

Six killed in copter crash  
F.P. Report

MIRAN SHAH: At least six people were killed and eight injured after a chartered helicopter carrying 14 passengers crashed in the North Waziristan district of the KP province on Saturday. The Mi8 helicopter was chartered by Mari Petroleum, an oil exploration and production company in Pakistan, and it crashed near Shewa oil field due to a technical fault, said the sources.

5 policemen injured in blast  
F.P. Report

KHAR: At least five police officials were injured when their vehicle was targeted with a remote-controlled explosive device in Bhai Cheena area of Khar tehsil in Bajaur on Saturday morning. According to DSP Abdul Azis, the explosive device was planted in a roadside tree that was detonated through a remote control when the police van was passing by it.



@thefrontierpost

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

www.thefrontierpost.com

Vol. XXXIXI

No. 245

Regd. No. 241

RABI-UL-AWWAL 24 1446 -- SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 29 2024

PESHAWAR EDITION

12 PAGES

PRICE. 30

# PM calls for further strenuous efforts to continue stability

LONDON (APP): Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Saturday said that the collective efforts by all the stakeholders in the government had put Pakistan on the path of economic stability and progress and called for further strenuous efforts and sacrifices to achieve the economic objectives.

During a media interaction, the prime minister elaborated that during their previous tenure of sixteen months in the government, they faced the financial challenges but with collective efforts, they saved Pakistan from running into default. Earlier, the prime minister arrived from New York where he had addressed the plenary meeting of the UN General Debate at the 79th session of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA).

In a veiled reference to previous government of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI), he said the former party's policies led the country to default, but 'with grace of Allah Almighty and with their collective efforts, Pakistan is now moving towards stability and progress. The international institutions also acknowledged it'. The prime minister also expressed his satisfaction over the approval of \$7 billion International Monetary Fund (IMF) extended fund facility.

Comparing last year's 32 percent spiraling inflation rate, he said now the price hike stood at 9.6 percent, adding the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) had also reduced the interest rate while the rates of daily commodities were showing stability. Prime Minister Sharif said the inflation rate had nosedived but still "Everything is not a hunky-dory. We have to sweat hard and broaden the tax net without burdening those already paying it."

He said the common people had always sacrificed for the country. Now, it was time for the elite to sacrifice for the country and play their part in the country's progress. The prime minister thanked the brotherly countries particularly the Kingdom of

Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates and time-tested friend China for their support in securing the IMF programme and said that without their support, it would not have been possible.

"I particularly thank them for their support to steer Pakistan out of economic straits" he said and commended the efforts of ministers of finance, foreign affairs, secretary finance, officials and ambassadors who made efforts in this regard. The prime minister lauded the chief of army staff for his efforts in achieving the IMF programme and said that the COAS had visited the brotherly countries which provided critical economic relief to Pakistan.

Terming it a 'team Pakistan's work', he expressed the hope that the IMF's programme would be the last one as the 240 million people and the government's efforts would accomplish it successfully. He stressed that they would have to reduce their expenditures and strive to provide amenities to the public at their doorsteps. "Time has arrived to work hard and uphold merit which should be their hallmarks."

The prime minister also reiterated his call for a 'charter of economy'. About his participation in the UNGA annual session, he highlighted that he had held useful meetings with different leaders of various countries including the UK, Bangladesh, Türkiye, Kuwait and others which would help to further foster their bilateral and brotherly ties.

"I have made a humble effort to convey voice of the people of Pakistan to the world over Palestine and Gaza where more than 40,000 people including children had been martyred," he said, adding that gruesome Israeli attacks continued on Beirut which was strongly condemned by Pakistan. The prime minister said that in his speech, he had reiterated the call for immediate ceasefire and stressed upon the international community to wake up and work for an immediate independent

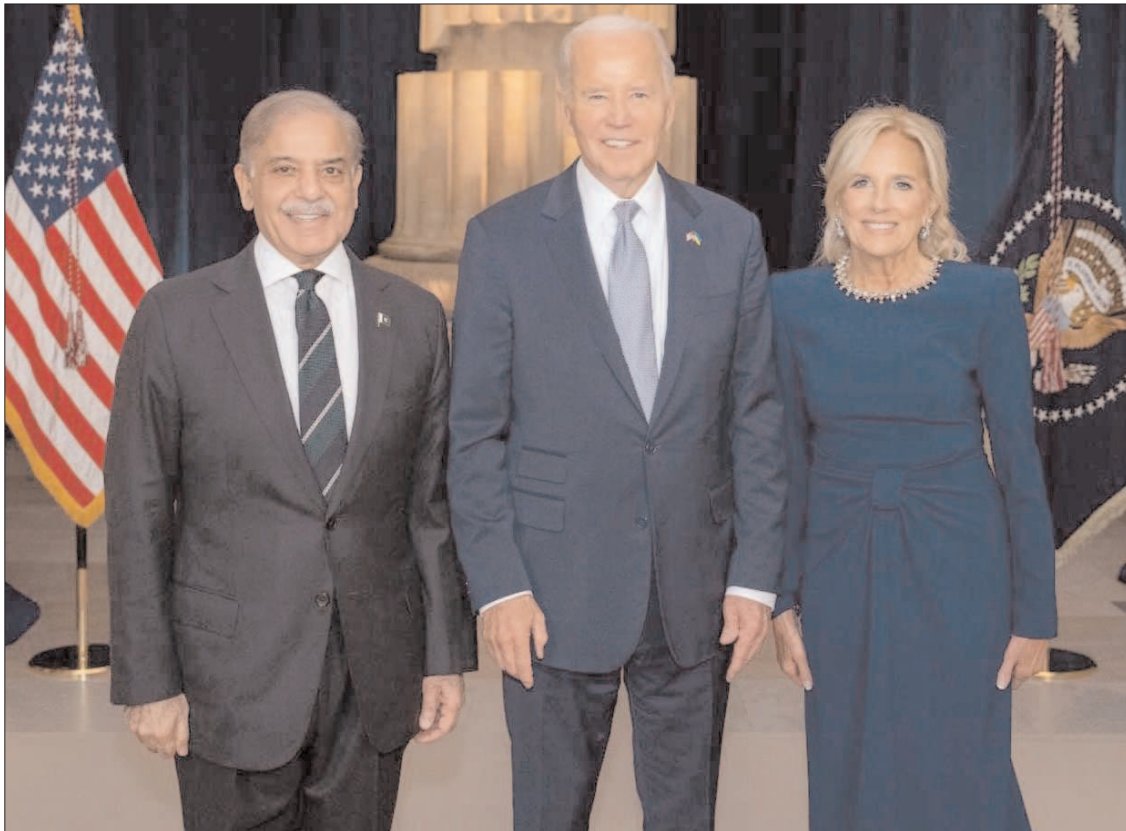
## Shehbaz attends Biden's reception

NEW YORK (APP): Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif attended a reception hosted by United States President Joe Biden in the honor of the heads of government participating in the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) session. President Biden and Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif met during the reception. Both the leaders expressed good wishes for each other. The heads of state of other countries also attended the dinner.

Palestinian state with pre 1967 borders, besides stressed for its representation in the UN.

He said that he also apprised the session of the grave situation in the Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK) where the Kashmiri people had been fighting for their legitimate rights and shedding bloodshed. They had been facing brute aggression and violence by the Indian illegal occupation forces. Modi's government with its unilateral and illegal steps had deprived IIOJK of its special status which was violation of the respective UN resolutions and other global human rights calls. Terror and aggression in IIOJK should end and the Kashmiri people should be given the right to hold plebiscite to independence, he added.

The prime minister, without naming PTI, also termed the 9th May riots targeting Jinnah's House, GHQ and showing disrespect for the martyrs' graves as 'an unpardonable act'. He also expressed his optimism that Pakistan would soon become an 'Asian Tiger' as pronounced by his leader and former prime minister Muhammad Nawaz Sharif whose efforts had put Pakistan on path of rapid progress and economic stability. He regretted that Nawaz Sharif's governments were removed through conspiracies.



NEW YORK: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif with President of US, Joe Biden and First Lady, Dr. Jill Tracy Jacobs Biden at a reception.

## Khamenei calls on Muslims to confront Israel

TEHRAN (Reuters, AFP): Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei called on Muslims on Saturday "to stand by the people of Lebanon and the proud Hezbollah with whatever means they have and assist them in confronting the ... wicked regime (of Israel)."

Khamenei, in a statement after the Israeli army said it had killed Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah, said: "The fate of this region will be determined by the forces of resistance, with Hezbollah at the forefront," state media reported. He condemned Saturday what he described as Israel's "short-sighted" policy after strikes on Lebanon that Israel said killed Nasrallah.

"The massacre of the defenseless people in Lebanon once again revealed the ferocity of the Zionist rabid dog to everyone, and proved the short-sighted and stupid policy of the leaders of the usurping regime," Khamenei said in a statement. Khamenei's statement gave no mention of Nasrallah but he said Israel was "too weak to cause significant damage to the solid construction of Hezbollah in Lebanon."

He called on the "Axis of Resistance", Iran-aligned armed groups across the Middle East that have targeted Israel and its US ally, to stand with Hezbollah. "Lebanon will make the aggressor and the evil enemy regretful," said Khamenei. Reuters earlier reported that Khamenei has been transferred to a secure location inside the country with heightened security measures in place, citing two regional officials briefed by Tehran. The sources said Iran was in constant contact with Lebanon's Hezbollah and other regional proxy groups to determine the next step after Israel announced that it had killed Nasrallah in a strike on south Beirut on Friday.

## COAS says resolving traders issues top priority

F.P. Report

KARACHI: Chief of Army Staff Gen Syed Asim Munir met with the renowned businessmen of the city and discussed different facets of the country's economy.

During his visit, the COAS invited the traders to work hand in hand with Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC) for the betterment of the country's economy. The ISPR said the COAS visited Karachi and met with business leaders to discuss important issues problems related to the economy.

Speaking to the business leaders, he said: "A year ago, I told you all not to

despair, as despair is a sin. Never give up hope for the prosperity of Pakistan," adding that joint efforts have helped defeat attempts to create despair within society. He mentioned the country's exceptional capabilities in various sectors, reiterating that the country seeks to secure its rightful place on the global stage through its own resources.

General Munir also praised the role of Pakistan's foreign allies, especially China, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates, for their contributions to the country's economic recovery. "Google, Starlink and other international companies are



investing in Pakistan," the army chief announced. He also mentioned that these positive developments could not have been possible sans the indefatigable role of the business community. Moreover, the COAS assured the traders of the city that their challenges and concerns would be addressed on priority.

## AD&SJ issues notice to KP Governor Humayun Khan

PESHAWAR: Additional District and Session Judge Alamgir Shah issued notice to Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Kundi, seeking a response in a defamation case filed by Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister's Faisal Amin, till 29th October.

The defamation suit has claimed Rs500 million in damages against Governor Kundi for corruption allegations made on a private TV channel program. The counsel Ali Azim Afridi advocate stated that Governor Faisal Kundi leveled baseless corruption charges against Ali Amin Gandapur and Faisal Amin, damaging their reputation.

The lawyer highlighted services rendered by Faisal Amin, Ali Amin, and their father to the people of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. A legal notice was sent to Governor Faisal Kundi to apologize, but he failed to respond, the counsel argued.

## Punjab election tribunals' case SC to announce reserved verdict tomorrow

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: The Supreme Court (SC) will announce its reserved verdict on the Election Commission of Pakistan's (ECP) appeal in Punjab election tribunals case on September 30 (Monday). A five-member larger bench headed by Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) Qazi Faez Isa had reserved the verdict on the Punjab election tribunals' case earlier this week.

Alongside CJP Isa, the bench includes Justice Amin-ud-Din Khan, Justice Jamal Khan Mandokhail, Justice Naeem Akhtar Afghan and Justice Aqeel Ahmed Abbasi. The top court had also ordered the top electoral authority to make the tribunals functional for hearing the February 8 nationwide polls-related petitions. The matter involves the authority to constitute election tribunals which have been a point of

contention between the LHC and the ECP for months.

The issue arose first when the ECP, on February 14, sought a panel of serving judges from the LHC for election tribunals. The then LHC chief justice nominated two judges on February 20 which was followed by the nomination of another six judges by the CJ on April 14. Out of these six nominated judges, two were notified by the ECP on April 26.

However, the electoral body then raised objections to the additional names for the appointment to Rawalpindi and Bahawalpur election tribunals. This, however, was denied by the LHC chief justice with the high court's registrar calling on the electoral body to notify the election tribunals consisting of the judges nominated by the CJ.

On May 29, Justice Shahid Karim ordered the electoral body to appoint six

more judges, nominated by the LHC chief justice, as election tribunals for hearing election petitions regarding the general elections and said that the notification would be deemed to have been issued in case of the ECP's failure to comply by the court's orders. The electoral body, while refusing to accede to the high court's registrar's demand, said that if it went through with notifying the election tribunals it would mean that they were in fact solely appointed by the LHC CJ and not as a result of consultations between the ECP and the chief justice — which essentially would be a violation of Section 140(3) of the Elections Act.

The then LHC Justice Malik Shahzad Ahmad then constituted eight election tribunals for hearing cases related to the February 8 polls — a move which was then challenged by the ECP in the apex court.

# Hezbollah confirms Nasrallah killed in Israeli strike

BEIRUT: Hezbollah chief Hassan Nasrallah was killed following an Israeli attack on Beirut's southern suburb on Friday evening, the organization has announced. Nasrallah, 64, led Hezbollah for nearly 30 years.

The Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps said Abbas Nilforushan, deputy commander for its operations and for that of the Quds Force in Lebanon, also died in the strike. Supporters of Hezbollah took to the streets where they had been displaced, expressing their deep sorrow over the killing. Heavy gunfire erupted in various neighborhoods and black flags were raised.

The Lebanese army took to the streets to prevent clashes between Nasrallah's supporters and opponents, although several confrontations took place. A statement from Hezbollah praised Nasrallah's "leadership, wisdom, and support for Palestine," emphasizing that the party would "continue its struggle in confronting the enemy, in support of Gaza and Palestine, and in defense of Lebanon and its steadfast and honorable people." Nasrallah's supporters posted on social media calling for "unity to overcome this phase, even

though the news was hard to believe," Some speculated that Nasrallah's death could be a turning point, even though the future was uncertain.

On Saturday, the Israeli military continued its pursuit of Hezbollah members and their supporters through intensive airstrikes and drone attacks. In Lebanon, 11 people died and 19 others — including doctors, nurses and paramedics — were injured in offensives targeting civil defense centers and Islamic Health Organization clinics in Taybeh and Deir Siriane.

Those who fled their homes on Friday night following Israeli threats endured a tumultuous night filled with relentless shelling and assaults that persisted into the early morning. The shocks continued with confirmation of Nasrallah's death from the Israeli army, who used F15 warplanes in the attack. Some 85 bombs, each weighing one tonne, were deployed.

The Israeli army said the raids targeted "Hezbollah's southern front commander Ali Karaki and several other leaders." Daylight revealed the scale of the devastation inflicted upon residential buildings, many of which were reduced to rubble. A drone



strike on a van on the Zahle road in the Bekaa Valley left its passengers injured, while another killed the owner of a vehicle in Daher El-Baydar.

An airstrike on the old Sidon road hit a residential apartment, killing three and injuring four, and there was a further attack in the Galerie Samaana area. The targeted locations were key transit and supply routes for Hezbollah. Iran Air suspended flights to Beirut following an incident in which the Israeli military breached the airport's control tower.

The Israeli army issued a warning against allowing an Iranian civilian aircraft to land, stating that failure to comply would result in the use of force. Minister of Transport Ali Hamieh instructed the airport to ask

the plane "not to enter Lebanese airspace." The Israeli army said its air force targeted over 140 Hezbollah positions from late Friday into the early hours of Saturday.

The strikes affected not only the southern suburbs but also towns in the Bekaa Valley and areas in Mount Lebanon, including the outskirts of the Bhamdoun-Soufre road. Civil defense personnel were unable to extinguish the fire and one of its members was killed. Those who fled during the night took to the sidewalks in the Sanayeh area of Beirut. Mosques and churches opened their doors to provide shelter, while schools were converted into accommodation centers.

The scenario was repeated in Shebaa, where the Israelis demanded that residents evacuate the area before subjecting the town to intense shelling. It is believed this recent action is part of a broader effort to clear the border region of inhabitants ahead of a possible ground military operation. The evacuations mitigated human losses to some extent. Meanwhile, casualties were reported due to airstrikes in northern and central Bekaa, where residents were not

instructed to evacuate.

The Ministry of Health requested hospitals inside and around southern Beirut to move the wounded and sick to other hospitals in order to receive possible casualties. Hezbollah, meanwhile, continued its military assaults on the Israeli side. Media correspondents observed an uneasy calm along the front when Hezbollah announced Nasrallah's death.

The militia launched an attack on several locations, including the settlements of Kabri, Sa'ar, Rosh Pina and Katzrin, the Ramat David military base and airport, the Sadah site, and a building in Ma'a lot, Western Galilee. Sirens were activated in Safed and various towns throughout Upper Galilee. According to Israeli Channel 12: "Sixteen rockets were launched from Lebanon targeting the Galilee region. One of these rockets landed in Nazareth Illit, located in the city of Acre." IDF spokesperson Daniel Hagari said: "We are on high alert around the clock. Difficult days are ahead of us, and this will take some time." He said: "Nasrallah, along with other leaders and the group's command center, were legitimate military targets under international law.

Nasrallah was one of Israel's fiercest enemies, and Israel is not seeking broader escalation but aims to recover hostages and ensure our borders are secure." Normally at about 1am on a Saturday morning, parking is easy to find at Ramlet el-Bayda on Beirut's seafont. On this Saturday morning, however, cars were bumper to bumper on both sides of the road. Many were double parked and more kept arriving, as people continued to flee the devastating waves of Israeli attacks on southern parts of Lebanon's capital. Earlier that evening, the Israeli military levelled a block of buildings in Beirut's southern suburbs, killing at least six and wounding another 91. The death toll is likely to rise further.

