven their capacity to drive positive change, enhance risk communication, and support long-term recovery processes, she added.

"Empowering women and girls in DRR efforts can lead to innovative solutions and more responsive policies. Women's involvement in policy-making and advocacy ensures that disaster management approaches address the diverse needs of all community members, promoting greater equity and effectiveness in recovery efforts," she said.

5000 carats of emeralds saled

PANJSHIR (BNA): Officials of Panjshir Directorate of Mines and Petroleum have reported sale of emeralds recently extracted from the mines. Mawlawi Mohammad Qasim Amiri, Director Panjshir Mines and Petroleum Directorate said that 4,977 carats of emeralds, valued at \$124,600, were auctioned off to local traders. Mawlawi Amiri emphasized that the sale was conducted in the presence of an authorized committee, ensuring a transparent process.

Worn-out currency incinerated

KABUL (BNA): Da Afghanistan Bank (DAB) has announced the destruction of over 500 million AFN of deteriorated currency in the western region. In a statement released today, Da Afghanistan Bank reported that 559,140,000 AFN worth of damaged banknotes, including denominations of ten, twenty, fifty, one hundred, five hundred, and one thousand afghanis, were destroyed in the presence of an appointed committee.

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

New centers speed up passport distribution

KABUL (TOLONews): The General Directorate of Passports states that after the establishment of three passport distribution centers in Kabul, the passport distribution process has accelerated. Noorullah Patman, the directorate spokesman, told TOLONews that citizens can now obtain a passport within a week. According to the spokesperson for the Passport Directorate, 70,000 to 75,000 passports have been distributed to individuals in the past week. Noorullah Patman said, "With the opening of three centers in Kabul, the demands and problems of the people have been

addressed. We distribute 12,000 passports daily throughout the country, and in the past week, between 70,000 and 75,000 passports have been distributed to citizens. These three centers were established to address the demands and solve the problems of the people, and work is actively ongoing." Passport applicants also seem pleased with the distribution process after the establishment of these three centers. Miraj, one of the applicants, told a TOLONews reporter: "I applied a week ago and was biometrically processed today. It is very good that three centers have been established in Kabul."

Citizens urge the Islamic Emirate to maintain the passport distribution process in this manner permanently. Sayed Hashim, a passport applicant, said: "Our request is that this process continues in the same way so that we can get our passports sooner." Abdul Wadood, another applicant, said: "It has been a month since I registered, and now it's my turn for biometric processing. I have also deposited the bank fee, and we did not have to wait long."

Meeting of IEA's Cabinet held

KABUL (BNA): In a recent cabinet meeting of the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan, the Ministry of Energy and Water was tasked with taking decisive measures to reinforce the banks of the Amu Darya River. According to a report released by ARG, the meeting was held under the chairmanship of Mullah Mohammad Hassan Akhund, Prime Minister of the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan. Several topics were discussed and decisions were made during the session. The cabinet specifically directed the Ministry of Energy and Water to implement robust actions to strengthen the Amu River's banks and prevent erosion and damage to its shores. Additionally, the meeting approved the first-quarter report of non-tax revenues from the Ministry of Finance. Some departments were commended, while others were advised to adhere to the Ministry of Finance's guidelines and make optimal use of available resources and opportunities. Furthermore, a committee was appointed to thoroughly investigate and report on the reclamation of properties belonging to Afghan Textile Company. The committee is expected to present its final report in the next cabinet meeting.

Karimi meets China special envoy for Afghanistan



KABUL (Ariana News): Bilal Karimi, Ambassador of the Islamic Emirate to China, met with Yuxiao Yong, the Special Representative of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of China for Afghanistan. During the meeting, discussions focused on further developing political relations between China and Afghanistan, strengthening good relations, and enhancing economic connectivity through mutual interaction with neighboring and regional countries. Topics such as trade, transit, consular matters, and other bilateral issues were also discussed. Both sides positively evaluated the current political and economic relations between China and Afghanistan and emphasized the need for continued efforts in this regard. Karimi was officially recognized as Afghanistan's ambassador to China in December last year when he presented his credentials to China's Foreign Ministry's director-general of the protocol department, Hong Lei.