Israel claimed the intended target was a central Hezbollah headquarters and that Hezbollah's leader Hassan Nasrallah has been killed. Hezbollah has yet to issue a statement on his fate. On the seafont, people laid down mattresses on the pavement or towels down on the beach. Further along the sand, some set up plastic chairs facing the water or sat around tables drinking coffee or smoking argileh pipes. — Arab News







# Governor writes letters to political parties

## — to form UTFC to address province’s problems

PESHAWAR (APP): The Governor of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Kundi wrote letters on Saturday to all political parties for strengthening Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, calling for collaborative action for socio-political, economic, and security challenges in the province and calls to form a United Task Force Committee (UTFC) to address the problems.

The letter has been written owing to the province's current socio-political, economic, law and order situation as it witnesses unrest and law and order situation, especially in southern and tribal districts.

The Letter has been sent to representatives of all political parties in KP, including Mian Iftikhar Hussain of Awami National Party, Sikandar Hayat Sherpao Quami Watan Party, Senator Maulana Atta Rehman Provincial Ameer of Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam, Maulana Jahanzeb Ali Jafari Provincial President of Majlis Wahdat-ul-Muslimeen, Allama Dr. Muhammad Shafiq Amin Provincial President Tehreek-e-Labaik Pakistan.

The letter has also been issued to Engineer Amir Muqam provincial president of Pakistan Muslim League-N, Mehmoos Khan Provincial President of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf Parliamentarian, Salar Fayyaz Ali Provincial President Mazdoor Kisan Party, Maulana Hamidul Haq Haqqani Provincial President Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam Samiul Haq, Prof Muhammad Ibrahim provincial president of Jamaat-e-Islami.

Moreover, the letter has also been sent to Syed Muhammad Ali Shah Bacha provincial president of Pakistan Peoples Party, Fayaz Khan provincial president of Jamiat Ulema Pakistan Noorani.

Furthermore, a separate letter has been written to the Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Sardar Ali Amin Gandapur, in which he requested join in the meeting.

In the letter the governor states, "I hope this letter finds you in good health and high spirits. As we confront the challenges of governance in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, I feel com-

pelled to bring to your attention several critical issues that urgently demand our collaborative efforts."

The letter further reads, "These challenges not only affect our communities but also shape the future of our province, making it essential for us to unite in our response. As you are aware, our province faces significant challenges, including socio-political, economic, and security threats that have paralyzed progress and stability, resulting in irreparable repercussions."

It adds, "Key issues include the fair distribution of resources and their optimal utilization, National Finance Commission (NFC), NHP (Net Hydrel Profit), Wheeling of Electricity, Federal Excise Duty on Oil, Water Share besides security concerns, and socio-economic and political landscape of the province that ultimately affect our citizens."

The governor says in the letter, "The current economic conditions further exacerbate these issues, necessitating immediate and collaborative action." Proposing to address the

issues he writes, "To address these challenges effectively, I propose the formation of a United Task Force Committee comprising representatives from all political parties in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa."

This committee would work together to advocate for equitable resource distribution, develop strategies for the NFC negotiations, propose measures to enhance security, promote political cohesion, and identify key economic development initiatives, the letter added.

"As the Governor, I am committed to serving all citizens of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, and I believe that our collective efforts can yield positive outcomes for the province. By uniting our voices, we can effectively present our concerns to the federal government," it adds.

I welcome your thoughts on this proposal and would like to convene an initial meeting to discuss the formation of the United Task Force Committee. Together, we can pave the way for a more prosperous and secure future for our province, said the letter.



PESHAWAR: School children interested in antiquities during a visit to Peshawar Museum.

### Governor express grief over helicopter crash incident

PESHAWAR (APP): Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Governor Faisal Karim Kundi on Saturday expressed grief and sorrow over loss of precious lives in an incident of helicopter crash in North Waziristan.

The Governor termed it an unfortunate incident and sought a report on the accident from the higher authorities, said a statement issued here. He expressed condolences with the bereaved families of those who died in the incident and prayed for early recovery of the injured.

Kundi directed provision of all possible medical facilities to the injured.

**CS expresses grief over loss of lives in Mari Petroleum helicopter crash:** Chief Secretary (CS) Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Nadeem Aslam Chaudhary has expressed grief over the loss of innocent lives in Mari Petroleum helicopter crash in North Waziristan.

In a statement issued here Saturday, Chief Secretary offered condolence to bereaved family members.

He prayed for the eternal peace of departed souls and directed authorities to provide treatment to those injured in the mishap.

### District admin launches crackdown

PESHAWAR (APP): The District Administration launched a mega crackdown on illegal filling stations across Peshawar; 45 stations were sealed, Deputy Commissioner Peshawar, Sarmad Saleem Akram said.

In compliance with the directives of the Provincial Government, the District Administration has taken action against illegal filling stations across Peshawar, sealing a significant number of them.

Administrative officers inspected illegal filling stations on GT Road, Warsak Road, Kohat Road, Inqilab Road, Urmahr Road, Charsadda Road, and in other areas, resulting in the sealing of 45 stations.

According to Deputy Commissioner Peshawar, Sarmad Saleem Akram, actions against illegal filling stations will continue under the directives of the provincial government.

### Cloudy weather with rain forecast

PESHAWAR (APP): The Provincial Meteorological Center Peshawar on Saturday predicted that mainly partly cloudy weather is expected in the province however rain-thunderstorms with gusty winds are likely to occur in various districts.

The districts where rain, gusty winds and heavy isolated rainfall were predicted included Abbottabad, Mans-ehra, Haripur, Battagram, Kohistan, Torghar, Shangla, Chitral, Upper & Lower Dir, Swat, Buner, Malakand, Bajaur, Mohmand, Mardan, Swabi, Charsadda, Peshawar, Khyber, Kohat, Hangu, Kurram, Bannu, Lakki Marwat, Karak, DI Khan, Tank and North and South Waziristan districts. During last 24 hours, mainly cloudy weather prevailed in most parts of the province.

# PHC stops adverse actions in corporate dispute

Humayun Khan

Swabi district.

The petitioner approached PHC in writ stating that Taimur Danish and Rabi Ul Haq registered a Firm with the name The Peak Builders Constitution and Consultant and dissolved on 18th May 2020 due to differences among both parties.

The petitioner registered First Information Report (FIR) at Khan Raziq Shaheed police station on 23 January 2023. However, Station House Officer Zaida issued notice to the petitioner for provision of Stamp paper on 27 January 2023 the writ stated.

Meanwhile, the petitioner challenged the notice issued by SHO Zaida at PHC which was decided on 12 June 2024 with the direction to the applicant to appear before the inquiry.

The recorded his statement on the same date with compliance of PHC's orders.

The applicant application to District Police Officer Swabi for closure of the inquiry after his appearance in the proceedings as per PHC orders.

The writ argues to declare inquiry initiated by DPO Swabi on 26 Jan 2023 as illegal, unlawful, perverse, fanciful, corum-non-judice despite the challan and cognizance took by JMJC Peshawar in FIR no 90 dated 23 Jan 2024 at Khan Raziq Shaheed police station may be set aside.

PHC issued notices to AG along with other respondents including DPO Swabi for submission of reply and stopped adverse actions against the petitioner while adjourned further hearing till 29th Oct.

# CJ PHC promotes 35 judicial officers

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Chief Justice Peshawar High Court Ishtiaq Ibrahim issued promotion orders of 35 judicial officers to the next grade, based on recommendations from the Departmental Promotion/Administration Committee.

The committee recommended promotion of 9 Additional District and Session Judges elevated to District Session Judge along with 19 Senior Civil Judges promoted to

Additional District and Session Judges and Civil Judges promoted as Senior Civil Judges.

The promoted judicial officers to District Session Judges including Nadeem Muhammad, Syed Yasser Shabbir, Rashidullah Kundi, Jamal Shah, Muhammad Saeed Amjad, Naveed-ur-Rehman, Syed Badshah, Shaukat Ali and Zia Ul Haq.

Moreover, Khalid Mansoor, Ijaz-ur-Rehman, Syed Israr Ali Shah, Karen Shaukat, Muhammad Irfan,

Najeeb-ul-Haq, Muhammad Hanif, Iftikhar Ahmed, Bakhtzada, Saidah Tahreema Sabahat, Muhammad Jamil Khan, Nadeem Akhtar and Asif Kamal promoted to the post of Additional District and Session Judges.

Meanwhile, Arshad Ali, Sabir Ali Shah, Ijaz Mohsud, Shaukat Hussain, Yasir Hussain, Aziz Ahmed, Adnan Iqbal, Rafiqat Zahoor, Sameullah Khan, Aram Naushin, Arshad Ali, Aram Ayesha and Riaz Aslam recommended for Senior Civil Judges.

### Welfare of journalists:

# Bill under discussion in KP assembly committee

PESHAWAR (APP): Information Advisor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Barrister Saif Saturday said that government believes in freedom of press and a bill aiming welfare of journalists is under discussion in committee of provincial assembly.

He was addressing the concluding session of leadership training program that was organized by Pakistan Federal Union of Journalists (PFUJ) for media persons. The training among others was attended by sec-

retary information PFUJ, Ehtisham-ul-Haq, Coordinator, Ghulam Mustafa, Shahzad Alam and senior journalists.

Speaking on the occasion, health advisor said that journalist fraternity has to transform itself according to contemporary trends that have changed the scenario of journalism.

He said that modern communication techniques have converted whole world into a global village adding that these trainings

would help media persons to understand the needs of current day journalism and to improve working according to ever changing dynamic standards of their profession.

Barrister Saif that government would always accept positive criticism keeping in view significance of media. He said that government has taken steps for welfare of journalists and to give them congenial and favorable working environment.

# Efforts intensified to control dengue outbreak: Secretary Health

PESHAWAR (APP): Secretary Health Adil Shah on Saturday assured that the Health Department is taking all necessary measures to control the spread of dengue fever in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

"We urge the public to support us in combating this disease, especially during the peak dengue season," Secretary Adil Shah said adding that "We have distributed 80,000 diagnostic kits to hospitals, 300,000 mosquito nets to control dengue and

malaria, and provided 640 liters of insecticide for spraying, 1,200 liters of chemical for fumigation besides, 11 kg of Temephos chemical to eliminate dengue larvae."

According to the latest statistics, 372 active dengue cases have been reported in the province, with only 21 patients hospitalized.

A total of 760 dengue cases have been reported so far, with 388 patients recovering from the disease. In the last 24 hours

and 72 new cases were reported, with four patients hospitalized and the rest undergoing treatment at home.

Unfortunately, two deaths have been attributed to dengue. Peshawar and Abbottabad are the most affected areas, with 218 and 106 reported cases, respectively. The Health Department appeals to the public to take precautionary measures to prevent the disease, he added.

**760 dengue cases reported in province so far:** As

many as 760 cases of dengue have been reported in the province so far among which 372 were active.

According to health department, 21 patients suffering from active dengue virus are under treatment in various hospitals.

The tally of dengue patients reported in 24 hours in 72 of which four are admitted in hospital. So far two deaths have been reported from dengue in the province while 388 patients have fully recovered.

# ‘Tour de Peshawar’ arranged

PESHAWAR (APP): The Directorate of Archaeology and Museums in collaboration with the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Culture and Tourism Authority (KPCTA) arranged a special "Tour de Peshawar" to mark the World Tourism Day.

The ceremony was attended by more than 75 participants, including students, academicians and influencers from various

fields, who took part in the tour of Peshawar's historical landmarks.

During the tour, the participants visited prominent historical sites such as the Peshawar Museum, Sethi House, Ghantaghar (Clock Tower), Khuttari, Chowk Yadgar, Mahabat Khan Mosque, Kapoor Haveli, Qissa Khwani Bazaar, and a number of restaurants and hotels.

Shahid Ali Khan, Chief Coordinator Tour de Peshawar said that the purpose of the tour was to send a message to world on the World Tourism Day that Peshawar and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa were the peaceful regions where tourists can visit and enjoy the scenic sites without any fear.

He stressed the need for collaborative efforts to pro-

mote tourism in the region. Since 1980, the United Nations World Tourism Organization has celebrated World Tourism Day as international observances on September 27. This date was chosen as on that day in 1970, the Statutes of the UNWTO were adopted.

The adoption of these Statutes is considered a milestone in global tourism.





## In brief

### Ice-addict robber arrested F.P. Report

KOHAT: Kohat police on Saturday arrested a notorious robber involved in various cases of robberies at gunpoint, informed Kohat police spokesman. The robber named Noor Khan aka NoorI, also an Ice drug addict was arrested by the Gumbat Police during an intelligence-based operation. A stolen motorcycle, weapons used in crimes and ice drugs were recovered from his possession. The successful operation was carried out by SHO Gumbat Waqar Afridi and his team, Cases under various sections were registered against the accused at three police stations. The spokesman said that DPO Kohat Mohammad Umar Khan had received complaints regarding snatchings of motorcycles, cash, mobile phones and valuables from citizens at gunpoint mostly during the night time. The DPO formed a special investigation team under the headship of DSP Gambit Nazer Hussain and SHO Gambit and directed them to formulate a comprehensive strategy to arrest the accused. The police team tracked down the accused through advanced investigation methods and ground intelligence and succeeded in his arrest. The accused who has confessed to committing several crimes of robbery was handed over to an investigation team for further revelations.

### Train service for Quetta, Peshawar

QUETTA (INP): The Railways Department has decided to restore the train service from Quetta on October 11. In the letter written by the CEO Railways to the Divisional Superintendent Quetta, it is stated that the Railways Department has decided to restore the train service from Quetta to within the country from October 11 and the Jafar Express for Peshawar will depart on October 11 at 9:00am. In this regard, railway officials told a private news channel that the repair of Dozan Bridge will be completed in 10 days after which a trial will be conducted. After the completion of the trial, the train service for the interior will be restored from October 11. According to railway officials, the Dozan Bridge was destroyed in a sabotage incident on August 26 due to which the train service was suspended.

### Two women shot dead

SHEIKHUPURA (INP): Two women were killed and another critically injured in firing of unidentified armed men here on Saturday, police said. According to details, the incident took place near a flour mill in Mohallah Sultanpura of Sheikhpura where unknown gunmen sprayed bullets at three women. As a result of firing, 55-year-old Nageena Shehzadi and 26-year-old Kiran were killed on the spot while Humaira Bibi 40, was critically injured. The attackers fled the scene after committing dual murder. Reasons behind the incident could not be ascertained. The bodies and injured were shifted to hospital for medico-legal formalities and police after registering a case into the incident started investigations. Meanwhile, one robber was killed and two others managed to escape after exchange of fire with police here on Saturday, police said. According to details, the Gujranwala and Sheikhpura Police on a tip-off regarding presence of gang of robbers conducted joint operation in Manawala of Sheikhpura.

# Fight between professors widely condemned in Dir

## F.P. Report

LOWER DIR: A physical clash between two professors at the University of Malakand was widely condemned by intellectuals, academicians and social circles in parts of the Lower Dir district. An assistant professor at the Government Degree College Dargai in Malakand district, Dr Abdul Naseer, a resident of Kamar Sar in Bajaur district, has alleged that he has been subjected to severe physical torture by the Pro-Vice chancellor, University of Malakand (UoM) Prof Dr Atta ur Rehman and his two sons.

Talking to this reporter on phone at Timergara, he demanded the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Governor Faisal Karim Kundi and secretary higher education department to properly investigate the matter and ensure justice to him. He said that after submitting students' papers in the UoM examination center he went to the Islamic Studies department to meet his former colleagues in their office the other day. He said the UoM pro-vice chancellor Prof Dr Atta ur Rehman who is also chairman of the Islamic Studies department,

entered the office and asked his colleagues to leave the room.

"As my former colleagues left the room, two sons of Prof Atta ur Rehman entered there who locked the room from behind and began to thrash, kick and punch me with an iron mukka", he said, adding that he somehow succeeded to open the door. He said the accused continued to beat him in front of several students outside the office, the CCTV footage of which are available. He said that he was shifted to the hospital by students in injured condition.

Dr Abdul Naseer was later taken to the tehsil headquarter hospital Chakdara in injured condition wherein he recorded his statement to the local police. Regarding a police case against the pro-vice chancellor, he said that he would lodge an FIR against Prof Dr Atta ur Rehman and his two sons once results of his fractures and wounds came in hand.

Referring to the allegation leveled by the pro-vice chancellor in police, he said that he had never registered a complaint against him that he was an Afghan national. He termed the FIR registered by Dr Atta ur

Rehman against him as baseless and immoral.

On the other hand, the UoM pro-vice chancellor Prof Dr Atta ur Rehman, lodged an FIR against Dr Abdul Naseer at the Chakdara police station under 352, 500 and 506 PPC, stating that he was present in his office when the accused Abdul Naseer, a resident of Kamar Sar Bajaur entered his office and began to calling him. According to his report the students and UoM employees present on the occasion protected him as the accused wanted to attack him.

He told police that the accused was repeatedly threatening him with dire consequences. He said the accused remained his subordinate at the varsity for three years as a lecturer and he was applying for a better position. He said the accused had been declared ineligible as he held a fake experience certificate. He told police the accused had also filed a complaint against him declaring him as an Afghan national. Dr Atta ur Rehman said the Pakistani intelligence agencies had declared him a Pakistani citizen. He demanded legal actions against the accused for threatening him.

# 3 smart police stations near completion: RPO

## F.P. Report

MULTAN: Regional Police Officer (RPO) Capt (retd) Sohail Chaudhry said that three state-of-the-art "smart police stations" were nearing completion in Multan region.

In a statement issued here on Saturday, the Regional Police Officer (RPO) said that these state-of-the-art police stations aim to provide a more efficient working environment for police officers, enhancing their performance and, in turn, improving public service. He said that a total of 39 smart police stations were being constructed across the province including in Gujranwala, Bahawalpur, Sheikhpura, Sahiwal, and Multan division. He said that the "smart police stations" were particularly suited for densely populated areas with high real estate costs, as they offer a space-saving yet fully functional solution.

Sohail highlighted that the modern stations will feature an innovative design, offering all necessary amenities in a compact space. He emphasized that the new stations would lead to significant cost savings for the Punjab Police by reducing rental expenditures and lowering construction costs.

Concluding his remarks, RPO Capt (retd) Sohail Chaudhry expressed his gratitude to the Punjab government for ensuring the timely allocation of funds for the construction of the smart police stations, which were poised to revolutionize police infrastructure in the province.

**Profiteers face harsh penalties:** The district administration has decided to take strict action against shopkeepers involved in selling commodities at high prices.

During his visit to the vegetable market to monitor the auction process here on Saturday, Deputy

Commissioner (DC) Wasim Hamid Sandhu said that the district administration was utilizing all possible resources to provide relief to the masses. He said that prices of commodities were being strictly monitored and action was being taken against violators. He maintained that it had been decided to send profiteers directly to jail besides imposing heavy fine on them.

The DC said that Awami Relief Camps, Awan Dost Counters and Cart Bazaars had already been made functional across the district. He said that the auction process at markets had been made open to ensure sustainability in prices while "Cheap DC Counters" have also been set up at general stores and shopping plazas for public facilitation. Sandhu added that the performance of price control magistrates was being monitored through online application for bringing more improvement in their performance.

# Free eye camp set up in Lower Dir

## F.P. Report

LOWER DIR: The Al-Khidmat Foundation and Dir Scouts, Frontier Corps North on Friday jointly arranged a free eye camp at the Al-Khidmat hospital Zwal Baba. The AKF central assistant secretary Fazal Mahmood and Colonel Sajjad Kiani inaugurated the camp during which 30 men and women were provided with free of cost medical treatment.

A function in this regard was addressed by Colonel Sajjad, AKF leader Fazal Mahmood, district president Hafizullah Khaksar, director of the Al-Khidmat hospital Haji Majidullah and others.

The speakers lauded the services of the AKF and

said that it had been serving the ailing humanity irrespective of their religion, caste and sect.

The AKF district president said that 150 orphan children were provided with shoes, clothes and toys while 150 other deserving families were provided with food packages with the financial support of a Turkish organization at Ahya ul Uloom Balambat here the other day.

**Road accident:** A 23-year-old man identified as Bahar ud Din, a resident of Kaladak was killed when a car hit a motorcycle at the Islam Dara area in the jurisdiction of Balambat police station here on Friday, residents and officials said. The Rescue 1122 medical team

rushed to the site and shifted the injured to the DHQ hospital Timergara wherein he succumbed to injuries. The Balambat police registered a case and started investigations.

Meanwhile the Rescue 1122 divers rescued five persons trapped in the Panjkora River near the Timer Afghan refugees camp and shifted them to a safe place, residents said. They said that a man had been trapped in the gushing water in the river due to torrential rains. They said that four other persons jumped into the river to rescue the trapped man but they all were trapped. The Rescue 1122 divers reached the site and rescued all the five persons.

# Pakistan can achieve economic prosperity

## F.P. Report

MULTAN: Additional Chief Secretary South Punjab, Fuad Hashim Rabbani, has said that the future of the global economy is closely linked to agriculture, livestock, and e-commerce.

He emphasized that Pakistan could achieve economic prosperity by leveraging modern technology in the fields. During a visit to an agricultural farm of a progressive farmer, Mumtaz Khan Manais in Mailsi, accompanied by Commissioner Multan Division Maryam Khan and Deputy Commissioner Vehari Asif Hussain Shah, he highlighted the potential of South Punjab to bolster the economy through these sectors. He noted that the South Punjab Secretariat had submitted various recommendations to the Punjab government for review and to formulate a strategy for implementation.

Rabbani stressed the importance of

adopting regenerative agriculture in South Punjab for sustainable development and efficient irrigation water use. This approach aims to enhance yields through advanced techniques while conserving water and preserving soil fertility. He pointed out that crop yields in South Punjab fall significantly short of global standards but could be doubled or even more with modern farming practices, particularly for crops such as wheat, tomatoes, and mangoes. The application of advanced technology and high-quality seeds is crucial to achieving these goals.

He also highlighted the significant demand for green chili in China and other countries, which can be processed into pickles and sauces to boost profits. Similarly, sunflower is vital for oil production and by-products, with access to premier markets being essential. He explained that potato production and profitability can be improved by utilizing quality seeds,

establishing cold chains, and employing mechanized facilities.

Rabbani said that recommendations for establishing processing plants for mangoes and vegetables in South Punjab have been sent to the government, enabling the production of value-added products such as pulp, juices, jams, and oils, with an estimated budget of Rs 345 million. Additionally, he mentioned a plan to leverage China's expertise in agriculture and dairy production, which includes training 1,000 farmers in modern farming techniques. Moreover, China has planted hybrid seeds across 500,000 acres in Punjab, with intentions to expand this area further. Rabbani noted the significance of the livestock and dairy sector, stating that enhancing this sector in South Punjab could earn millions of Dollars through the export of milk, dairy products, and halal meat.



KHAR: Injured police officials being treated at hospital after bomb blast in Bajaur. — F.P. photo

## Science and Art Companions arranged F.P. Report

HAFIZABAD: Annual Science and Art Companions among students of District Public School Hafizabad held under supervision of Principal Muhammad Zaman Cheema. Ex-District Nazim Col.(R) Ali Ahmad Awan was chief guest on this occasion while members board of governor Professor Muhammad Tahir Ayub, Sheikh Najam-ul-Islam, Sheikh Faisal Islam, Shafaqat Hussain Tarar, parents and other prominent personalities attended the function.

Col.(R) Ali Ahmad Awan inaugurated exhibition different models made by the students and the guests lauded creative work and worth of students.

Principal Muhammad Zaman Cheema said that with provision of such platforms, provide opportunities to students to show their abilities and hidden talent of students floats as a result of which, not only confidence of students improved but quality of healthy competition and leadership also raise. The guests appraised performance of the district public school declared that DPS is the best educational institution in the district which shows best results in academic and co-curriculum activities.

**Police arrest six dacoits:** Hafizabad Police organized Crime Circle have arrested six dacoits who were involved in robbery at a rice mill on Saturday.

All the six dacoits after looting cash and other valuables from the rice mill fled away successfully. Later, Organized Crime Circle traced the dacoits with the help of latest technology and arrested them. Police also recovered looted cash from their possession and returned it to the ownership of the rice mill. Hafizabad police registered a FIR against the arrested dacoits and started investigation.

## 15 criminals nabbed

SARGODHA (INP): The district police arrested 15 alleged criminals during a crackdown on law-violators across the district.

A spokesman said that police teams from different police stations raided different localities under their respective jurisdictions and arrested Nadeem, Naem, Naseer, Nouman, Naveed, Nasrullah, Muhammad Ashfaq, Muhammad Aslam, Tariq, Waqas, Waleed.

# Dr Najib remembers in Landi Kotal

## F.P. Report

LANDI KOTAL: A rich tribute was paid to the former Afghan President, Dr Muhammad Najibullah on the occasion of his 29th death anniversary on Friday and recalled his services for the wellbeing of his people.

In this connection a gathering was organized in Landi Kotal press club, district Khyber that was attended by General Secretary Communist Party of Pakistan (CPP) and convener of lift alliance Imdad Qazi, comrade Najib Khawarichan, Shakib Khan Ahmad Ali and people from different walks of life.

Speakers including Imdad Qazi Najibullah Khawarichan, Shakib Khan

highlighted different aspects of the life of former Afghanistan President Dr Najibullah and said that killing of Dr Najib was the black chapter of the history as he worked for the rights and unity of the Pakhtuns throughout his life and this he would be remembered for ever.

Dr Najibullah had been seeking peace and stability in the region but he was killed by the regional enemies of the Afghans, they remarked. They maintained that Dr Najib was assassinated under an international conspiracy to destabilize regional peace. It was the ideology of CPP to work for the prosperity and betterment of the working class, they added and said

the wheel of development of the country functioned due to the group.

They said time had arrived for Pakhtuns to differentiate between friends and foes as the enemies had been deceiving them through hollow slogans for the last four decades. The speakers urged the youth community to follow Dr Najib footprints while striving hard to work for restoration of peace and stability in Pakhtuns society that had suffered due to conflict in the recent past. It is to be mentioned here that Muhammad Najibullah, born 1947, in Gardiz province of Afghanistan and was killed by Taliban on September 27, 1996 in Kabul.

# First Chikungonia patient identified in Buner

## F.P. Report

BUNER: The viral disease named Chikungonia patient has been identified in Sura village of Mandanr, Buner district, on Saturday. According to National Institute of Health (NIH) advisory on preventing the spread of Chikungonia which is transmitting by 'Aedes' mosquitoes.

Moreover, Coordinator for Health Dr. Mukhtar Bhatti, stated that Chikungonia is a viral disease that spreads through mosquito bites, mainly in

Africa, South Asia and Southeast Asia. The symptoms of Chikungonia as severe fever, joint pain, headache, muscle pain, rash and swelling around joints.

The diagnosis process including blood tests are necessary for accurate diagnosis, as symptoms resemble those of Dengue fever. Moreover, no specific medication available while rest and hydration recommended for treatment. Doctors may prescribe medications to alleviate fever and joint pain.

Meanwhile, the viral disease can be control by pre-

vention. No vaccine available yet (clinical trials underway in the US), protective measures against mosquito bites are essential. NIH has directed relevant health authorities to take timely and appropriate measures to control the spread of Chikungonia.

District Health Officer Buner told The Frontier Post that no precautions and prevention measures initiated despite two adjoining districts of Shangla and Tor Ghar are severely effected by the viral disease.

# PRSP hold meeting with stakeholders

## F.P. Report

TOBA TEK SINGH: District Population Office Toba Tek Singh and PRSP organized a meeting with stakeholders regarding change in human attitudes regarding family planning. District Population Officer Muhammad Naem, Incharge Program NRSP Muhammad Atta, Deputy Director Social Welfare, District Information Officer Muhammad Shahbaz Ansari, DM Doctor Asif, Asif Shabbir and stakeholders from the community participated.

While giving a detailed briefing regarding changes

in positive attitudes regarding family planning, he said that our religion Islam also provides us with guidance regarding family planning. The purpose of which is to reduce the negative effects on health as well as to play a role in national planning. A growing population is reducing the capacity to provide basic amenities to citizens.

This is increasing unemployment. The country's economy is under pressure. We have a large workforce but unfortunately the available jobs are unable to absorb this work force. Moreover, the education sector and health care sys-

tem are facing challenges in meeting the needs of the growing population. Our education system is also suffering from many problems while health facilities are limited.

The infrastructure, urban amenities and transportation facilities of the cities are inadequate to bear the burden of ever increasing population. To solve this serious problem facing the dear country, the population has to be controlled. In this regard, all the stakeholders have to play their role with a firm intention to improve the practical situation of family planning in Pakistan.

# Political tensions rise over amendments

## F.P. Report

MULTAN: Federal Advisor on Political Affairs Rana Sanaullah emphasized the significance of including Maulana Fazlur Rehman in the ongoing constitutional amendment process, despite the challenges posed by the Supreme Court's decision on Article 63A.

Sanaullah noted that even without Rehman's votes, amendments could still potentially pass, but insisted that it would be unwise to exclude him from negotiations. He expressed this while talking to media. Sanaullah expressed concerns regarding the current relationship between political institutions, suggesting that mutual conflicts could be resolved if each entity operated within its design-

nated limits. He criticized the apex court for taking an extended 90 days to interpret constitutional matters, arguing that such delays raise questions about the authority of the judiciary, particularly when it comes to crucial decisions affecting the political landscape.

He pointed out that the judiciary's influence over constitutional amendments, particularly referencing the controversial 19th Amendment, has sparked significant backlash. "The Supreme Court cannot dictate to Parliament," Sanaullah asserted, calling for a reevaluation of the judicial authority in legislative matters.

The discussion also touched upon the need for consensus on Article 8 of

the proposed amendments, which has faced scrutiny from various political factions. Sanaullah revealed that discussions had previously taken place with Maulana Rehman, and while some amendments were agreed upon, he urged that all parties come together to finalize the remaining issues.

Ultimately, Sanaullah underscored the importance of collaboration, stating, "We need Maulana to complete the numbers. It will not be appropriate to complete the numbers for constitutional amendments by excluding him." As the political landscape continues to evolve, the resolution of these tensions will be crucial for the stability of the country's governance.





# Sayeeda Warsi quits Conservatives over UK party’s lurch to ‘far right’

LONDON: Britain’s first Muslim cabinet minister has resigned from the opposition Conservative Party, saying it has moved too far to the right.

Baroness Sayeeda Warsi, who sits in the House of Lords, announced her decision, saying that it was “a reflection of how far right my Party has moved and the hypocrisy and double standards in its treatment of different communities”. “I am a Conservative and remain so but sadly the current Party are far removed from the Party I joined,” said Warsi, who made history by becoming the country’s first Muslim cabinet minister under former Prime Minister David Cameron and formerly served as co-chair of the Conservatives.

Warsi’s decision came amid controversy over her response to the recent acquittal of pro-Palestinian protester Marieha Hussain, who faced racial abuse charges after carrying a placard depicting then-Prime Minister Rishi Sunak and Suella Braverman, the former home secretary, alongside coconuts under a tree on a beach. Prosecutors considered

the placard to be a racist slur, interpreting its meaning as “you may be brown on the outside, but you are white on the inside”. After Hussain’s acquittal, Warsi posted a picture on X of herself drinking from a coconut and wished her “many congratulations”.

Shortly after Warsi released her statement, a Conservative Party spokesperson said: “Complaints were received regarding divisive language allegedly used by Baroness Sayeeda Warsi ... [who] was informed an investigation was about to begin earlier this week. “We have a responsibility to ensure that all complaints are investigated without prejudice.”

Later, Warsi defended her decision to support Hussain. “A court of law found #MariehaHussain not guilty. Whatever Rishi Sunak and Suella Braverman think of that decision that is the rule of law and they are not above the law,” she posted on X. “I will not be gagged on a point of principle,” she said.

Warsi, who is of Pakistani origin and was made a peer in 2007 by Cameron and served in his first gov-

ernment, resigned as a minister in the Foreign and Commonwealth Office in 2014 over the government’s policy on Gaza. At the time, she described the United Kingdom’s stance as “morally indefensible” and called for a weapons embargo to be placed on Israel. Throughout her career, Warsi has taken multiple stands against racism and Islamophobia within party ranks.

In 2022, she came to the defence of Conservative MP Nusrat Ghani, who claimed she was sacked as minister because colleagues felt “uncomfortable” about her religion and because she had not defended the party against Islamophobia allegations. At the time, Warsi told Sky News that the party saw the issue of Islamophobia as “far less serious than other forms of bigotry”. Last year, Warsi called Braverman “dangerous” over comments she made against pro-Palestine protests. The row erupted ahead of the Conservative Party conference that starts on Sunday, where hopefuls will make their cases to become leader. — Aljazeera



WEST BANK: People watch as an excavator pours sand over one of the 88 bodies buried in a mass grave in Khan Younis.

## 30,000 people crossed into Syria from Lebanon: UN

NEW YORK: More than 30,000 people, mainly Syrians, have crossed into Syria from Lebanon in the past 72 hours, according to the United Nations refugee agency (UNHCR). The escalating conflict between Israeli forces and Hezbollah has displaced more than 90,000 people since September 23, the agency said.

About 80 percent of those crossing over are Syrians and about 20 percent are Lebanese, said Gonzalo Vargas Llosa, the UNHCR representative in Syria. “They are crossing from a country at war to one that has faced a crisis conflict for 13 years,” an extremely difficult choice, he told a news conference. Lebanon is home to about 1.5 million Syrians who fled civil war in their country.

Israel has dismissed global calls for a ceasefire with Hezbollah and continues a bombing campaign that has killed more than 700 people in Lebanon since Monday. Nine members of one family from Shebaa, including four children, were the latest victims. More than 5,000 people have been injured, according to the latest figures from Lebanon’s Ministry of Public Health.

Health Minister Firass Abiad said 25 people have been killed in Israeli strikes on Lebanon. Israel’s Defence Minister Yoav Gallant reiterated that the military would keep targeting Hezbollah until northern Israel is safe again. “We are hitting Hezbollah very hard over the past year and in particular over the past few weeks,” he said during a visit to the northern town of Safad, according to The Times of Israel newspaper. Vargas Llosa said half of those crossing into Syria are children and adolescents, adding that men are making the crossing in smaller numbers than women. “We will have to see over the next few days how many more do so,” he added.

UNHCR chief Filippo Grandi said this week that the mass displacement in Lebanon was “yet another ordeal for families who had fled years of civil war in Syria ... only now to be bombed in the country where they sought shelter”. — Aljazeera

## France’s debt weighs heavier ahead of budget

PARIS (AFP): France’s vast public debt pile grew in the second quarter, official figures showed, as Prime Minister Michel Barnier’s shaky minority government girds itself for a gruelling budget debate. New borrowings of 68.9 billion euros (\$77 billion) between April and June increased the country’s debt pile to almost 3.23 trillion euros, or 112 percent of annual output, data from statistics agency INSEE showed.

The figures underline the scale of the challenge for Barnier, the former European Union commissioner and Brexit negotiator heading a centrist and conservative coalition heavily outnumbered in the National Assembly lower house. With the chamber roughly divided in three since July’s parliamentary election, the NFP left alliance and far-right National Rally (RN) could

oust the new government at any time if they joined forces in a confidence vote.

There is scepticism among financial players of Paris’ ability to get its debt and annual deficit under control. Ratings agency S&P downgraded France’s creditworthiness earlier this year. And just this week the yield on France’s debt -- the return investors can expect for holding 10-year government bonds -- stripped the measure for Spain for the first time since 2006, pointing to falling confidence among investors.

Barnier is expected to lay out the broad strokes of his policy in a speech to lawmakers that will also be closely watched by markets. His new budget minister Laurent Saint-Martin said that the draft 2025 budget law would be filed “in the week beginning October 9”. “Our public finances are in a grave

state, and I won’t beat around the bush,” Saint-Martin said, warning that this year’s annual budget deficit would likely top six percent of GDP -- twice the European Union limit.