Children made homeless by climate disasters:

Afghanistan highest number in world

KABUL (Ariana News): Extreme weather events forced at least 38,000 people from their homes in Afghanistan in the first six months of this year – of whom about half are children. Save the Children said this week. The organization said that the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC) found there were more displacements in the first half of this year due to droughts, extreme temperature, floods, landslides, avalanches and storms than in all of 2023. IDMC also reported that half of people driven from their homes in Afghanistan are children. Afghanistan also had the highest number of children made homeless by climate disasters of any country in the world as at the end of 2023. Save the Children reported. While most displacements in recent decades have been due to conflict, in 2022 climate disasters became the main reason people fled their homes and moved to other areas within Afghanistan. Drought was the main reason for disaster-driven displacement, according to the UN. One out of every seven Afghans is facing long-term displacement, the largest number in South Asia and the second highest in the world. Afghanistan is the sixth most vulnerable country to the impacts of climate change – but also one of the least able to adapt and cope with the impacts of the crisis. More than one in three people in Afghanistan are facing crisis levels of hunger, driven mostly by climate shocks and high food prices. Twenty-five of Afghanistan's 34 provinces face severe or catastrophic drought conditions, which affect more than half the population, according to the UN. Kandahar province in the south has been severely

affected by drought, leading people to move to other areas after hundreds of wells and other sources of water dried up. In one village where Save the Children has been working, around half of all families left their homes due to a drastic reduction in clean water, with the remaining families forced to seek work in other districts. Arshad Malik, Country Director Save the Children in Afghanistan, said: "The climate crisis is fuelling the humanitarian crisis in Afghanistan. It is forcing people from their homes, destroying water sources, and preventing children from going to school. "Afghanistan is seeing extreme weather events with alarming frequency. This year alone, thousands of people have not only been displaced by drought, but also by floods. The climate crisis is destroying Afghan lives and livelihoods."

The committee will help resolve problems around access to standard services for residents in the respective areas. These services include religious and modern education, health, telecommunications, roads and potable water. According to experts, the border districts of the country are under-served which is why the IEA is focusing on improving the situation for locals. Experts have also said that because of the lack of attention given to these areas, illegal activities are carried out in these areas. The Ministry of Finance has also been advised of this development and ordered to cooperate with the committee and provide them with a budget. Afghanistan shares a common border with the countries of China, Turkmenistan, Iran, Uzbekistan, Pakistan and Tajikistan, but the border between Afghanistan and Pakistan is a de facto border and not recognized by the authorities who claim it was imposed on Afghanistan.

IEA forms body to solve problems

KABUL (Ariana News): The Islamic Emirate's supreme leader has issued a decree ordering the establishment of a committee to improve services in districts along the de facto border, the Durand Line. The committee will be headed by acting Minister of Borders and Tribal Affairs Noorullah Noori and will include relevant deputy provincial leaders, district governors, representatives of the ministry of defense and other provincial leaders. This committee will help resolve problems around access to standard services for residents in the respective areas. These services include religious and modern education, health, telecommunications, roads and potable water. According to experts, the border districts of the country are under-served which is why the IEA is focusing on improving the situation for locals. Experts have also said that because of the lack of attention given to these areas, illegal activities are carried out in these areas. The Ministry of Finance has also been advised of this development and ordered to cooperate with the committee and provide them with a budget. Afghanistan shares a common border with the countries of China, Turkmenistan, Iran, Uzbekistan, Pakistan and Tajikistan, but the border between Afghanistan and Pakistan is a de facto border and not recognized by the authorities who claim it was imposed on Afghanistan.

Faryab residents donate land for school building

FARYAB (TOLONews): The Faryab Education Department reports that residents of this province have donated approximately twenty jiribs of land free of charge for the purpose of building schools. According to the department, the construction of 17 schools on lands donated by local residents has been undertaken this year. Mohammad Taher Jawad, head of education in Faryab said: "So far, about 20 jiribs of land has been donated to education, and we are currently constructing schools on most of it, and this series will continue." Jawad clarified that for balanced development, quality assurance, and better educational facilities, the Faryab Education Department needs more support. Faryab residents said they will continue their efforts to support education and provide a suitable learning environment for students. Abdul Khalil, a resident, said: "We would give our lives, not just land, for education. We gave the land so our children can learn knowledge and lift us out of poverty." Another resident, Ghulam Sakhi, said: "Our

Ministry refutes IOM report

KABUL (BNA): The Ministry of Refugees and Repatriation has rejected a recent report by the International Organization for Migration (IOM) that claimed 8 million Afghans had migrated since 2020. In a statement, the ministry said the report contained false information that was being spread by some organizations to attract donor attention, which it said was directly affecting the Afghan people. The ministry claimed the return of Afghans has actually been faster than migration over the past 40 years, with 3.7 million Afghans returning to the country in the past three years. "The return of Afghan refugees has been much higher than migration in the last 40 years," the ministry said. "In the past three years alone, 3.7 million Afghans have returned to the country." This directly contradicts the IOM report, which stated that 8 million Afghans had left the country since 2020 amid the political and economic upheaval following the Islamic Emirate's takeover. The ministry accused certain organizations of "spreading false information about Afghanistan to attract donors' attention," which it said was having a detrimental impact on the Afghan people.