He blamed lower-than-expected tax receipts and companies holding off on hiring and investment for much of the worsened picture, as well as saying local and regional administrations had spent more than planned. “We must have to make a significant collective effort” to get the public finances under control, Saint-Martin warned. Barnier and his team say they aim for more spending cuts than tax increases to right the ship, prompting accusations of “austerity” from the left. But the prime minister said Sunday that higher levies on big firms and very wealthy individuals could be part of the equation.

## 3,661 killed in ‘senseless’ Haiti gang violence: UN

PORT-AU-PRINCE: At least 3,661 people have been killed in Haiti in the first half of this year amid the “senseless” gang violence that has engulfed the country, according to the United Nations.

The UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) said that the death toll between January and June -- which included 100 children -- showed that last year’s “high levels of violence” had been maintained. “No more lives should be lost to this senseless criminality,” said UN rights chief Volker Turk in a statement.

Haiti was already reeling from years of unrest as powerful armed groups -- often with ties to the country’s political and business leaders -- vied for influence and control of territory. The situation worsened dramatically at the end of February, when the gangs launched attacks on prisons and other state institutions across the capital, Port-au-Prince. The UN report documented “extremely seri-

ous patterns of human rights violations and abuses taking place” in Port-au-Prince and the Artibonite Department north of the capital.

It also tracked growing violence in the southern part of the West Department, where the capital is located, an area of the country that had so far been largely unaffected. According to the report, “gangs have continued to use sexual violence to punish, spread fear and subjugate populations”. Violence in the country is fuelled by arms trafficking, primarily from the United States, but also from the Dominican Republic and Jamaica.

OHCHR said poorly monitored airspace, coastlines and porous borders were allowing gangs to obtain high-calibre weapons, drones, boats and “a seemingly endless supply of bullets”. Turk urged the international community to implement a global arms embargo, a travel ban, and an asset freeze programme imposed by the UN Security Council. The

surge in violence this year prompted the resignation of Haiti’s unelected prime minister, the creation of the transitional presidential council, and the deployment of a UN-backed, Kenya-led multinational force called the Multinational Security Support Mission (MSS).

About 10 countries have pledged more than 3,100 troops to the MSS, but only 430 of these have deployed so far, said OHCHR. The report was published days before the MSS’s one-year mandate to support Haiti expires, with the UN Security Council scheduled to vote on September 30 on whether to renew it. Haiti has asked the UN to consider turning it into a formal peacekeeping mission to secure stable funds and capacity.

Turk said it was clear the mission needed “adequate and sufficient equipment and personnel to counter the criminal gangs effectively and sustainably, and stop them spreading further and wreaking havoc on people’s lives”. — Aljazeera

## Europe en route for Moon with new simulator, says astronaut

BRUSSELS (AFP): Europe has embarked on the mission to put humans back on the Moon with a new lunar simulator launched in Germany. French astronaut Thomas Pesquet told AFP. Pesquet was at the German Aerospace Center (DLR) in Cologne to test out LUNA, a facility built to resemble the surface of the Moon.

The 46-year-old astronaut, a national icon in France for his missions to the International Space Station (ISS), glowed at the prospect of participating in a lunar mission. “It would be a dream and the high point of my career. The Moon is 1,000 times farther away than the ISS,” he said in an interview. “Aboard the ISS, you feel like you’re doing something out of the ordinary. But going to the Moon takes the adventure to a whole other level.”

The newly opened facility was designed to train astronauts and test equipment and material for use on missions to the Moon. International interest in exploring the Moon has surged in recent years. NASA has launched a programme, Artemis, to put astronauts on the Moon in 2026, more than five decades after US

space explorers last visited on the final flight of the Apollo missions in 1972. Earlier this year, China sent a probe that collected the first samples from the far side of the Moon. The country aims to send a crewed mission to Earth’s satellite by 2030, and wants to build a base on the lunar surface. Japan and India are planning to send a probe to hunt for water near the south pole of the Moon in 2025.

The European Space Agency (ESA) hopes to team up with NASA on future Moon missions, Pesquet said. “It’s a key moment for Europe, because we’re truly jumping into lunar exploration. We’re already partnering with NASA on supplying equipment and materials for Artemis,” he said. “But LUNA is really the first highly visible sign of the fact that we’ve embarked on plans to return to the Moon. We’re proving that by making long-term investments. This facility will be open to other space agencies, researchers and, we hope, to private firms.”

Pesquet described his first test of LUNA as surprising. He and fellow ESA astronaut Matthias Maurer rehearsed walking on the lunar sur-

face, wearing special suits that weighed 25 kilogrammes (55 pounds) and carrying scientific and communications equipment, he said. “I was surprised by the piercing light seen on the Moon, especially at the south pole. It’s very hard to evaluate the topography,” he said, describing how he sank into the thick layer of dust simulating that found on the lunar surface.

“The minute you leave the path, figuring out where to step is a whole different kettle of fish.... It’s also incredibly slow. It’s not like Earth, you’re a lot less coordinated. It reminded me of my spacewalks at the International Space Station.” Europe’s role providing the service module for NASA’s Orion capsule, which will carry the Artemis crew members, has earned the ESA three spots for its astronauts on the programme’s first three missions around the Moon. But “NASA has told us, ‘To land on the Moon, you need to propose something to do on the lunar surface,’” said Pesquet. “LUNA isn’t a contractual part of the deal. But it allows us to show we’re serious.”

## Is Sudan’s army on the verge of recapturing Khartoum?

KHARTOUM: In the early morning of September 26, Sudan’s army launched a major offensive to capture the capital Khartoum from the rival paramilitary Rapid Support Forces (RSF). Local outlets reported that the army sent in several infantry formations that crossed vital bridges that connect Omdurman to Khartoum, backed by air power and artillery fire.

The army captured at least one important bridge and took control of Souk al-Araby -- a market in the heart of Khartoum, Al Jazeera’s Hiba Morgan reported. Several residents in the city told Al Jazeera the army had taken control of three major crossings in total. The assault could be one of the army’s most significant operations since the Sudan war erupted in April 2023.

Since then, the RSF has been in firm control of most of the city and has been accused of committing abuses against the civilian population, such as looting markets and hospitals, uprooting residents and confiscating their homes and subjecting women and girls to extreme forms of sexual violence. Reports of the army’s recent advances have brought some hope to civilians still living

under RSF control in Khartoum, according to Augreis, “a human-rights activist who has been procuring aid and food for beleaguered civilians living under RSF rule.

“People are fed up with the militia,” she said, referring to the RSF. However, she added that civilians were also frightened amid the continuing fighting. “We have been nervous since 2:00am [00:00 GMT]. We heard all the sounds from all the types of heavy artillery [being used] at the same time. [All the sounds and attacks are] coming from all directions along with the [sound of] fighter jets and drones,” she told Al Jazeera.

Prior to the army’s recent advance in the capital, there were growing concerns among its supporters that it may not be equipped or able to defeat the paramilitary. The lack of faith compelled thousands of Sudanese men to pick up weapons to protect their villages and communities from the RSF. But now, with news that the army is fiercely battling to recapture the capital, there appears to be a growing belief among supporters of the army that the RSF could be defeated.

“There is a bond between the army and the Sudanese people. It is our soldiers and people that are in the army,” said Badawi, an activist in Omdurman, a city that forms part of the wider state of Khartoum. Badawi added that there is “joy” among people living under the army in areas in Omdurman and that people view this recent operation as an “important step forward” to win the war.

Hajooj Kuka, the external communications officer for the Khartoum State Emergency Response Rooms (ERRs), which is a network of local activists providing life-saving aid to civilians in RSF- and army-controlled areas, cautioned that it was too early to determine the balance of power in the city. “The general feeling is that [the army] won’t take [Khartoum] over,” he told Al Jazeera. “All I know is that in areas where our ERR members are, the control didn’t change much. Sudan’s army chief, Abdel Fattah al-Burhan, recently spoke at the UN General Assembly in New York as the de facto authority in the country, where he said that a number of countries are sending weapons and supplies to the RSF. — Aljazeera

## Is Austria’s far right poised for historic win in Sunday elections?

VIENNA: Austria’s far-right Freedom Party of Austria (FPÖ) appears set to win the popular vote on Sunday in what would be a historic first. The FPÖ has been outpolling the governing centre-right Austrian People’s Party (ÖVP) and the Social Democratic Party of Austria (SPÖ) for the past year, partly driven by opposition to immigration.

“Anti-migration sentiment is now rising, empowered by the latest East German elections and success of the Alternative for Deutschland (AfD),” University of Helsinki lecturer in Eastern European studies Katalin Miklossy told Al Jazeera. Germany’s far-right AfD became the first party in that country to win a state election three weeks ago, coming ahead of mainstream parties in Thuringia. It also performed well in Saxony.

“The German chancellor promised in desperation to close borders and send back illegal immigrants,” said Miklossy. Now the Austrian far right seems set for another breakthrough. The FPÖ’s campaign worries sceptics. FPÖ leader Herbert Kickl calls himself Volkskanzler, a “people’s chancellor”, the title used by Adolph Hitler in the 1930s. He supports a constitutional amendment recognising two sexes, effectively outlawing

non-binary genders, a position advocated by Russian President Vladimir Putin’s United Russia Party. The FPÖ manifesto recommends “de-migration of uninvited foreigners” and a return to greater racial homogeneity.

The FPÖ supports deporting migrants who break the law, cutting down on -- or banning -- asylum approvals and admitting fewer migrants into the economy. It wants to limit social benefits to native Austrians. One concern is that together with other European Union members opposed to immigration, it could push for major changes to the Asylum and Migration Pact, agreed last May after five years of negotiation.

The pact’s crucial innovation is that it obliges central European states to take on some of the burden of processing asylum seekers with front-line states like Greece and Italy. Angeliki Dimitriadis, lead migration researcher at the Hellenic Foundation for European and Foreign Policy (ELIAMEP), an Athens-based think tank, believes a revision is unlikely.

“There was already dissatisfaction amongst many MEPs in the European Parliament with the pact and a desire to seek to renegotiate specific parts, especially to harden policy on returns, immediately after it was

agreed,” she told Al Jazeera. “It is not only the Austrians but others who have expressed a desire to reopen certain chapters. But perhaps this is wishful thinking. The Commission has made it clear that it wants to proceed to implementation.” Austria has long been conservative on migration.

In September 2015, after German Chancellor Angela Merkel said she would admit 800,000 asylum seekers, Balkan countries opened their borders to a stream of refugees who walked from Greece to the Austrian and German borders. Many Europeans feared a repeat performance in the spring. In February 2016, Austria created a separate refugee monitoring system with the police chiefs of the former Yugoslavia, prevailing on North Macedonia to put up barbed wire along its border with Greece. This effectively closed the Balkan route, bottling up arrivals in Greece.

When the European Commission created a relocation programme in September 2015, asking member states to voluntarily take on asylum cases from Greece and Italy, Austria was one of six EU countries that refused. Yet Austria has voted for the current pact which makes solidarity obligatory. Austria’s Russophilic ten-

dencies during the Ukraine war are perhaps of even greater concern to the EU.

Kickl is critical of the money spent on defending Ukraine. So is the Netherlands’ Geert Wilders, Slovakia’s Robert Fico and Hungary’s Viktor Orban. Austria and Hungary are the only EU and NATO members not to have sent weapons to Ukraine except through multilateral aid. “They are already working together,” said Miklossy. “The [expected] outcome is accelerating the pressure on Ukraine for peace talks.” Austria’s neutrality towards Russia has deep roots.

“Austria is a very special case because of ... its special status during the Cold War era,” when it sat along the Iron Curtain, Jakub Landovsky, director of the Aspen Institute Central Europe told Al Jazeera. “There was a strong feeling that Russia can be reasoned with, that Russia is a good trade partner, which is not exactly the case.” “The Russian desire during the Cold War era was to have this country neutralised like Finland,” he said.

Russia neutralised Austria partly by subsidising it with cheap energy. “From the 1960s onwards, Austria was able to import gas and oil cheaply and reliably from Russia via

Ukraine,” wrote Tessa Szyszkowitz, a distinguished fellow at the Royal United Services Institute (RUSI). Austria’s neutral stance also lowered its defence costs. After 1970, it never spent more than 1.5 percent of its economy on the armed forces, according to figures from the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI).

“Neutrality has proven so popular because it has allowed Austria to invest more in social services, health-care and education over the decades,” wrote Szyszkowitz. A quarter of a century ago, under Jorg Haider, the FPÖ placed second in the 1999 general election and entered a coalition with the ÖVP, which had placed third.

It was the first entry of a far-right party in government since the second world war and it shocked Europe. But the FPÖ fell from grace in 2018 after its leader was caught on video trying to exchange political favours with what he believed to be a Russian oligarch’s niece.

The affair became known as the Ibiza scandal, after the Spanish island where the video was filmed. “It looks as though the scandals, like the Ibiza scandal, haven’t made an impact in the credibility of this party,” said Landovsky. The current government

under Chancellor Karl Nehammer has attempted to float the idea that neutrality towards Russia no longer pays, and security must come first -- if necessary, at the expense of the economy.

“The big question is whether the general populace feels the same way and accepts the current hard economic reality,” said Landovsky, “or if they want to continue with this appeasement dialogue policy, which I think is very ineffective in dealing with Russian aggression.” The FPÖ is not expected to win enough votes for single-party rule, meaning it will most likely have to form a coalition to govern. That would mean forming a consensus on touchy issues like migration and foreign policy.

Nehammer, leader of the ÖVP, has ruled out working with Kickl, but hasn’t ruled out working with the FPÖ. It is also conceivable that the SPÖ and ÖVP would form a coalition to keep the FPÖ out of government. Austria’s President Alexander Van Der Bellen, a former spokesman for the Green Party, is also a powerful gatekeeper. He would have to approve cabinet appointments, filtering out extremists, and has the power to dismiss the cabinet. — Aljazeera



The Frontier Post

Rehmat Shah Afridi (Late)

Founder

Bilal Shah Afridi

Chief Executive

Jalil Afridi

Managing Editor

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

Peshawar Office: 091-5700095, 0300- 9009001

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

E-mail: fppeshawar@thefrontierpost.com

Lahore Office: 0335-4026284

Email: fplahore@thefrontierpost.com

Islamabad Office: 0321-5066253

Email: mahmoodafridi@thefrontierpost.com

Karachi Office: 021-32213411, 0300-8340907

Email: fpkarachi@thefrontierpost.com

\*USA and Canada Toll Free Number 1-800-5905747

Israel's impunity

THE situation in the Middle East has once again reached a critical juncture, with Israel's ongoing violence and military operations against Palestine and Lebanon raising grave concerns. For decades, the Palestinian people have been subjected to a relentless cycle of occupation, displacement, and brutal aggression. This continued bloodshed prompts a pressing question: who, if anyone, will step in to stop Israel from its unchecked violence, brutality, and what many perceive as state-sponsored terrorism?

Israel's actions in Gaza, the West Bank, and against Palestinian civilians are not isolated incidents. These are part of a larger, systemic issue that has existed since the creation of Israel in 1948. What we see today is the continuation of a long history of dispossession and violent enforcement of Israeli control over Palestinian lands. Homes are demolished, civilians are killed, children are left traumatized, and entire communities are displaced under the banner of security. Yet, the world watches, and little is done to halt this relentless oppression.

The hypocrisy of the international community, particularly the United Nations, is glaring. On the one hand, the United Nations holds its high-profile meetings in the American state of New York, talking endlessly about peace, human rights, and the importance of dialogue in resolving conflicts. Yet, on the other hand, Israel, a nation that often claims to be acting in self-defense, is ruthlessly massacring Muslims by raining gunpowder and bombs on innocent civilians in Palestine and Lebanon. The disconnect between the rhetoric of peace and the reality on the ground reveals a deep failure of international institutions that are supposed to protect the vulnerable and uphold justice. While diplomats debate in air-conditioned rooms, entire families in Gaza are obliterated, and Lebanese towns are reduced to rubble, raising the question of whether the global powers are genuinely committed to peace or complicit in perpetuating violence.

This disturbing contrast highlights the impotence of the UN and its inability to enforce its own resolutions, particularly when it comes to holding Israel accountable. Despite numerous calls for ceasefires and humanitarian access, Israel's military operations continue unabated, shielded by its powerful allies. This brutal cycle of violence and the inaction of international organizations lead many to conclude that the UN has become a stage for empty promises, incapable of stopping the bloodshed. While the world watches, Palestinians and Lebanese Muslims are left to wonder who will stand up for their right to live in peace and dignity, as the bodies of their loved ones pile up amid the smokescreen of diplomatic inaction.

Despite mounting global outrage and condemnation, the international community has largely failed to intervene in any meaningful way. The United Nations has issued countless resolutions, and world leaders have voiced concern, yet Israel continues its policies with impunity. The lack of accountability raises serious questions about the effectiveness of international mechanisms meant to uphold human rights and prevent atrocities.

A major factor in Israel's ability to act with such impunity is the unwavering support it receives from powerful allies, particularly the United States. The U.S. has been Israel's most staunch ally, providing billions of dollars in military aid annually and consistently shielding it from international scrutiny. Time and again, the U.S. has used its veto power at the UN Security Council to block resolutions condemning Israel's actions, effectively paralyzing the international body's ability to take meaningful action.

The Western media's portrayal of the conflict also plays a crucial role in shaping public perception. Israel's actions are often framed as self-defense against terrorism, particularly against groups like Hamas. While no one can deny Israel's right to defend itself, this narrative conveniently ignores the broader context of occupation, apartheid-like conditions, and the disproportionate use of force against a largely defenseless population. By controlling the narrative, Israel ensures that its actions are seen as defensive rather than aggressive, deflecting criticism and avoiding accountability.

Yet, behind the political maneuvering and media framing lies the stark reality of a people living under siege. Gaza, often described as the world's largest open-air prison, is subject to airstrikes, blockades, and collective punishment. The West Bank continues to see illegal settlements expand, and Palestinians live under a system that restricts their freedom of movement, access to resources, and basic human rights. These actions meet many definitions of state terrorism, where the purpose is not just to suppress but to instill fear and break the will of an entire population.