Taliban suspends licenses of 17 local media outlets

JALALABAD (Khaama Press): The Afghanistan Journalists Center reported that the Taliban Ministry of Communications and Information Technology has suspended the licenses of 17 local media outlets in Nangarhar province. The ministry stated that the licenses of these media outlets were suspended due to non-payment of taxes. According to the Afghanistan Journalists Center, the Taliban's Ministry of Communications and Information Technology has warned that these media outlets will not be allowed to operate until they settle their "frequency tax" dues. The Afghanistan Journalists Center expressed concern on Monday, August 5, over the suspension of activities of these media outlets and criticized the Taliban ministry's decision as unfair. They urged Taliban authorities to reconsider their decision. The Afghanistan Journalists Center reported that since the Taliban took power in Afghanistan in August 2021, the operations of private television station Enikass Radio and Nargis and Islah radios in Nangarhar province have been halted. The center added that currently, 14 radios are active in this province. The report stated that the Taliban has not yet halted the publications of these media outlets but has warned their owners that if they do not pay the obligatory taxes, their publications will be stopped. This organization supporting media outlets mentioned that radios and local television stations in Nangarhar, as a first-class province, are obligated to pay an annual tax of 108,000 Afghanis. The center acknowledges that these media outlets owe back taxes ranging from one to ten years. The suppression of independent media and restrictions on journalism have intensified in Afghanistan under Taliban rule, leading to concerns about press freedom and access to information. The international community has raised alarms about the deteriorating situation of media freedom in Afghanistan and has called on the Taliban to uphold press freedoms and allow journalists to operate without fear of reprisals or censorship.

Ministry unveils annual progress, future initiatives

KABUL (BNA): As part of the program highlighting the achievements of various Emirati (governmental) institutions over the past year, officials from the Ministry of Urban Development and Housing presented their key activities, accomplishments, and future plans during a press briefing. Sheikh Hamdullah Noman, Acting Minister of Urban Development and Housing, announced that the ministry has established 46 prepared townships in 29 provinces for returning citizens. Additionally, land has been identified and surveyed in Bamiyan, Panjshir, Khost, and Ghazni provinces. He added that, in the past year, the ministry developed, designed, and approved 57 urban plans. These include master plans for Khost and Pul-e-Alam cities, standard plans for Lashkar Gah, Ghazni, Maidan Shahr, and Asadabad cities, and detailed plans for Upper Sholgara, Lower Sholgara, Upper Maywand, and Ghorak districts. Minister Noman mentioned that the ministry also initiated five key housing and construction projects nationwide. Notably, 25% of the construction for the Neelabagh township in Kabul's Darulaman area has been completed, with the remaining work expected to finish in the next 38 months. Additionally, a residential township in Kandahar was delivered, construction for a housing project for 500 families in Helmand is ongoing, and a survey for residential needs for 20,000 families in Nangarhar has been conducted. To alleviate traffic congestion in Kabul, he stated that the ministry is planning the construction of terminals for cargo trucks in Char Asiab, Khaki Jabbar, Estalif, and Arghandi. The Ministry of Transport is working on land transfer, planning, design, and construction.

Recreation area to be made on Maranjan Hill

KABUL (TOLONews): Nematullah Barakzai, a representative of Kabul Municipality, told TOLONews that the institution intends to build a large standard recreational area on Maranjan Hill in Kabul. Barakzai also said that the preliminary work for this large recreational area has started and is expected to take four years. A representative of Kabul Municipality added: "The main focus here is to have recreational facilities such as various playgrounds, as well as large green areas, a clinic, and a mosque." Some residents of the capital who have come to Maranjan Hill for recreation welcomed the news of the creation of a large recreational area on this hill. Zabiullah, a resident of Kabul, said about the construction of the recreational area on Maranjan Hill: "It is very good that a park is being created on Maranjan Hill. This initiative will be very good for families and for recreation." Dawood, another resident of Kabul, told TOLONews: "People can benefit from green spaces like Maranjan Hill, and if a recreational area is built, it will be very good for the people to use."

1400 staff unemployed in Afghanistan: Body

KABUL (Khaama Press): The Swedish Committee reported on Monday that 1,400 Afghan staff members have lost their jobs following the cessation of its operations in Afghanistan. The organization stated that employment contracts for its staff expired on July 31st. According to the relief agency, hundreds of Afghan employees of the Swedish Committee for Afghanistan have been unemployed since the organization halted its activities in March 2024 due to increased pressure from the Taliban. Cajsa Wikström, the media secretary for the Swedish Committee for Afghanistan, expressed hope that other organizations would take over the implementation of their projects to meet the needs of affected groups adequately. The Swedish Committee for Afghanistan ceased its operations in Afghanistan on March 2024, citing increased Taliban pressure and concerns over the safety of its staff members. Andreas Stefansson, the general director of the Swedish Committee for Afghanistan, indicated that this decision followed heightened pressure from the Taliban after the incident involving the burning of the Quran in Stockholm. The organization had previously warned that around 7,000 of its employees in health, education, and infrastructure sectors across 16 provinces would lose their jobs with the cessation of its activities in Afghanistan. Since the Taliban seized power in Afghanistan, there have been widespread reports of severe restrictions on women's education and employment opportunities. Women and girls have been barred from attending schools beyond sixth grade and universities in Afghanistan. The Taliban's policies have severely curtailed women's access to employment opportunities, with many workplaces enforcing strict gender segregation and dress codes. Female employees in various sectors, including healthcare and education, have reported being forced out of their jobs. The humanitarian crisis in Afghanistan has exacerbated the challenges faced by women, with many unable to access essential services or earn a livelihood. The international community has expressed growing concern over the deteriorating human rights situation and the impact on women's rights in particular.

WFP cuts aid in Afghanistan

KABUL (Khaama Press): The World Food Programme has announced it will not be able to assist 600,000 pregnant women in Afghanistan with nutritious food this solar year due to budget constraints. The organization stated on Tuesday, through a message on its official social media, that it had supported 1.6 million pregnant and lactating women last year to prevent malnutrition-related illnesses. The World Food Programme emphasized its support for pregnant and lactating women in Afghanistan to prevent and treat malnutrition in the country. Earlier, the World Food Programme issued a report on World Food Day, warning that 3 million children in Afghanistan suffer from malnutrition.

Azerbaijan enforces strict ban on Afghan migrants

KABUL (Khaama Press): The Deputy Prosecutor of East Azerbaijan announced that Afghan nationals' activities in the province are prohibited, with severe penalties for violators. Ahmad Moghri added that even those Afghans holding residency permits are not allowed to stay in the province. According to Iranian media, Moghri pointed to the influx of Afghan migrants into Iran following the Taliban takeover, alleging "tangible crimes" by them. He stated, "Based on higher decisions and documents, residency of Afghan nationals, even with permits, is prohibited in some provinces, including East Azerbaijan." Moghri emphasized that industrial complexes in Iran are employing Afghan migrant labor, urging judicial and law enforcement bodies to take serious action against employing companies. The ban on residency and activities of Afghan migrants in various cities of Iran, including East Azerbaijan, is not a new phenomenon. Despite recent harsh crackdowns against Afghan migrants, Iranian authorities continuously highlight Afghan migrants' role in unemployment and crimes in the country. The International Organization for Migration reported that about 70% of Afghans migrate to Iran due to a lack of job opportunities in their own country. Afghan migrants in Iran not only face the threat of deportation but also encounter discriminatory and violent behavior from some Iranian citizens. Human Rights Watch warned about the increasing government and societal discrimination against Afghan migrants in Iran, describing the treatment of Afghan migrants in the country as "catastrophic."

KP cabinet directs MPs inspect public service delivery on weekly basis

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: The 11th Meeting of the Provincial Cabinet was held at Civil Secretariate Peshawar on Tuesday presided by Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Sardar Ali Amin Gandapur. The meeting was attended by Ministers, Advisors, Special Assistants, Senior Member Board of Revenue, Additional Chief Secretaries and Administrative Secretaries.

Chairing the cabinet meeting, Chief Minister of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Sardar Ali Amin Gandapur, directed cabinet members to devise a plan for weekly visits to districts to inspect public service delivery and monitor the progress of developmental projects. He emphasized that special attention should be given to activities in the Merged Districts. Additionally, he instructed the departments particularly education and health to prioritize strengthening human resource deployment in Merged Districts, ensuring that the placement of personnel strictly adheres to a domicile-centric policy.

The cabinet has approved the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Livestock and Poultry Production Act 2024 thus allowing its placement before the provincial assembly. With the promulgation of the act the Livestock, Fisheries and Cooperative Department will be able to register and regulate the livestock and poultry production activities in the province.

The cabinet has approved the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Animal Welfare Act, 2024 for placement before the provincial assembly. This legislation aimed at prevention of infliction of unnecessary pain to animals and to set standards regarding humane handling, treatment and transportation of animals in the province.

The provincial cabinet has approved the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Livestock Breeding Services Act, 2024 allowing its placement before the provincial assembly. This legislation is aimed at regulation of livestock breeding services, improve the genetic potential of breeds and protect indigenous breeds of livestock and to provide for improvement, control, marketing and quality assurance of livestock in the province.