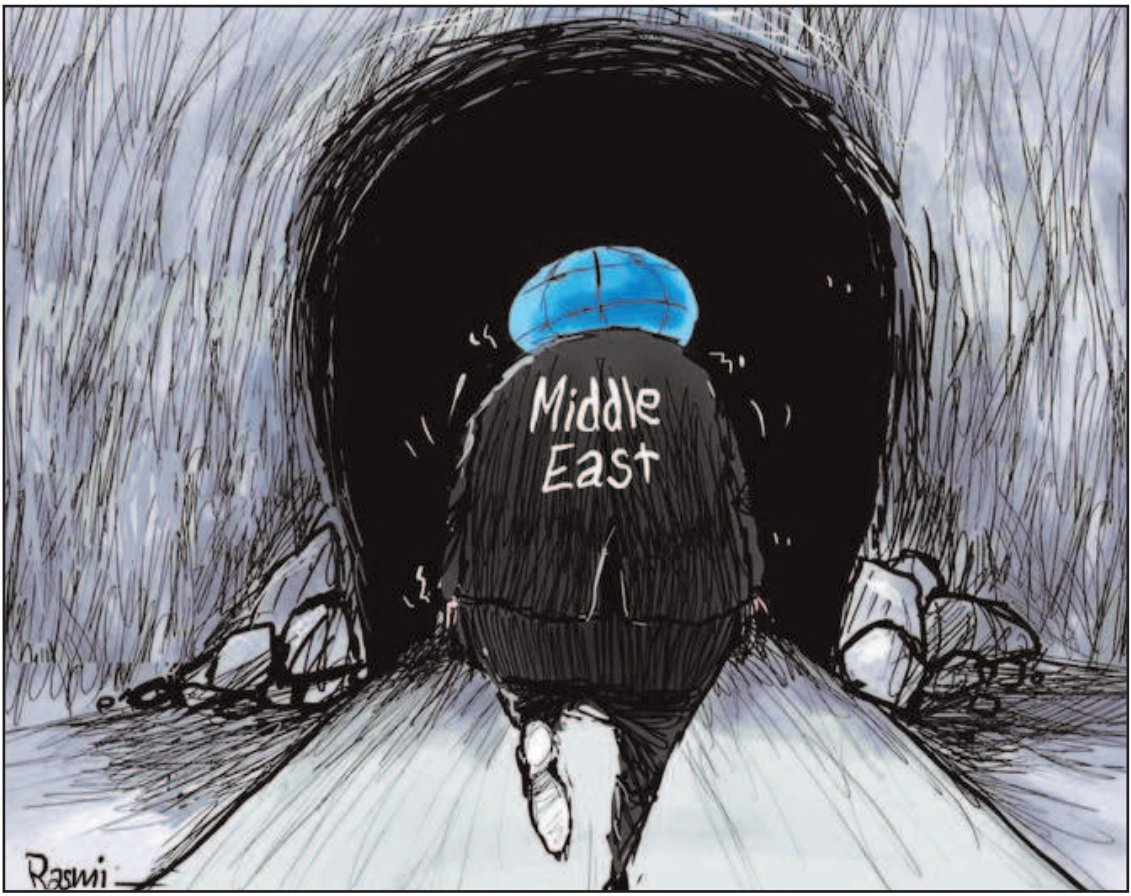
The question remains: who will stop Israel from this continued violence? The answer seems elusive, but several potential avenues exist. The most obvious is the role of international law and bodies like the International Criminal Court (ICC). In recent years, the ICC has made moves to investigate Israeli actions in Palestine, particularly focusing on war crimes. While this offers a glimmer of hope for justice, the process is slow, and without widespread international support, its impact is uncertain.

Another avenue could be the resurgence of global civil society movements. The Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions (BDS) movement, for instance, has gained traction in recent years, pressuring companies and governments to cut ties with Israel over its treatment of Palestinians. Such grassroots movements can create the kind of international pressure that governments seem unwilling or unable to apply.

Moreover, the Arab world, once united in its opposition to Israel, has become fragmented. Many Arab states, particularly in the Gulf, have normalized relations with Israel, prioritizing economic and strategic interests over solidarity with the Palestinian cause. However, recent events, including increased violence in Gaza, have reignited public outcry in these countries, putting pressure on their governments to reconsider their alliances with Israel. If Arab nations were to unify once again and leverage their political and economic influence, they could play a crucial role in halting Israeli aggression. Ultimately, the most significant change may come from within Israel itself. There is a growing movement of Israelis who oppose the occupation and the continued violence against Palestinians. While still a minority, these groups represent a shift in Israeli society, one that recognizes the moral and political consequences of their country's actions. The international community must support and amplify these voices, encouraging a future where peace and justice for both Israelis and Palestinians are possible. In conclusion, the path to stopping Israel's ongoing bloodshed and brutality is neither simple nor straightforward. It requires a multifaceted approach involving international law, civil society, diplomatic pressure, and internal change within Israel itself. The world cannot continue to stand by and watch as these atrocities unfold. It is not just a matter of politics or strategy; it is a matter of humanity and justice. The question, therefore, is not just who will stop Israel but when will the world finally find the moral courage to act? The answer to that question may well determine the future of peace in the Middle East.

Important Notice

The Frontier Post will not be responsible for the comments in the articles and letters. The Frontier Post requests the writers of articles and letters to please make sure that they write their email addresses and mention the names of the cities, towns, districts or teshil of their residences at the bottom of their articles and letters.



What's in a name? Quite a lot if you're French

Azouz Begag

FRANCE has witnessed an unprecedented event. At his farewell address, **Gérald Darmanin, born in 1982 in Valenciennes and now former minister of the interior, dropped a bombshell before handing over to his successor, conservative Catholic Bruno Retailleau. As he often did during his seven-year tenure, he spoke about his background, mentioning his mother who worked as a concierge for the Bank of France and as a cleaning lady, in an attempt to touch hearts. But it was his account of his birth that left the audience stunned.**

The outgoing interior minister disclosed that he was nearly named Moussa at birth, after his Algerian-born maternal grandfather. "My name is **Gérald Moussa Jean Darmanin**," he began. "At the maternity ward, my father wanted to write Moussa on my birth certificate. It was the name of my grandfather, an Algerian sharpshooter who had loyally served France. After so many years in elected office, it is painfully clear," he admitted. "Had I been called Moussa Darmanin, the doors to becoming mayor, deputy, and certainly Minister of the Interior would have remained firmly shut. This name would not have altered my education, diminished my merit, or lessened my love for France. But we must confront the uncomfortable truth of our society."

His comments, which sparked numerous mockeries, clearly indicated that France has not yet overcome its Islamophobic ghosts. Discrimination against children of immigrant backgrounds persists, particularly due to their Arab-Muslim sounding names, especially in the job market.

The discrimination faced by those with North African names, a persistent issue since the 1970s, has only intensified in recent years. As the far-right's influence in French politics has grown, the acknowledgment of this societal prejudice by a figure as prominent as the former interior minister strikes a particularly raw nerve. For millions of French citizens with North African heritage, this recognition has

come far too late. "The rise of the far-right as a major political force has already been a source of concern for many. Now, hearing this stark sociological reality confirmed by none other than the former interior minister himself, adds a new layer of pain for millions of French citizens with North African roots. It is a bitter pill to swallow."

On Monday, **Gérald Moussa Darmanin** laid bare a harsh truth about French politics: a name like Moussa, even one honoring a grandfather who fought for France, can be a barrier to electoral success. His revelation is profoundly dispiriting. For seven years, Darmanin served as France's top law enforcement official, all while harboring an internal conflict: **Gérald** versus **Moussa**. This duality, reminiscent of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde, highlights the complex identity struggles faced by many French citizens of immigrant origin. Only now, freed from his ministerial duties, does Darmanin allow his suppressed 'Moussa' identity to voice its frustration. "We have to face facts!" he declares, a statement that rings hollow after years of silence.

The 2016 right-wing primaries in France brought to light a controversial name issue. **Alain Juppé**, former prime minister, fell victim to vile racist attacks. The contest turned on a linguistic twist: **Alain** versus **Ali**. Many right-wing voters were prepared to support Juppé over François Fillon until baseless rumors began to circulate. These whispers painted Juppé as pro-Muslim.

In the weeks leading up to the primary, Juppé's opponents flooded the internet with accusations. They claimed he had funded a large mosque, supported an imam, and promoted "diversity." Doctored images circulated showing him dressed as a mullah. These attacks, coming a year after the devastating Islamist attacks in Paris, centered on the wordplay **Ali-Alain**, insinuating that Alain was concealing an Ali. This smear campaign played a role in Juppé's defeat. The pain of this reality lingers. **Ali-Alain. Gérald-Moussa**. It recalls the 2008 US presidential

election and its world-shocking debates, with Barack Obama emerging victorious.

Low blows were raining down, coming from Republicans who attributed to him equivocal affiliations with Islam, suspected his childhood in Indonesia, his schooling in a Quranic school, connections with terrorist networks. Hatred reached its zenith during the campaign. At a John McCain rally, someone yelled "kill him!" The murderous call was echoed by others in the crowd of thousands. This incident unleashed a wave of white, Christian, and Islamophobic rhetoric against Barack Hussein Obama. Two young neo-Nazis were arrested before the election, planning to assassinate Obama to foil what they perceived as an Arab-Muslim plot. **Barack Hussein**. An American struggle this time. Repulsive. Amid this, one politician, **Colin Powell**, took a stand against the Islamophobic tendencies within his own party.

**Colin Powell**, African-American and former secretary of state under **G.W. Bush**, endorsed Obama, appalled by the racial undertones in his party. He stated, "I am troubled by another argument from McCain, which other Republican Party members are also using. They now freely say things like: 'Mr. Obama is Muslim!' He is not Muslim. He is Christian and always has been. But the real answer is: 'So what if he was?'" Powell boldly asked: was being Muslim a problem in the United States? Despite the controversy, **Barack Hussein Obama** was elected and even won a second term. His presidency was ending just as **Alain Juppé** lost in France, partly due to the 'Ali' controversy.

Fillon's supporters could celebrate, but the damage from the anti-Ali attacks would linger in the minds of countless Muslims. Exploiting Islam as a political bogeyman was beneath the ideals of fraternity in France. Since the 1970s, French citizens named Ali have been compelled to alter their names to evade discrimination, conceal their identities to avoid rejection, and even deny

their heritage to appear more acceptable.

The link between self-esteem and appreciation of one's first name is significant. A name is the first personal detail shared in new encounters, influencing how others perceive and integrate an individual. More familiar names are often better received, as familiarity breeds acceptance. During the 1970s-1980s, young Arabs in France adopted European names like **Aldo**, **Luigi**, or **Jimmy**, instead of **Mohamed**, **Bachir**, or **Ali**, to gain social acceptance. Later, diminutives helped conceal origins: **Mustapha** became "Mouss", **Mohamed** "Momo", **Samir** "Sami", **Messaoud** "Mess", **Kader** "Kad", etc. Eventually, verlan slang transformed names: **Karim** to "Rimka", **Maurad** to "Radmo", and **Kamel** to "Melka", etc.

The psychological effects of these identity concealments on future generations of young Arabs were foreseeable. French society's rejection of their names equated to rejecting their parental history, ancestral heritage, genealogy, and ultimately, Islam. This identity suppression was bound to backfire. The pendulum would swing from self-denial to ostentatious display of identity. Today, we find ourselves caught in this vicious cycle.

In 1960s America, the greatest boxing champion ever changed his name from **Cassius Clay** to **Mohamed Ali**, asserting his identity in a segregated society. In France, it was understood that **Mohamed** hindered job prospects. However, the Juppé incident revealed that even Ali had become synonymous with rejection. On September 23, 2024, former minister **Moussa Darmanin's** statement officially confirmed this troubling trend. In 2008, **Colin Powell** posed questions to Americans: "Is being Muslim in the United States a problem? No... Is it an issue for a seven-year-old American Muslim child to dream of becoming president? No..." In France, however, such issues persist. The question remains: how much longer will this disdain towards the **Moussas** continue?

Arab News

It's not just Trump vs Harris

Jonathan Freedland

HESITATE to give JD Vance any ideas, but if American women were denied the vote, Donald Trump would be restored to the White House in a landslide. Similarly, if men were removed from the franchise, Kamala Harris would be swept into the Oval Office in an even bigger earthquake. As it is, the two are clashing in an election marked by a gulf so wide, the phrase "gender gap" doesn't do it justice. In ways that go deeper than mere politics, and with implications for the world beyond the US, the presidential election is increasingly looking like a war between men and women.

The numbers are stunning. An NBC poll this week found men favour Trump over Harris by 12 points, 52% to 40%. Among women, Harris leads Trump by 21 points: 58% to 37%. Put the two together and you have a gender chasm of 33 points. Men may not be from Mars and women may not be from Venus, but when it comes to choosing a US president, they are on different planets.

What explains it? The most obvious answer is that Trump's record, including a court ruling that he had committed rape and his own admission of serial sexual assault, boasting that he grabbed women "by the pussy", makes him repellent to tens of millions of women, none of that reduced by appointing a sidekick who speaks of "childless cat ladies". Similar explanatory power attaches to the 2022 decision by the supreme court, in the **Dobbs** case, to overturn the constitutional right to an abortion. Since then, it's been up to the 50 states whether to grant or withhold that right from women, and 22 of them have chosen to deny it. That shift is on Trump, who nominated three of the six supreme court judges who made the **Dobbs** decision, an achievement of which he has said he is "proud".

But while the move delighted Trump's evangelical Christian supporters, it has cost him dear. **Dobbs** did not just anger American women, it mobilised them. In the midterm elections of 2022, as high inflation fuelled disaffection with Joe Biden, Republicans assumed they would ride a "red wave" to victory. That wave never came, in part because women, furious at the court's ruling and Republicans' part in it, turned out in big numbers to vote against them. And while Biden has never been fully comfortable speaking about abortion, **Dobbs** is widely regarded as the moment Harris found her voice as a national figure. Still, the long-running battle over abortion rights only explains one side of the gender divide. Less obvious is that, as much as women are pulling away from Trump, large numbers of men, especially young men, are drawn towards him.

Here, the numbers are even more striking. Attitude surveys show that women between the ages of 18 and 29 are the most progressive group in US history. Meanwhile, a majority of men the same age back Donald Trump. A poll of six battleground states last month found

among gen Z voters a gender gulf of 51 points.

Part of it is explained by Trump's trade in swaggering machismo, offering a kind of cartoonish manliness. In recent months that part of his act has only got louder. His supporters always wore T-shirts showing Trump's face superimposed on a ripped, Rambo-style body, but now they have the image of his bloodied face, fist pumped in the air, seconds after the assassination attempt on him in July, as he urged his followers to "Fight, fight, fight!"

There is nothing subtle about this. At his party convention in Milwaukee he was introduced by wrestler Hulk Hogan and the man behind the Ultimate Fighting Championship. Bear in mind that one study of young people around the world found that while young women were most concerned about issues such as "sexual harassment, domestic violence, child abuse and mental health", young men were more focused on "competition, bravery, and honour".

Toxic as those voices might be, they succeed because the resentment they feed on is real. If plenty of young American men feel they're getting left behind, that's because on multiple key measures they are. As the scholar **Richard Reeves** has set out, American boys are trailing behind girls whether in readiness to start elementary school or graduation from university. Men have lost their place as the default family breadwinner, and watched as many of the jobs they once regarded as their own, including manual work requiring no degree, have vanished. When it comes to finding a partner, or even just having friends, men lag behind.

These are trends affecting all men, which might help explain why Trump has made unexpected inroads not only with non-graduate white men, but also with men of colour, especially the young in both groups. They feel beleaguered – and see in Trump someone who sees them.

Now, there's a good chance that the gender chasm will ultimately help Harris. Women tend to vote in greater numbers than men, and they're with her. But polls have a habit of underestimating Trump and there could be an army of young men, out of pollsters' reach, who feel that a woman in the Oval Office would be one feminist advance too many. The Taylor Swift endorsement is welcome, but the Harris campaign could do with a thumbs-up from someone with serious influence over young men. It doesn't help that the "who we serve" page of the Democrats' own website features a long list of groups, including women, but makes no equivalent offer to men.

I don't expect any of this came up when Keir Starmer met Trump this week, but there is a warning here that should sound far beyond America's shores. As one US think-tank puts it: "History is littered with examples of nations suffering from the consequences of young men finding themselves idle without purpose." The gender gap is becoming dangerously wide. It must not become an abyss.

Hezbollah chief Nasrallah's fatal underestimation of Israel

Hussain Abdul-Hussain

HEZBOLLAH chief Hassan Nasrallah has miscalculated, and in the process dragged Lebanon into a bloodbath that the already impoverished, isolated, and desperate Lebanese can ill afford. The world is trying to help him save face, although first he must agree to many concessions before Israel lets him off the hook. But what brought him here?

Nasrallah fell into the classic trap of an undisputed leader who lives alone and surrounds himself with yes men. Since 2006, he has rarely been seen in public. Those who get to meet him are taken, blindfolded, through a maze of security measures that lead to the militia chief.

Detachment from the general population, coupled with a personality cult that Nasrallah has so carefully cultivated over the past two decades, limited his awareness of reality. When justify-

ing his "war in support of Gaza," the Hezbollah chief did not measure cost and effect. He simply justified going to war by saying that, on the Day of Reckoning, "the Almighty will ask each one of us what did you do to help Gaza?" Mixing faith with reason is hardly a recipe for success.

Nasrallah then started believing his own propaganda, that Israel was weak, that his militia was invincible, so much so that – in one speech – he threatened to attack Cyprus, a member of the EU. Israel, however, was not on its last legs. Its economy was not in tatters. Its population was not decadent and unwilling to fight for the homeland, or shrinking due to emigration. Only hit pieces in "resistance axis" media underestimated Israel's strength and resilience.

The "axis of resistance" overestimated its own power. Missiles are not new. Saddam Hussein produced

hundreds of Al-Hussein and Al-Abbas ballistic missiles and threw up to 40 of them at Tel Aviv. While they are a threat, especially to civilians, these weapons cannot annihilate Israel or any other country, nor can the wedding photography drones that Hezbollah and Iraqi militias launch on Israel with a small load of explosives. Among the axis, its leader Iran understood the limitation of its military. In the two instances that it launched missiles at an American base in Iraq and on Israel, Tehran choreographed the attack carefully and made it known that it was a one-off event designed to save face.

The Houthis in Yemen, too, realized that Israel was capable of hurting them much more than they could inflict damage on Israel. Since their drone killed an Israeli and almost cost them control of the port of Hodeidah, the Houthis have

launched only one ballistic missile, which the "axis of resistance" spent a week praising and analyzing how it presumably "changed the course of the war." Only Hamas's Yahya Sinwar and Nasrallah did not understand that "the unity of the fronts" was more wishful thinking than reality. Iran never came to the rescue of Hamas or Hezbollah. These proxies were designed to fight and die for Iran to secure its interests on the cheap, not to drag it into costly direct wars.

Last but not least, Israel's failures on Oct. 7 might have convinced Nasrallah of its weakness. It took the Israelis up to 72 hours to push Hamas fighters out of the villages that they had raided and ravaged, and to wither down the waves of Hamas that continued to push into Israeli territory. On Oct. 8, when Israel looked at its weakest, Nasrallah launched

his war. Israel's focus on Gaza in the south limited its response to Hezbollah in the north, and made Nasrallah believe that he had set the tone and tempo of what he called "the rules of engagement." Nasrallah believed he had waged a low intensity war that he could afford, and that would allow him to set the conditions for how it ends.

But when Israel was done with Hamas, it shifted its military weight northward and started running circles around Hezbollah, which stood helpless and suffered heavy blows. To make up for his humiliation, Nasrallah's propaganda started celebrating its rockets were activating Israel's sirens and Nasrallah did not understand that "the unity of the fronts" was more wishful thinking than reality. Iran never came to the rescue of Hamas or Hezbollah. These proxies were designed to fight and die for Iran to secure its interests on the cheap, not to drag it into costly direct wars.

rabbit out of its hat and surprise Hezbollah by sidelining their effect.

To justify the miscalculation, both Khamenei and Nasrallah said that, had it not been for American power and support, their axis would have decimated Israel. How much of Israel's strength comes from within and how much from foreign support is debatable, but irrelevant to anyone who is planning to wage war on Israel. War plans cannot be built on "what if" America did not support Israel.

Had Lebanon been free, and Hezbollah's war and peace policies open for debate, Nasrallah could have read these lines before taking the country to hell. But when dissenting Lebanese voices are accused of treason and perceived as "part of the enemy's psychological war," Nasrallah's ability to discern fact from fiction becomes impaired and Lebanon plunges into the abyss.



# How Russian factor has affected Turkiye’s normalization efforts

**R**USSIA has consistently played a significant role in Turkiye’s normalization efforts with both Armenia and Syria. Armenia is often viewed by Russia as part of its sphere of influence, while Syria holds considerable geopolitical importance for Moscow’s ambitions in the Middle East.

Historically, Turkiye’s relations with Armenia and Syria have been strained, with cordial ties existing for only a brief period with Damascus in the pre-civil war era. Ankara is now actively working to normalize its relations with both Yerevan and Damascus. Improving relations with Armenia is vital for Turkiye’s influence in the South Caucasus, while Syria is crucial for its role in the Arab regional system.

With Turkiye in an era of formulating a new foreign policy, Armenia is also reassessing its foreign policy priorities. Despite domestic and diaspora pressures, Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan on Tuesday met with Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan at the Turkish House in New York, on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly. The leaders agreed to “give new impetus” to the ongoing normalization process.

After Russia’s invasion of Ukraine in 2022, Armenia found itself increasingly vulnerable and so began seeking closer ties with Turkiye and Western nations to safeguard its interests. The full-scale invasion shifted Moscow’s focus away from regional issues, including those in the South Caucasus. Additionally, the loss of Nagorno-Karabakh has heightened

Yerevan’s urgency to resolve its conflicts with Azerbaijan and Turkiye, as Pashinyan has benefited from the weakening of the pro-Moscow opposition at home.

Armenia’s foreign policy and geopolitical orientation are heavily influenced by its history and geography. Armenia shares borders with Azerbaijan and Turkiye but lacks a direct border with its traditional ally, Russia. Although Armenia has been the only former Soviet state where Russian influence has steadily grown since the Soviet Union’s collapse — as illustrated by the appearance of Russian border guards in 1992 and the establishment of a military base in Gyumri in 1995 — its dis-appointment with Moscow’s actions during the 2020 Nagorno-Karabakh War has eroded its view of Russia as an ally or security guarantor. This disillusionment has been a key factor driving Yerevan toward Ankara.

Dissatisfaction with Moscow has prompted Armenia to make bold moves, including providing humanitarian aid to Ukraine for the first time since the Russian invasion and requesting the withdrawal of Russian border troops from Yerevan’s international airport, signaling a further decline in Russian influence.

In regard to the Turkish-Armenian normalization process, we see a decline in the influence of the Russian factor. This is not the first instance of Russia distancing itself from Turkish-Armenian normalization efforts. In 2009, when protocols were signed between Armenia and Turkiye, Russia

opted to remain uninvolved. Ultimately, the protocols were not ratified by either parliament.

Currently, two factors are keeping Russia out of the process: the ongoing war in Ukraine and the desire of both Turkiye and Armenia for a bilateral normalization process without third-party involvement. Armenia, in particular, does not see Russia as a favorable partner in this context, despite Moscow’s previous offers of assistance in 2021.

The Russian factor in Turkiye’s normalization efforts with Syria closely parallels that observed in its relations with Armenia. In 2019, developments in Syria were largely shaped by Russian and American influence, which prevented Turkish intervention, particularly their safeguarding of the Kurdish groups considered as terrorists by Ankara. The presence of Russian military forces has repeatedly thwarted Turkish attempts to initiate military operations in Syria, with at least three planned operations being directly impacted by this dynamic. For Ankara, in certain contexts, Russia has failed to uphold its commitments in the region. Furthermore, there has been little meaningful progress within the Astana process, which involves Turkiye, Russia, Iran and the Syrian regime.

For Russia, the normalization of relations between the Turkish government and the Syrian regime remains a key priority. By maintaining its presence in Syria, Russia aims to protect its interests in the region. However, geopolitical shifts, combined with the glob-

al ramifications of the war in Ukraine, have significantly influenced the dynamics on the ground in Syria. Following its invasion of Ukraine, Russia, constrained by resource limitations, withdrew a number of its troops and some weaponry, including the S-300 air defense system, from Syria. This has ushered in a new chapter of the conflict in Syria. As the conflict dragged on, it was unavoidable for Russia to give concessions to Ankara. Thus, Russian-Turkish relations within the context of the Syrian crisis evolved not only due to the Ukrainian war, but also the dynamics in the region.

As Russia’s military and political influence begins to wane, Arab states are stepping into the role of mediators between Turkiye and Syria. Both Erdogan and Syrian President Bashar Assad have expressed their openness to resuming talks over the past few months. In the late 1990s, it was Arab nations that facilitated the normalization process between Turkiye and Syria. This shift presents a potential advantage for Turkiye, much like the situation with Armenia.

In conclusion, after Russia’s invasion of Ukraine, Turkiye seized the opportunity to engage with both Armenia and Syria, navigating diplomatic channels with a newfound assertiveness. This approach allowed Turkiye to pursue its interests without the constraints of Russian involvement, which had previously complicated relations with these states. By capitalizing on the reduced Russian presence, Turkiye has been able to make overtures to both nations without the need for concessions.

**UKRAINIAN President Volodymyr Zelensky’s visit to New York last week focused on much more than just addressing the UN General Assembly. A war in Ukraine that many expected to last only a few days in February 2022 has turned into a grinding conflict measured instead in years, and Zelensky knew this visit to America was one of the most important since the Russian invasion.**

As a former comedian and actor, he understands the power of communication. During his visit, Zelensky delivered important messages to three audiences: the American people, the international community, and US leaders. His first stop was a munitions manufacturing plant in Pennsylvania, where he met workers producing artillery rounds for Ukraine’s armed forces. The main purpose of this visit was to personally thank those working tirelessly to arm Ukraine. Even though it was not the intention, this stop had political implications. In the 2020 presidential election, Joe Biden narrowly beat Donald Trump in Pennsylvania by 80,000 votes. It is a swing state, home to about 800,000 Ukrainian Americans. Kamala Harris has run television ads there emphasizing her support for Ukraine. Meanwhile Trump has been increasingly critical of aid to Ukraine, making Zelensky’s visit seem to some like an indirect endorsement of Harris. From a logistical perspective, Pennsylvania’s proximity to New York and Washington DC made it a logical stop for Zelensky. Although his visit was not intended as an interference in US domestic politics, the significance of Pennsylvania with the election weeks away inevitably sparked debate.

In New York, Zelensky delivered a passionate speech to the General Assembly outlining Russia’s violations of the UN Charter. He used the platform to promote his 10-point Peace Formula to end the war. The proposal addresses key issues such as respecting Ukraine’s borders, ensuring nuclear

Luke Coffey

safety, securing global food exports, and holding Russia accountable for war crimes. Notably, this remains the only concrete diplomatic proposal on the table.

A crucial aspect of Zelensky’s time in New York was his outreach to leaders from the Global South, many of whom are neutral in the war or sympathetic toward Russia: in a UN vote in March 2022 condemning Russia’s invasion, many abstained or voted against. They view the war less as Russian

did yield significant other outcomes, including one of the largest single aid packages for Ukraine. Also, next month Biden will convene a meeting of about 50 countries in Germany to discuss and coordinate more military aid to Ukraine. Usually this would be chaired by the US defense secretary, so it is notable that the president will do so.

Observers have also noted a subtle but significant shift in the language used by the Biden administration about Ukraine. Instead of saying the US

**The proposal addresses key issues such as respecting Ukraine’s borders, ensuring nuclear safety, securing global food exports, and holding Russia accountable for war crimes. Notably, this remains the only concrete diplomatic proposal on the table.**

aggression and more as a proxy conflict between Russia and the West. Zelensky’s challenge was to convince them that Ukraine’s fight was one of national survival, not a mere battleground for competing global powers.

Zelensky’s final major stop was Washington, where he met President Joe Biden at the White House. The primary objective was to reinforce Ukraine’s strategic needs and emphasize the importance of continued US support. Zelensky revealed his long-awaited “victory plan” to Biden, though few details have emerged. One of his key requests was for the US to lift restrictions on Ukraine’s use of long-range weapons against military sites in Russia. So far Biden has been cautious, fearing an escalation of the conflict. From Ukraine’s perspective, this allows Russia to launch air raids from within its territory with little fear of retaliation.

The military rationale behind this restriction is debated: many experts argue that Ukraine should be allowed to attack airfields that threaten its cities. We do not know if Biden agreed to Zelensky’s request, but the meeting

will support Ukraine “for as long as it takes,” the White House now says it will provide Ukraine with “the support it needs to win this war.” The previous phrase had been criticized as ambiguous and lacking a clear goal. Whether the new language represents a more focused commitment to helping Ukraine achieve victory remains to be seen.

Despite the additional aid and Ukraine’s recent battlefield success in Kursk, Ukraine’s situation remains dire, especially as US domestic politics evolve. Regardless of the election’s outcome, Ukraine faces challenges. Trump has expressed skepticism about continued aid and has suggested Ukraine may need to cede territory to Russia in a peace deal. On the Democratic side, Harris has yet to articulate a comprehensive strategy for Ukraine if she wins. So far, her position aligns with Biden’s — supporting Ukraine enough for it to survive but without taking the bolder actions needed for Kyiv to win decisively. Zelensky’s visit came at a critical moment in the war. But unless there is a drastic change in US thinking, which seems unlikely, 2025 will be a difficult year for Ukraine.

# Alongside Sean ‘Diddy’ Combs, hip-hop culture will also be on trial

**E**ARLIER this month, the world was shocked by the arrest of one of the most successful music moguls in the history of rap, Sean “Diddy” Combs, at a Manhattan hotel on charges ranging from sex trafficking and aiding in the transportation for prostitution to racketeering.

The 55-year-old rapper’s arrest and subsequent indictment were the result of a ten-month investigation that began after several women publicly accused him of sexual misconduct and other forms of abuse. In November 2023, American singer Cassie Ventura filed a lawsuit against Combs claiming he had repeatedly raped her, subjected her to physical and psychological abuse, completely controlled her life and demanded she carry a firearm for him in her purse during their over-a-decade-long relationship. She also alleged that he forced her to take drugs and engage in sexual relations with a series of male sex workers in what she described as “freak-offs” – staged, drug-fuelled sexual encounters involving a large number of people that at times lasted several days and were recorded by Combs.

Combs denied the astounding allegations but settled the charge just one day later. Additional lawsuits against him soon followed, however, including one from a woman who accused him of “sex trafficking” and “gang raping” her, back in 2003, when she was just 17 years old. Four months before his arrest, CNN broadcast a surveillance video recorded at a California hotel in 2016, which showed him violently grab, shove, drag and kick his then-girlfriend Ventura during an altercation.

Combs immediately published an apology, but as the lawsuits continued to mount, accompanied by increasingly troubling and horrific allegations, he underwent a dramatic fall, echoing the fate of another well-known figure in the entertainment sector, disgraced film producer Harvey Weinstein. Forbes Magazine has estimated Combs’s net worth at \$740m, a testament to his successful pursuits in music, fashion, television, and the alcohol industry. Yet, despite his varied successes, his name is permanently linked to one specific area: hip-hop.

Diddy undoubtedly exemplifies the archetype of a hip-hop impresario. In 1993, he launched Bad Boy Records, a music imprint that came to represent many industry legends and popular music stars, including Notorious B.I.G., 112, Faith Evans, The Lox, Ma\$e, French Montana, Janelle Monae, and Machine Gun Kelly. Under his stewardship, the label achieved extraordinary milestones, including sales exceeding 500 million records, the production of 38 platinum singles, and multiple Grammy Awards. Furthermore, throughout his career in the music industry, Diddy has been recognised with various honours, including a Global Icon Award from MTV as recently as September 2023. Within the same month, New York Mayor Eric Adams awarded him a key to the city in a formal ceremony in Times Square for his “alleged service to the public and the common good”. This accolade came nine years after Howard University honoured him with an honorary Doctor of Humanities degree and established a scholarship program in his name in May

Tafi Mkaka

2014. Nevertheless, both the city and the university subsequently revoked these distinctions following the airing of the Ventura assault video.

With time, hip-hop came to represent far more than just an innovative and vibrant form of artistic expression. It functioned as a significant medium for critical commentary on the adversities encountered in inner-city life, expressing deep-seated frustrations regarding gang violence, unemployment, systemic racism, social marginalisation, gun-related issues, drug problems, and police brutality affecting African American communities.

Russell Simmons, the co-founder of Def Jam Records, has also faced a multitude of sexual assault and rape allegations. So Combs is, without a doubt, not an exception in the hip-hop landscape. When Diddy is brought to trial, the hip-hop industry will inevitably also undergo an examination. In the most shameful circumstances, it will be forced to reflect on its inherent misogyny.

This may be the one good thing that comes out of Sean Combs’s crimes against women. Indeed, the industry must urgently confront its unsettling evolution from a respected art form giving voice to the struggles within Black urban communities into a money-making vehicle fraught with sexual exploitation and violence. It is also essential to analyse how a movement rooted in a desire to give a voice to and better the lives of inner-city African American communities has eventually morphed into an outlet for insulting and attacking women, especially Black

women. This is a pivotal moment to scrutinise the underlying motivations for the substantial financial investments poured into the commercial degradation of all women.

Eminem, Dr Dre, and Snoop Dogg’s continued success expose the hip-hop industry’s continued inclination to support male violence against women. It should be questioned how and why ballads of misogyny and hate created by the likes of Snoop Dogg and Diddy have become the industry standard while tracks that emphasise social consciousness, like those by Public Enemy, have been marginalised. This approach has been a moral disaster, but financially advantageous, as the Recording Industry Association of America (RIAA) reported that hip-hop generated \$15.9bn in 2022 from music streaming and sales.

In 2017, the arrest of Harvey Weinstein underscored the systemic nature of sexual exploitation and marginalisation that women face in the film industry. Unfortunately, hip-hop is grappling with a similar challenge. To be sure, the abusive depictions of women are predominantly the outcome of an industry that has long deviated from ethical standards and displayed tremendous reluctance to engage in meaningful self-reflection or change.

It is important to recognise that sexual violence and misogyny in society are not merely outcomes of hip-hop; nevertheless, hip-hop has a responsibility to support the development of inclusive, progressive, and non-violent views towards women. It takes an entire industry to develop a man like Sean “Diddy” Combs.

Aljazeera

# Compromising with troublemakers not the way to achieve regional peace

**T**HE rapid escalation in violence between Israel and Hezbollah is firm evidence that the conflict since Oct. 7 has a broader regional dimension that cannot be resolved locally. The limited ceasefire that has been proposed and other temporary arrangements serve to postpone the explosion and set the scene for the relevant players. What matters most is the context within which the conflict is framed and also resolved. I have always been bad at predicting invasions. In 2003, I thought that the US invasion of Iraq would never happen. I even placed a bet with a friend in Oxford.

Only won because he put a date on it and he still owes me a pizza. On July 12, 2006, I put my family on a night flight from London to Beirut. All the planes were full as there was a border incident that morning, but I thought it would all be over by the time they landed. However, Beirut airport was bombed soon after they had made their way out and that was the start of the third Lebanon invasion. As I write this, in the mountains overlooking Beirut, I still cannot believe that Israel would be so foolish as to launch another ground operation in Lebanon. Its battle is not with Lebanon, nor is it solely with Hezbollah.