As a stance of the province the provincial cabinet has approved a set of forward-looking recommendations to be included in the position paper for the upcoming National Finance Commission (NFC) award. Among these recommendations is the

demand for the establishment of a 10-year grant, termed the 'Pakistan Building Grant,' sourced from the Federal Divisible Pool. This grant aims to address significant financial needs and development deficits that have accumulated since the 7th NFC award. Additionally, the cabinet has called for an interim adjustment to bring the 7th NFC Award into compliance with the Constitution of Pakistan, recommending that Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's share in the new award be recalculated to include the population and area of the newly merged areas within the province.

The provincial cabinet has approved the forwarding of Resolution No. 18, adopted by the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Provincial Assembly, to the Federal Government. The resolution, introduced by MPA Muhammad Abdul Salam, denounces the ordinance related to appointing retired judges to the election tribunal as a "black law" and demands that the Federal Government withdraw the ordinance. The resolution also states that the appointment of retired judges to the election tribunal is tantamount to undermining justice and democracy, and it has brought disrepute to the country on the international stage.

The provincial cabinet has approved a grant-in-aid of Rs 326.40 million for the Drug Free Peshawar Programme Phase-III and Rs 23.10 million for the Beggars Free Peshawar Programme, aiming to eliminate drug addiction and beggary from the streets of Peshawar. The department plans to rehabilitate 2,000 drug addicts in Phase-III of the Drug Free Peshawar Programme. During the deliberations, the Chief Minister directed the social welfare department to offer free services to families across the province who wish to rehabilitate a drug-addicted family member but cannot afford the treatment.

The provincial cabinet has accorded approval for the cost enhancement from rupees 87.700 million to rupees 152.00 million for the ADP scheme of repair and rehabilitation of Mahabat Khan Mosque Peshawar. The project is aimed at preserving and restoration of the historical Masjid to its original grandeur. Besides, conservation of the structure, restoration of fountain pond, water supply, CCTV System, sound system, illumination work, renovation of ablution area and provision of motorized sun shed are part of the project.

As per the policy of devolving the financial and administrative powers to divisional headquarters for speedy

development the cabinet has approved the establishment of a Regional Development Committee, to be led by the respective divisional commissioner. This decision also involves amending the Planning & Development Guidelines (2015) by the P&D Department, as well as revising the Powers of Sanctioning Development Projects/Programmes under the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Delegation of Financial Powers Rules, 2018. The P&D Department will allocate the required technical human resources from its existing officer pool without creating new vacancies. The cabinet has approved the creation of 35 number of posts of different nomenclatures in Administration Department for the newly declared Khyber Pakhtunkhwa house in D.I.Khan. This was aimed at strengthening of facilities for the smooth devolution of the financial and administrative powers to divisional level.

The provincial cabinet has approved the release of 1.377 billion rupees to the Food Department to settle the remaining wheat procurement liabilities for growers, suppliers, and their authorized representatives at 22 wheat procurement centers. This brings the total financial obligations for the procurement of 208,993.873 MT of wheat to 20.377 billion rupees. The Finance Department had already disbursed 19 billion rupees to the Food Department, as per the decisions made in previous cabinet meetings.

In response to a request by the Union Council Sarai Naimat Khan, District Haripur, and a proposal by the Health Department, the provincial cabinet has approved renaming Category D Hospital Sarai Naimat Khan to Constable Azmat Rashid Shaheed Hospital. This change is made in recognition of Constable Azmat Rashid's Shahadat in the line of duty.

The provincial cabinet has approved non-ADP scheme titled 'Payment of Salaries for 395 Vaccinators (BPS-12)' for period from 1st July 2022 to 30th June 2024 at a cost of rupees 447.780 million. The vaccinators have already rendered services but their salaries have not been paid. The funds will be arranged through re-appropriation within Health sector ADP. The cabinet has allowed the transfer of provincial government land measuring 2 kanal and 11 marla for construction of office building for District Education Officer (F) Hangu.



PESHAWAR: Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Ali Amin Gandapur chairing the provincial cabinet meeting.

Leghari highlights dramatic escalation in IPP costs

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Energy Minister Owais Leghari has disclosed a staggering increase in the cost of electricity from Independent Power Producers (IPPs), revealing that the price of a unit, which was Rs 3 in 2016, has soared to Rs 285 today.

Speaking during a meeting of the Senate Standing Committee on Energy, chaired by Mohsin Aziz, Leghari highlighted the dramatic escalation in IPP costs. He announced that the government will cease purchasing electricity in the future, leaving consumers to buy power directly.

During the meeting, committee chairman Mohsin Aziz voiced concerns over IPP-related issues, questioning the details of contracts, capacity charges, and the under-utilization of plants running at less than 70-80% capacity. He emphasized the committee's agenda to provide relief to the public and scrutinize the rates agreed upon when these IPPs were established.

Leghari committed to providing detailed information in the next meeting, assuring transparency in government dealings. He also requested a private briefing session to discuss sensitive information.

Senator Shibli Faraz expressed a desire to investigate potential fraud by IPPs, criticizing the high cost of electricity production in Pakistan compared to the region. He accused the Ministry of Energy of mismanagement. The Energy Secretary added that while the country can theoretically generate 236 billion units of electricity, actual production is limited to 132 billion units annually due to low demand. He clarified that payments to IPPs are based on terms rather than installed capacity, noting the shutdown of several plants.

Leghari further noted that Karachi Electric (KE) receives a significant government subsidy to align its tariffs with national levels. He warned that electricity prices are expected to rise between 2025 and 2027 as new projects come online.

IHC seeks report on Imran's jail facilities

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad High Court (IHC) on Tuesday sought a report from the Adiala Jail authorities about provision of facilities to incarcerated PTI founder Imran Khan. Chief Justice IHC Justice, Aamer Farooq heard the plea. Azhar Siddique advocate appeared before the IHC to represent the PTI founder.

At the outset of the hearing, the IHC CJ said the court would inquire from the Adiala Jail authorities about the provision of facilities to the former prime minister because they know the ground realities. At this juncture, Azhar Siddique advocate said his client is not being allowed to talk to his sons on WhatsApp call.

"Wait a bit, let the authorities answer," CJ Justice Farooq said to the lawyer of the applicant. The IHC adjourned the hearing until August 22 after summoning a detailed report on the facilities provided to the PTI founder during last two weeks. Earlier, in a letter written to Punjab advocate general, IG prisons stated that the prisoners have requested the same privileges as Imran Khan, including six meetings with his lawyers in a day.

Israeli sonic booms rattle Lebanese capital

Israeli attacks kill 12 Palestinians in West Bank

GAZA: Israeli attacks, including air strikes on the Jenin refugee camp, have killed at least 12 Palestinians across the occupied West Bank in one of the deadliest days in the territory in recent months, the Palestinian Health Ministry has said. Five people were killed in the Jenin air raids on Tuesday while two were fatally shot by Israeli forces in Kafr Qud in the northern West Bank. One young man was also killed in Bethlehem, according to the health ministry. Late on Monday, three men and one 14-year-old child were killed in the Tubas governorate in the northeast of the occupied territory, health officials have said. Reporting from Jenin, Al Jazeera's Nida Ibrahim said Tuesday morning's strikes in Jenin came after Israeli forces raided the area on Monday afternoon, targeting a money exchange shop and claiming it was linked to financing the group Hamas, which governs Gaza. Ibrahim reported that an Israeli raid had prompted an armed confrontation in Aqqaba, near Tubas, on Monday. — Aljazeera

were identified crossing from Lebanon and one was intercepted. Israeli medical officials said seven people were evacuated to hospital, to the south of the coastal city of Nahariya, one in critical condition.

The Israeli military said an initial investigation indicated the injuries were caused by an interceptor that "missed the target and hit the ground, injuring several civilians." It said the incident was still under review. Reuters journalists saw one impact site near a bus stop on a main road outside Nahariya. The Israeli military said in a statement sirens sounded around Acre, but that turned out to be a false alarm. It said its air force

struck two Hezbollah facilities in south Lebanon.

Fears are rising that the Middle East could tip into full-blown war following vows by Hezbollah to avenge Shukr's killing, and by Iran to respond to the assassination in Tehran last week of the head of Palestinian militant group Hamas. A Hezbollah source told Reuters that "the response to the assassination of commander Fuad Shukr has not yet come." Earlier on Tuesday, four Hezbollah fighters were killed in a strike on a home in the Lebanese town of Mayfadoun, nearly 30 km (19 miles) north of the border, medics and a security source said.

Harris picks Minnesota governor as running mate

WASHINGTON (AFP): United States Vice President Kamala Harris picked Tim Walz as her running mate on Tuesday, opting for the Minnesota governor as the partner most likely to complement her in a historic — and bruising — bid for the White House.

Walz had been on a shortlist with a string of other Democratic figures seen as broadening Harris's appeal as she sprints into the contest against Donald Trump.

Aiming to make history as the first woman president, Harris — already a trailblazer as the first female and first Black and South Asian vice president — has little time before Election Day on November 5. The choice was first reported by CNN early on Tuesday morning.

Expectations had always been that Harris would pick

a white man to balance the ticket — and the kind of Democrat who can help counter attacks from Republicans that she is too far to the left. Walz fits that description as a 60-year-old Midwesterner with a folksy manner from a state that could be light years from the coastal elites of California, where Harris comes from, or the East Coast. He will also appeal to progressives after having championed popular Democratic policies, including cannabis legalization and increasing worker protections.