The Lebanese state and its society have no say in this war. Hezbollah is also not alone in attacking Israel, but rather is part of a broad coalition of regional forces. The regional aspect cannot therefore be ignored, nor can it be resolved militarily by invading Lebanon for a fourth time. Hezbollah is part of a broad and regional “Gaza

Support Front,” as declared by Secretary-General Hassan Nasrallah on Oct. 8, 2023, the day after Hamas had launched the Al-Aqsa Flood operation in Gaza, with the predictable Israeli response. It gradually became clear that this support front had several participants, including the so-called axis of resistance led by Iran’s Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps.

In addition to Hezbollah, this also included militias in Syria and Iraq, as well as the Houthis in Yemen and of course the IRGC itself, to which these various militias/non-state actors are affiliated to varying degrees. Since then, in addition to Lebanon, there have been missiles and drones sent to Israel from Syria, Iraq, Yemen and Iran. Israel has been hitting the whole region too. There were the targeted assassinations of Hezbollah and Hamas commanders in Lebanon and that of Ismail Haniyeh in Tehran; the bombing of the port of Hodeidah in Yemen in August; and attacks on IRGC targets in Syria and Iraq. In one of his many speeches, Nasrallah explained that fighters from all over the Muslim world would be coming to join the fight in Lebanon as part of the support front. In a bullring, the matadors attack from various directions, confusing and exhausting the bull until it collapses and is given the final coup de grace. But in this arena there is more than just one bull.

The IRGC, through its Yemeni proxy the Houthis, has attacked the UAE and Saudi Arabia and threatened the whole region. The Houthis are also threatening maritime ship-

ping, supported logistically by an Iranian observation ship in the Red Sea. At the beginning, there was complete denial about any coordination with Iran over Oct. 7. Visitors whispered in diplomats’ ears in Beirut that both Hezbollah and Iran were surprised by the Hamas attack and unhappy that they were not consulted or coordinated with. It was claimed that missiles launched across the border by Hezbollah on Oct. 8 were just to save face, to show solidarity with Hamas, and were never intended to trigger a full-blown war. At the same time, Nasrallah used his speeches to continuously issue threats to bomb Haifa, Tel Aviv or Israeli oil and gas installations in the Mediterranean.

Efforts to resolve the crisis have also been fragmented, with US Secretary of State Antony Blinken accumulating air miles by traveling between Washington, Jerusalem, Cairo and Doha in an attempt to solve the Israeli-Hamas war, but to little effect. Meanwhile, US envoy Amos Hochstein has flown back and forth attempting to contain the Israel-Hezbollah conflict. There was always talk of preventing a regional war, but no effort at dealing with it within a regional framework. While Iran’s IRGC is playing bad cop in the region, the country’s new president, Masoud Pezeshkian, is playing good cop at the UN General Assembly’s annual meetings in New York. He presents himself as the firefighter to the IRGC’s arsonist.

Rumors are flying that Iran is offering to lay down its arms if Israel is willing to do the same.

Contradictory statements by his foreign minister add to the confusion. The bottom line is that he is offering Iran as an interlocutor to help the US resolve the problems of the region, in return for a seat at the table in all regional affairs. If such a deal were to be successfully reached tomorrow, with Hamas, Hezbollah and Iran as the counterparts, it would be a victory for Iran and its proxies over the US’ allies in the region. The IRGC would have established itself as the power that controls the region and makes all the key decisions.

It is not their vision of perpetual conflict in the region that is the most desirable. A game changer would be to let the other players in and treat the conflict as what it is: a battle between two visions for the future of the region. One vision of perpetual war, held by Iran and implemented through its regional proxies. And one held by the Gulf states, despite their differences, of solving the problems of the region, rather than exploiting them, and moving on. There is too much at stake and a fragmented approach of compromising with the troublemakers is not the right approach. What is needed is a comprehensive regional approach to find long-term solutions to the region’s conflicts, possibly through a regional conference led by the Gulf states and involving the key states of the region, including Turkiye and Israel, to build on positive achievements such as the Abraham Accords and the Saudi-Iranian rapprochement. The US and the EU would also be key participants — they have as much at stake in the bigger picture than any of the local actors.

# Zelensky’s three audiences on US visit

**UKRAINIAN President Volodymyr Zelensky’s visit to New York last week focused on much more than just addressing the UN General Assembly. A war in Ukraine that many expected to last only a few days in February 2022 has turned into a grinding conflict measured instead in years, and Zelensky knew this visit to America was one of the most important since the Russian invasion.**

As a former comedian and actor, he understands the power of communication. During his visit, Zelensky delivered important messages to three audiences: the American people, the international community, and US leaders. His first stop was a munitions manufacturing plant in Pennsylvania, where he met workers producing artillery rounds for Ukraine’s armed forces. The main purpose of this visit was to personally thank those working tirelessly to arm Ukraine. Even though it was not the intention, this stop had political implications. In the 2020 presidential election, Joe Biden narrowly beat Donald Trump in Pennsylvania by 80,000 votes. It is a swing state, home to about 800,000 Ukrainian Americans. Kamala Harris has run television ads there emphasizing her support for Ukraine. Meanwhile Trump has been increasingly critical of aid to Ukraine, making Zelensky’s visit seem to some like an indirect endorsement of Harris. From a logistical perspective, Pennsylvania’s proximity to New York and Washington DC made it a logical stop for Zelensky. Although his visit was not intended as an interference in US domestic politics, the significance of Pennsylvania with the election weeks away inevitably sparked debate.

In New York, Zelensky delivered a passionate speech to the General Assembly outlining Russia’s violations of the UN Charter. He used the platform to promote his 10-point Peace Formula to end the war. The proposal addresses key issues such as respecting Ukraine’s borders, ensuring nuclear

Luke Coffey

safety, securing global food exports, and holding Russia accountable for war crimes. Notably, this remains the only concrete diplomatic proposal on the table.

A crucial aspect of Zelensky’s time in New York was his outreach to leaders from the Global South, many of whom are neutral in the war or sympathetic toward Russia: in a UN vote in March 2022 condemning Russia’s invasion, many abstained or voted against. They view the war less as Russian

did yield significant other outcomes, including one of the largest single aid packages for Ukraine. Also, next month Biden will convene a meeting of about 50 countries in Germany to discuss and coordinate more military aid to Ukraine. Usually this would be chaired by the US defense secretary, so it is notable that the president will do so.

Observers have also noted a subtle but significant shift in the language used by the Biden administration about Ukraine. Instead of saying the US

# Sri Lanka’s new president faces a problem

**SRI Lanka is at a historic juncture. Faced with its worst economic crisis since the Great Depression and having defaulted on its external debt for the first time, the country recently saw unprecedented protests demanding systemic change. The former president Gotabaya Rajapaksa was literally chased away in 2022, as protesters stormed his residence and swam in his pool.**

The political parties and their offshoots that have ruled the country since independence are unravelling. Take Anura Kumara Dissanayake. He polled just 3.8% of the vote during the previous presidential election in 2019. This week, he was sworn in as president.

The new president belongs to the Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna (JVP) party and leads the new centre-left National People’s Power (NPP) coalition. The JVP engaged in two major insurrections in the early 1970s and late 1980s, which resulted in the loss of tens of thousands of lives – mass violence was committed by both the JVP and the state. But the party has come a long way from its mix of revolutionary Marxist-Leninism and Sinhala ethno-nationalism, having moved into the centrist mainstream. From its roots in the rural south of the country, the party remoulded its base in the suburbs and small towns and even wooed the middle classes by taking up the issue of corruption. Its electoral capture of state power was contingent on the unprecedented economic crisis, as it waited patiently for the political winds to turn.

Yet its victory comes during unenviable times, as the bankrupt country is subject to severe austerity measures in line with the conditions of an agreement with the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the Washington-based financial institution that has long promoted social welfare cuts on developing countries in the name of the free market.

The previous government did not even consider negotiating terms with the IMF. It

Ahilan Kadirgamar

was all too willing to grovel before the global powers and ran the economy adhering to the benchmarks and recommendations of western institutions. These economic policies benefited the elite in the country, while the burden from the rise in VAT, the market pricing of energy, the halving of real wages for many and the cost of living doubling have all hit working people. Domestic debt restructuring, pushed by the international bondholders – consisting of large hedge funds and other financiers – was also needed to satisfy the IMF’s debt sustainability analysis (DSA). This now means the retirement funds of working people, such as garment workers and tea pluckers, over the next 16 years are going to lose half their value. Meanwhile, wealthy investors in the financial sector have got away scot-free, with their investments untouched.

The central challenge before Dissanayake is getting a better IMF agreement. And it is this tension between a new president who seeks social change and the old IMF, which remains committed to the interests of global finance and markets, that is likely to play out in the weeks and months ahead.

Sri Lanka is heading for parliamentary elections in seven weeks, and it is Dissanayake’s strength in parliament, and the national consensus he can forge, that will determine his bargaining power with the IMF and the extent to which he can keep the elite in the country at bay.

At the heart of any renegotiation are the IMF’s targets. According to these, Sri Lanka must get its public debt down to 95% of GDP and must spend 4.5% of GDP annually in external debt servicing once the IMF programme is finished. This amounts to 30% of all government revenue going on servicing debt – a great scenario for Sri Lanka’s creditors, particularly international bondholders to whom \$12.55bn is owed. But with little debt relief, the reality is

that Sri Lanka could end up defaulting again.

In this context, there is mounting pressure on Dissanayake to stay the course with the IMF. From the elite in the capital, Colombo, to the western media, there is much talk that a former Marxist cannot work with the IMF and manage the economy. This amounts to a kind of sabotage. It is important to point out here that while the so-called “IMF bailout” amounts to just about \$60m a month for the duration of the programme, Sri Lanka’s foreign earnings (exports, service earnings and worker remittances) every month now are about 30 times that amount, at \$1,800m. In other words, the president will not be sticking to the IMF programme for its funds, but due to international political pressure and the fear of isolation.

There are lessons to be learned from elsewhere here – notably Kenya. Its president, William Ruto, was elected in 2022, a year after an IMF agreement, and the red carpets were eventually rolled out for him in Washington for sticking to the neoliberal programme. Yet within two years, massive protests against austerity and state repression have marred the country. In Sri Lanka, as in about 70 developing countries around the world in debt distress, the same questions arise. Do they continue to mortgage their national policies to the bondholders and the IMF, or do they seek alternative avenues of development finance and negotiate their way out of the crippling IMF programmes?

Dissanayake is going to have to walk a tightrope. For a country and people that are going through the worst phase of dispossession since independence, international solidarity should mean providing space for rebuilding the country. For if Dissanayake fails to carry the citizenry, the xenophobic and polarising forces that ravaged Sri Lanka for decades will be waiting in the wings.

The Guardian





## Fazal Moqeem elected president SCCI unopposed



F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Fazal Moqeem Khan, Abdul Jalil Jan and Shehryar Khan elected unopposed as president, senior vice president and vice president of the Sarhad Chamber of Commerce and Industry for the year 2024-26. This was announced by the Election Commission during its meeting held here at the chamber house on Saturday.

Members of the election commission Malik Niaz Ahmad, Abdul Hakim Shinwari and Zarak Khan present during the meeting.



According to the election commission, no nomination papers were submitted against Fazal Moqeem, Abdul Jalil Jan and Shehryar Khan, therefore, all the office bearers were elected unopposed.

The newly elected office bearers will take charge of their respective office on October 1, 2024.

Under Trade Organization Rule 2013, Rule 18, Sub Rule 18, members of the newly elected executive committee of the SCCI had also given assent of Fazal Moqeem Khan, Abdul Jalil Jan and Shehryar Khan as



president, senior vice president and vice president of the chamber unopposed for next term.

Earlier, Abbas Fuad Azeem, Adnan Nasir, Aftab Iqbal, Fazal Moqeem Khan, Hassan Zahideen, Ashfaq Ahmad, Junaid Altaf, Sabir Ahmad Bangash, Zaheer Sajjad and Ziaul Haq Sarhadi for Corporate group while Abdul Jalil Jan, Abdul Naseer, Gul Zaman, Muhammad Nadeem, Mujeeb Rehman, Saddam Hussain, Saifullah Khan, Shams ur Rehman, Shehryar Khan and Sultan Muhammad for Associate

Group elected as members of the SCCI executive committee for year 2024-26.

Similarly, the newly elected executive members elected two EC members on women reserved seats including Aafia Walayat and Shahida Parveen.

Muhammad Sajjad, has already been elected as member of the SCCI Executive Committee from Bannu Town Association.

It is noted to mention that the Annual General Meeting of the Sarhad Chamber of Commerce and Industry will be held in the chamber house on September 30, 2024 (Monday).

### Aleem Khan invites Chinese investors

ISLAMABAD (PPI): Minister for Privatization, Abdul Aleem Khan has invited Chinese businessmen to invest in housing, energy and transport sectors in Pakistan.

He was presiding over a Business and Investment Roundtable held in Beijing to promote investment cooperation between Pakistan and China.

Abdul Aleem Khan said since the visit of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif to China, significant progress has been made in accelerating China-Pakistan business-to-business and investment cooperation.

He highlighted how CPEC served as a cornerstone of Pakistan-China economic cooperation and underlined that in its next phase, industrialization would be joint priority. Three memorandums of understanding were also signed between Chinese and Pakistani companies on the occasion.

### Women urged to start handicraft business

BAHAWALPUR (APP): Handicrafts Association Chairperson Ayesha Farooqui has urged women to initiate a handicraft business to make themselves self-independent and for women empowerment.

She was addressing a ceremony here that was organized to highlight the importance of handicraft business for empowerment of women. She said that handicraft business was one of leading business fields of the world which had wide scope, especially for women to earn their livelihood. "Handicraft business used to attract customers from all over world due to its popularity," she said, adding that fans of antiques and other items made by artists of handicrafting are found across the world.

She viewed that increasing business on internet and e-commerce had provided great opportunities for those, engaged in handicraft business. "You can get customers not only from your own country but from abroad for your handicraft items and products," she opined.

The ceremony was attended by office-bearers of Handicraft Association including Vice, Chairperson, Ms. Nida Nawab and members of the Executive Committee-Usman Arshad Khan, Asma Aamir, Ayesha Amaan, Mariam Qasim, Naheed Saud, Sherrish Waqas, Fatima Tauqeer, Ms. Fauzia and a large number of women.

### Gold prices dip by Rs700

ISLAMABAD (APP): The per tola price of 24 karat gold decreased by Rs700 and was sold at Rs276,000 on Saturday compared to its sale at Rs276,700 on last trading day. The price of 10 grams of 24 karat gold also decreased by Rs601 to Rs236,625 from Rs237,226 whereas the price of 10 gram 22 karat gold went down to Rs216,907 from Rs217,456, the All Sindh Sarafa Jewellers Association reported.

The price of per tola and ten gram silver remained constant at Rs3,050 and Rs2,614.88 respectively.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Commerce Jam Kamal Khan addressing ICCI's 40th anniversary ceremony.

## Govt determine to make Pakistan top destination for business, investment

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Commerce Jam Kamal Khan on Saturday said the government is working on increasing 'Ease of Doing Business in Pakistan' to make it an attractive destination for foreign investment.

In this regard, projects like Pakistan Single Window have been undertaken to provide one node solution to potential investors rather than hopping between various government departments for different permits, said a press release issued here.

The government remains fully committed to supporting businesses and fostering an environment that enables them to thrive. This has been stated by Jam Kamal Khan while addressing 40 years anniversary celebration of Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) as Chief guest.

The Minister said that prudent and effective policies of the Government have brought down inflation. Stable and increased foreign reserves have brought down interest rate. Moreover, the Government has been working relentlessly on bringing down power tariffs for the industry in general and exporters in particular.

He added that Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif himself is paying utmost attention on the resolution of the business community's problems and that a high profile Board is

already working under his (Prime Minister) chair for the purpose.

He further said that an all-out effort is being made by every ministry to see regional trade flourish and explore business opportunities for our exporters. The transshipment policy is being revised to spur cross border trade in the region and foster business opportunities for our business community.

Once devised, the transshipment policy is expected to make Pakistan a regional business hub for the Central Asia, South Asia and Middle East regions. This will create employment for skilled labour force, bring in foreign exchange, boost revenues for the Government and bring in overall development in the country.

The role of Chambers in promoting trade and commerce, both domestic and international, cannot be overstated. Over the past four decades, the Islamabad Chamber has played a pivotal role in spurring business activity, promoting entrepreneurship, and contributing significantly to national economic progress, he further stated.

In his welcome address Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari, President Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry, highlighted the major milestones of ICCI achieved during his tenure. He said that he and his entire team tirelessly worked to resolve the problems

being faced by the community and to provide it a congenial atmosphere for ease of doing businesses.

He said that we have to increase our exports, impart skill training to our youth and formulate long term economic policies for the wellbeing of the country. He described his success as President ICCI the result of the entire team work and expressed the hope that the future leadership of the Chamber will carry forward this legacy.

Chairman Founder Group ICCI Khalid Iqbal Malik paid rich tributes to Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari for his outstanding performance as President ICCI which made the Chamber as one of the premier Chambers of the country.

In his address former President Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry and Secretary General United Business Group Zafar Bakhtawari underlined the need for the acknowledgement of business leaders' achievements through excellence awards at government level. He called upon the youth to idealize business leaders to emerge as job providers instead of job seekers.

Former President FPCCI and ICCI Zubair Ahmad Malik by mentioning the problems of the business fraternity impressed upon the government for provision of necessary facilities to business community. He also demanded incitation of immediate work on

Pakistan-Iran gas pipeline project, CASA-1000, TAPI etc. in the best interest of the country.

President elect ICCI Nasir Mansoor Qureshi said that Pakistan is blessed with multiple opportunities and resources and the only needed thing is to showcase them articulately to overcome the economic challenges. He also made the mention of his future plans to further promote the Chamber's repute and especially to resolve community's problems.

### Govt spearheading SME uplift

ISLAMABAD (PPI): Minister Industries and Production, Rana Tanveer Hussain, has said that Government is spearheading SME development to create a conducive business environment for SMEs, enabling them to address the prevailing challenges

Chairing the 12th Meeting of National Coordination Committee on SME Development in Islamabad, the Minister expressed satisfaction on the implementation process of the SME Policy.

He appreciated SMEDA's active coordination with provincial working groups to expedite the formulation of implementation strategies in all provinces and administrative units.