The duo will hit the campaign trail immediately, launching an intense, five-day swing through battleground states beginning on Tuesday in the biggest prize, Pennsylvania. Fresh from securing the official Democratic nomination overnight, Harris can now head to the national con-

vention in Chicago in two weeks in total control of her party. It has been a remarkable journey for Harris, who only entered the race last month when President Joe Biden withdrew, bowing to mounting concerns over his mental acuity and ability at 81 to serve a second term.

In a campaign that is barely two weeks old, the 59-year-old former prosecutor has obliterated fundraising records, attracted huge crowds and dominated social media on her way to erasing what had been Trump's growing lead in polls over Biden. The latest presidential poll by the University of Massachusetts Amherst released on Monday has Harris leading Trump nationally by three points — 46 per cent to 43pc — compared to a four-point lead for Trump over Biden in January.

Putin asks Iran to avoid civilian casualties in Israel response

MOSCOW (Reuters): Russian President Vladimir Putin has asked Iran's Supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei for a restrained response to Israel's suspected killing of the leader of Hamas, advising against attacks on Israeli civilians, two senior Iranian sources said.

The message, according to the sources, was delivered by Sergei Shoigu, a senior ally of the Kremlin leader, in meetings with top Iranian officials as the Islamic Republic weighs its response to the assassination of Ismail Haniyeh. Tehran also pressed Moscow for the delivery of Russian made Sukhoi Su-35 fighter jets, the two Iranian sources, privy to the meeting in Tehran, the sources told Reuters.

In Moscow, the Kremlin did not respond to a request for comment. State-run RIA news agency reported on Tuesday that Shoigu said he discussed Haniyeh's killing on his Tehran visit. The two sources with knowledge of the matter did not provide further details on the talks with Shoigu, who was defense minister before

becoming the secretary of Russia's security council in May.

They said Shoigu's visit was one of several avenues Moscow had used to relay to Iran the need for restraint while at the same time condemning Haniyeh's killing as "a very dangerous assassination," in a bid to prevent a Middle East war. The Middle East, the sources said, was on the brink of a major war and those behind the assassination were clearly trying to trigger such a conflict.

Russia has cultivated closer ties with Iran since the start of its war with Ukraine and has said it is preparing to sign a wide-ranging cooperation agreement with Tehran. There was no immediate comment from Iran's Foreign ministry. On Monday it said Tehran did not seek to raise regional tensions but needed to punish Israel to prevent further instability.

In Washington, an official from the Biden administration warned on Monday of the risks of a major regional conflict. The official, who spoke on condition of anonymity, emphasized that

the scale of Iran's and Hezbollah's response would be a key factor in determining the extent of a potential conflict. Despite efforts by Western and regional states to persuade Iran to retaliate in a measured way, or not at all, Tehran has told foreign officials it will respond "severely" to the killing of Haniyeh in Tehran, where he attended President Masoud Pezeshkian's inauguration, four Iranian sources independently confirmed.

In Lebanon, a prominent Lebanese source close to Hezbollah said "a retaliatory strike is inevitable and diplomacy is no longer a viable option," adding Iran wants the strike to be "severe" but not lead to a regional war. However, he said, this does not rule out the possibility of a war in Lebanon between Iran-backed Hezbollah and Israel. A Middle East-focused senior US official said Washington was doing all it can "to dissuade all parties from going to a place they can't get back from," stressing that other states in the region and Europe should do more.

No room for violence in any sect or religion: KP Governor

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Kundi has said that Islam is a religion of peace, love and tolerance and there is no room for violence in any sect or religion.

In fact, Hajj is the message of unity, unity, and peace and security of Islam. He expressed these views while addressing the Message of Hajj Conference 2024 held in here on Tuesday in collaboration with the Pakistan Ulema Council and the International Tazim-e-Haramain Sharifain Council.

Federal Minister for Religious Affairs and Overseas Chaudhry Salik Hussain, Ambassador of Saudi Arabia Nawaf bin Saeed Al-Maliki, Chairman of Pakistan Ulema Council and General Secretary of International Tazim-e-Haramain Sharifain Council Maulana Tahir Mahmood Ashrafi, Deputy Ambassador of Palestine, Special Representative of Jordanian Embassy and a large number of scholars of different schools of thought participated.

Addressing the conference, the Governor Faisal Karim Kundi said that peace, brotherhood, tolerance, inter-religious harmony are the teachings of the holy duty of Hajj, and we have to play a full role in promoting inter-religious harmony for the development and prosperity of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan. He said that Governor House Peshawar role in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa is dedicated to playing a leadership role in this regard.

He said that Pakistan and Saudi Arabia have excellent and strong relations, adding the Saudi government has provided facilities to pilgrims under the Road to Mecca program is an example. He said that at a time when Pakistan is facing difficulties, the government and people of Saudi Arabia stand with Pakistan. He said that the services of Saudi Arabia for Muslim countries and the Islamic world are not hidden from anyone.

PHC seeks response against curtaining LG mayor powers

Humayun Khan

PESHAWAR: Peshawar High Court (PHC) has issued a notice to Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa seeking a response till 15th August regarding a petition challenging the withdrawal of financial and administrative powers from mayors and tehsil chairmen and transferring to the Secretary Local Council Board, on Tuesday.

PHC's divisional bench comprising Justice Syed Arshad Ali and Justice Ijaz Khan Sabi, heard the petition filed by Mayor Peshawar Haji Zubair Ali. The counsel Farooq Afridi advocate argued that the provincial government has violated the Constitution by withdrawing powers from elected representatives and handing them over to a government official.

The lawyer stated that Article 32 of the Constitution emphasizes

the promotion of local government institutions to enable elected representatives to serve the people at the grassroots level. He added that the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Local Government Act 2013 was also passed to regulate these matters. However, a recent notification issued by the Secretary Local Government Department on July 12, 2024, has transferred financial and administrative powers related to development projects at the local council level to the Secretary Local Council Board.

The lawyer argued that this action not only undermines the effectiveness of local councils but also violates Article 14-A of the Constitution, which guarantees the existence of local government. He stated that the Secretary Local Government notification has given all administrative and financial powers to the Secretary Local Council

Board, whereas the Local Government Act 2013 and 2019 only allow for the transfer of powers through amendments passed by the provincial assembly.

The counsel Farooq Afridi advocate informed the court that the Local Council Board's primary function is to handle matters related to appointments, promotions, transfers, and pensions, but it has now been given financial powers as well, which were previously held by elected representatives. He argued that this is illegal and unconstitutional, as it undermines the effectiveness of the local government system.

The lawyer requested the court to declare 12th July notification illegal and restrain its implementation until a court decision is made. PHC has sought a response from the provincial government by 15th August and adjourned further hearing.

UK riots raise spectre of racism and evoke haunting memories

LONDON: Since riots broke out across Britain, news outlets have focused on the role of disinformation shared on social media. As far-right mobs rage in several towns, questions abound: should social media platforms crack down on the proliferation of dangerous conspiracy theories — primarily that people of immigrant and Muslim backgrounds are more likely to commit deadly crimes or sexual abuse? Are companies like TikTok inflammatory, allowing rioters to flaunt footage of their hate crimes with abandon?

There's little doubt that social media plays a significant role in stoking tensions. However, the threat of the far right is not new, and many of their views entered the political mainstream long before we were glued to our screens. Violence first flared after three girls — Alice Dasilva Aguiar, nine, Elsie Dot Stancombe, seven and Bebe King, six — were stabbed to death at a Taylor Swift-themed summer holiday camp in Southport.

After the northern English

town in mourning held a peaceful vigil, a group of far-right agitators ran riot in scenes that have been repeated for a week. Conspiracy theorists were quick to float the idea that the Southport attacker was Muslim and a migrant.

Neither is true of his identity. The suspect has been named as 17-year-old Axel Rudakubana. Suspects below 18 have automatic anonymity, but judges decided to identify Rudakubana, in part to stop the spread of false information. He is a British national born in Wales, reportedly to Christian parents from Rwanda. Despite attempts to debunk the provocateurs, it was too late. The damage had already been done. Responding to a video shared on X on Saturday by the infamous agitator Tommy Robinson, picturing black-clad men and boys throwing fireworks in a Liverpool street, Musk wrote on his platform: "Civil war is inevitable". He's now at loggerheads with the British government over the comment.

Those joining the days-long riots have chanted against — and attacked — migrants, Muslims and non-white Britons. Mosques have been vandalised. Rioters have thrown bricks into the homes belonging to ethnic minorities and smashed the windscreens of their cars. A Syrian supermarket in Belfast was set alight. Hotels housing asylum seekers have been surrounded by furious crowds, some of whom have made deadly threats; one masked man was filmed making a slit-throat gesture. Racist graffiti was sprayed on the Holiday Inn Express in Tamworth, perhaps an indicator of how many communities are at risk: "Fu** P****s", "Scum", "Get out England".

The Daily Telegraph's crime editor shared a quote from a resident in Middlesbrough, where riots broke out on Sunday: "They were yelling, 'There ain't no black in the Union Jack' and randomly smashing windows in the hope the houses belonged to immigrant families." — Aljazeera