He said that Steering Committee on SMEs has been entrusted to oversee initiatives and ensure the implementation of the National SME Policy.

### Court Notice

In the Court of Javera Sartaj Khan Additional District Judge II /Azafi Zila Qazi Buner at camp court Totalai Buner. Appeal.No. 30/13. Institution 4/3/2023. Date of hearing. 26/10/2024.Shah Room VS Sardar Khan etc.Notice to no. 1/1. Javed Khan. 1/6.Ashfaq. 1/7.Altaf sons of Sardar Khan resident of Totalai tehsel Khadukhel district Buner.Whereas in the above mentioned case the mentioned defendants can not be served in the ordinary way, it is, therefore, proclaimed that if the said defendants will/shall not appear personally or through dually authorized agent or pleader in the court at 8.00 am dated 26/10/2024 the proceeding will be taken ex-parte. Given under my hand and seal of this Court.

### Court Notice

In the Court of Javera Sartaj Khan Additional District Judge II /Azafi Zila Qazi Buner at camp court Totalai Buner. Appeal.No. 31/13. Institution 4/3/2023. Date of hearing. 26/10/2024. Mehmod Shah VS Sardar Khan etc. Notice to no. 1/1.Javed Khan. 1/6. Ashfaq. 1/7.Altaf sons of Sardar Khan resident of Totalai tehsel Khadukhel district Buner. Whereas in the above mentioned case the mentioned defendants can not be served in the ordinary way, it is, therefore, proclaimed that if the said defendants will/shall not appear personally or through dually authorized agent or pleader in the court at 8.00 am dated 26/10/2024 the proceeding will be taken ex-parte. Given under my hand and seal of this Court.

## Tajikistan declared as best destination for tourism

ISLAMABAD (APP): Speakers at the First 'Dushanbe International Tourism Exhibition' (DITE) declared Tajikistan as the best destination for tourism in Central Asia and regional countries including Pakistan.

In the first Dushanbe International Tourism Expo, businessmen and industrialists from Pakistan set up various stalls and participated in various industrial and commercial activities while participating in the exhibition.

The exhibition was attended by the businesses belonging to different sectors including handicrafts, tourism and hospitality from Pakistan and also signed business and agreements with the representatives of Tajikistan Chamber of Commerce.

On this occasion, Deputy Minister of Economic Development and Trade of Tajikistan, Ahliddin Nuriddinzoda, Chairman of the Committee of Tourism Development Tajikistan Kamoliddin Muminzod addressed the ceremony.

Addressing the exhibition on this occasion, the Deputy Minister of Economic Development and Trade of Tajikistan, Ahliddin Nuriddinzoda said that innovation is being brought in the tourism sector in Tajikistan, which is the vision of the President of Tajikistan, Imam Ali Rehman.

He said that tourism has a fundamental role in the economy of Tajikistan and

is an important part of our livelihood.

He said that currently there are many opportunities in cultural tourism, health and adventure tourism in Tajikistan.

The Chairman of the Committee of Tourism Development Tajikistan Kamoliddin Muminzod said that Tajikistan has mountains, glaciers, rivers and lakes and opportunities for all types of tourism and the government is making innovations in tourism infrastructure.

He said that Dushanbe is the gateway for tourism in Tajikistan and Dushanbe Mayor Rustam Enomali is leading us on the Tourism 2030 vision and Tajikistan will become a center for world tourism.

The Chairman said that Tajikistan has an attractive landscape for all kinds of tourism and last year more than one million tourists visited Tajikistan.

He said that tourism has an important contribution in the economy of Tajikistan and the volume of the tourism sector will increase further in the country's economy.

From September 25 to 27, 2024, the 1st Dushanbe International Tourism Exhibition (DITE-2024) took place at the "Dushanbe Expo Center".

This significant event was timed to coincide with World Tourism Day and was initiated by the Chairman of the Majlisi Milli of the Republic

of Tajikistan, the Chairman of the city of Dushanbe, Rustami Enomali.

Representatives of more than 16 countries, 20 foreign companies and over 90 domestic companies took part in DITE-2024, which underlines its international importance. The exhibition provided a unique platform to strengthen ties between Tajikistan's tourism entities, especially those in Dushanbe and its partner cities, while promoting the country's natural, cultural, and wellness tourism potential.

The organizers express their sincere gratitude to all participants for their active involvement and collaboration. Special recognition is given to the significant contributions of "Somon Travel", "King Tour", and "Diyor Travel", which played key roles in ensuring the event's success.

The exhibition also featured the International Tourism Forum and B2B meetings, facilitating the signing of new cooperation agreements in the tourism sector. Participants were able to explore the capital's tourist attractions, including a visit to the "Istiklol Complex", and took part in a cultural and entertainment program in honor of World Tourism Day.

DITE-2024 marks an important milestone in the development of tourism in Tajikistan, creating new opportunities for attracting foreign tourists, investments, and strengthening international tourism ties.

## Global stocks mostly rise, cheering Beijing stimulus

NEW YORK (AFP/APP): Stock markets mostly rose Friday as slowing US and European inflation raised hopes of more aggressive interest rate cuts while investors applauded China's measures to boost its struggling economy.

All major European markets closed higher, locking in strong gains for the week. Wall Street stocks finished mixed after a choppy session, with the Dow edging to a fresh record and the Nasdaq retreating. It's "clearly a very positive week, the third straight week of gains," said Angelo Kourkafas of Edward Jones.

Earlier, the Hong Kong and Shanghai stock markets finished the week more than 10 percent higher, with Shanghai seeing its strongest weekly gain since 2008.

The US personal consumption expenditures

(PCE) price index was up 2.2 percent from a year ago in August, down from 2.5 percent in July, the latest data point to show an easing in price pressure.

"Inflation stayed in its cage last month, reinforcing ideas that the Federal Reserve has runway to sharply cut rates in coming months," said Joe Mazzola, a strategist at Charles Schwab. The Fed cut its main lending rates by 50 basis points earlier this month -- its first rate cut in more than four years -- and analysts expect further cuts at the next policy meeting in November.

US "inflation seems to be on a sustained path lower", said Bret Kenwell, US investment analyst at eToro trading platform.

For the Federal Reserve, he said, "it makes sense to turn their focus to the labor

market, which has shown softness in recent months."

Annual inflation slowed sharply in France and Spain in September, official data showed on Friday, fueling speculation the European Central Bank (ECB) could also cut rates more aggressively than expected.

Besides expectations of lower rates, Europe's main stock markets were boosted by hopes of rebounding Chinese demand, especially for luxury products and cars. In Frankfurt, BASF soared 7.2 percent after the German chemicals giant Thursday unveiled a major overhaul to focus on cost cutting and strengthening its core businesses.

In Paris, Ubisoft shares jumped 5.8 percent after Credit Agricole raised its stake to 11 percent -- making it the game company's largest shareholder.

panels in just one year.

This surge in the market has prompted several companies to plan the installation of solar inverter plants in Pakistan, aiming to save foreign exchange through local production. If solar systems are installed with QR code verification and maintained properly, they can provide reliable service for many years.

## Significant drop in solar panel prices in Pakistan

ISLAMABAD (INP): The solar energy market in Pakistan is experiencing a remarkable shift as prices continue to decrease. The cost per watt has fallen to between 30 and 32 rupees.

This marks a decline from earlier this year, when prices ranged from 39 to 40 rupees per watt in April.

A year ago, solar panels were priced at 80 rupees

per watt, which has now dropped to 37 rupees.

The reduction in prices is attributed to an increase in local supply and a decrease in international rates. Currently, the price per watt for solar panels has reached as low as 28 rupees.

Federal Minister Owais Leghari recently revealed that Pakistan imported 8,000 megawatts of solar





## In brief

## Rain washes out day two

KANPUR (Reuters): The second day's play was called off in India's weather-plagued second test against Bangladesh without a ball being bowled, following intermittent rain in Kanpur on Saturday. Rain and a wet outfield had allowed only 35 overs of play on Friday and the start of the second day's play was also delayed by inclement weather. The on-again, off-again rain-fall kept the covers on and the umpires decided to call off play with Bangladesh, bidding for a series-levelling victory, stuck on 107-3 in their first innings. While the weather is likely to improve slightly on Sunday, a draw looms over the contest in view of the time lost to rain. India, who won the opening test in Chennai by 280 runs, need a draw to register their record-extending 18th consecutive test series victory on home soil.

## South Africa beat Ireland

ABU DHABI (Reuters): A 136-run opening wicket partnership led South Africa to an eight-wicket win over Ireland in the first of their two-match Twenty20 series at the Zayed Cricket Stadium on Friday. Ryan Rickleton and Reeza Hendricks put on the highest opening wicket partnership for South Africa in a T20 international on foreign soil, setting the foundation as the team successfully chased down a target of 171-8 set by Ireland, who were put into bat first. Rickleton made a career best 76 and Hendricks 51 with South Africa reaching 174 with 14 balls to spare. South Africa-born Curtis Campher top scored for the Irish with 49 while Patrick Kruger took three wickets for South Africa in Ireland's last over to finish with the game's best bowling figures of 4-27. The two teams meet again in Abu Dhabi on Sunday and then next week start a three-match One Day International series at the same venue.

## WADA appeals, seeks ban

MONTREAL (AFP): The World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) said Saturday that it has appealed to the Court of Arbitration for Sport in the steroid case of tennis world number one Jannik Sinner. "WADA is seeking a period of ineligibility of between one and two years," it said in a statement, after the Italian twice tested positive for the banned substance clostebol in March but was cleared to carry on playing. The 23-year-old Sinner, who recently won the US Open for his second Grand Slam title and is currently in action in Beijing, has denied doping. Last month, the International Tennis Integrity Agency (ITIA) said that Sinner had been cleared of any wrongdoing after twice testing positive earlier in the season. The ITIA accepted his explanation that the drug entered his system when his physiotherapist used a spray containing it to treat a cut, then provided massage and sports therapy to the player. WADA said in its statement that it lodged an appeal to CAS, the top court in sport, on Thursday. "It is WADA's view that the finding of 'no fault or negligence' was not correct under the applicable rules," it said. It added: "WADA is not seeking a disqualification of any results, save that which has already been imposed by the tribunal of first instance. "As this matter is now pending before CAS, WADA will make no further comment at this time." Clostebol is an anabolic agent prohibited at all times by WADA.

## Faisalabad may be new PSL center: PCB Chairman

LAHORE (APP): Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) Chairman Mohsin Naqvi has said that the PCB may consider Iqbal Stadium, Faisalabad as new venue for the next edition of the Pakistan Super League considering the passion for cricket of the local fans.

Chairing a high-level meeting to review preparations for the ICC Champions Trophy 2025 at the PCB headquarters, Gaddafi Stadium here on Saturday, he said the PCB will review the possibility of conducting PSL matches at Iqbal stadium, adding that he was awed by the spirit of the cricket fans in Faisalabad during the ongoing Champions

One Day Cup.

The PSL matches have been played in Lahore, Karachi, Multan and Rawalpindi in the past so far while Peshawar, being the home-town of Peshawar Zalmi, is another candidate to hold PSL matches.

The Chairman PCB directed to constitute certain committees for the successful conduct of the upcoming ICC Champions Trophy 2025 to be hosted by the PCB, adding that the TORs of the committees should be finalized immediately so that these may start work.

'World's best teams will visit Pakistan for the ICC Champions Trophy and the arrangements should be

perfect,' Naqvi said.

The meeting also reviewed progress of the ongoing Bahria Town Champions Cup and the upgradation of the cricket stadiums in the Lahore, Rawalpindi and Karachi.

Chairman PCB said that no stone should be left unturned in order to complete the upgradation of the stadiums within the deadline, adding that the upgradation of stadiums will provide a better view to the spectators and they will enjoy more during the matches.

PCB COO Salman Naseer, CFO Javed Murtaza, directors and other officials attended the meeting.

## FIFA ban Argentina goalkeeper Martinez



PARIS (AFP): Argentina's World Cup-winning goalkeeper Emiliano Martinez has been banned for two matches by FIFA for "offensive behaviour", the Argentine Football Association (AFA) announced on Saturday.

The 32-year-old Aston Villa star was also found guilty of "violating principles of fairplay" in two separate episodes.

Martinez was found to have violated FIFA's code

of conduct when holding a replica of the Copa America trophy to his groin after the World Cup qualifier win over Chile on September 5.

It is not the first time Martinez has performed such an action having also done it with the Golden Glove trophy for best goalkeeper after Argentina beat France on penalties in the 2022 World Cup final.

FIFA also sanctioned him for hitting a TV cam-

eraman's camera with his gloves after their 2-1 defeat by Colombia on September 10. The AFA expressed their dissatisfaction with the FIFA ruling.

"It should be noted that the Argentine Football Association expresses its absolute disagreement with the decision taken by the FIFA disciplinary committee," they said in a statement.

As a result of the decision Martinez -- also a key member of the Argentina side that won the Copa America in July, as well as the 2021 edition -- will miss the World Cup qualifiers against Venezuela on October 10 and Bolivia on October 15. Argentina are top of the South American qualifying table with 18 points after eight matches. Colombia are just two points behind.

## Inter-District Kabaddi C'ship concluded



F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: The traditional inter-district kabaddi championship has ended. Charsadda and Peshawar were jointly declared winners. Chief guest Deputy Commissioner Charsadda Qaiser Khan distributed the prizes among the players.

He was accompanied by Additional Commissioner Shabqadar Shayan Ali, District Sports Officer Mashal Malik, AD Sports Arshad Khan, former DSO Tahsinullah, Provincial Kabaddi Association President Arbab Naseer General Secretary Syed Sultan Bari, District

Charsadda Kabaddi Association President Niaz Ahmed. General Secretary Mohibullah Malangian and other personalities were present.

Under the public agenda of the provincial government, a kabaddi tournament organized by the sports department was organized by the district administration of Charsadda to promote traditional sports in the district. The final match was played between Peshawar and Charsadda teams, which was very exciting. And at the ed of the match , both teams scored 29-29 points each, and both teams were declared joint winners.

On this occasion, Chief

Guest Deputy Commissioner Qaiser Khan said that in any society,

when the playgrounds are populated, the hospitals of that society are deserted, which proves that the youth play a part in creating a healthy society.

The district administration in Charsadda has always tried to take practical steps for the promotion of sports. Therefore, the same tradition will be maintained in the future and sports competitions will be organized regularly. Teams from Mardan, Nowshera, Swabi, Peshawar and Charsadda participated in the championship.

## Sri Lanka scent series victory as New Zealand 129-5 after follow-on

Galle (AFP): Sri Lanka were just five wickets away from a crushing second Test and series victory over New Zealand on Saturday with the tourists 129-5 at tea on the third day, having followed on after collapsing to 88 all out in their first innings.

Tom Blundell was not out seven and Glenn Phillips was on two at the break after debutant off-spinner Nishan Peiris took three top-order wickets. Devon Conway, battling to save both his team and his

place in the side, joined forces with former captain Kane Williamson in a dogged 97-run partnership for the second wicket. De Silva lured Conway, who had made 61 off 62 balls, into a drive towards the vacant deep cover boundary that was caught by Dinesh Chandimal in a spectacular backward running catch.

Williamson, the world's second-ranked batsman behind England's Joe Root, departed when he misjudged a shot off Peiris, with Ramesh Mendis grab-

bing a tumbling catch at long-on. Tom Latham was the first wicket to fall before lunch, caught by Pathum Nissanka for a duck at short leg off Peiris, who earlier had taken three first-innings wickets. Spinner Prabath Jayasuriya took 6-42 in the first innings for his ninth five-wicket haul.

He has a slender chance of making six more in the second innings to equal the record for the fastest bowler to 100 Test wickets. The record has stood



LONDON: Kai Havertz of Arsenal headers the ball during the Premier League match between Arsenal FC and Leicester City FC at Emirates Stadium.

## Pak cricket team needs 'ruthlessness' to beat England

I S L A M A B A D

(Monitoring Desk): Pakistan's red-ball head coach Jason Gillespie said on Saturday that the national cricket squad required "a bit more ruthlessness" and can't afford to be complacent when they take on England in the upcoming three-match Test series next month.

Pakistan suffered a historic 2-0 whitewash at home against Bangladesh earlier this month, putting more pressure on skipper Shan Masood who has lost five matches on the trot as captain since January this year.

The green shirts lost both matches against Bangladesh despite being in commanding positions at various points in the series.

In the first Test, Pakistan lost after declaring their first innings at 448-6 while in the second match, the hosts had Bangladesh on the ropes at 26-6 before Liton Das hit a spectacular century to rescue his team.

Speaking to the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB), Gillespie noted that while Pakistan played impressive cricket with both bat and ball in the series, it allowed Bangladesh to "get into the game" and capitalize at key moments during the series.

"So, what we need is a bit more ruthlessness," he said. "When we're ahead, we need to stay ahead and make sure we really drive home that advantage."

The former Australian fast bowler said Pakistan needs to "minimize those poor periods and maximize the good ones."

"It boils down to being disciplined, patient, and ready to strike when the opportunity presents itself," Gillespie said. "When we see the gap, we need to go for it and capitalize on those key moments."

As criticism over the recent string of poor performances by the Pakistan team mounts, Gillespie urged fans and critics both to back the national squad during its tough time.

"These players are very, very talented cricketers," he said. "We just need to give them the backing, love and support to show them that we're right behind them. It's an exciting time."

England will play a three-match Test series against Pakistan from Oct. 7-28.

## Arsenal score twice in stoppage time to beat Leicester

LONDON (Agencies): Arsenal scored twice in stoppage time to earn a dramatic victory over Leicester.

A Wilfred Ndidi own goal in the 94th minute and a close-range Kai Havertz strike in the ninth minute of stoppage time denied a Foxes side who were within reach of an unlikely point at Emirates Stadium after clawing back a two-goal deficit in the second half.

Gabriel Martinelli had given the dominant Gunners a deserved first-half lead when he steered home Jurrien Timber's cross, before providing the pass for the second, converted by Leandro Trossard, on the stroke of half-time.

Leicester had managed only one touch in the Arsenal area before the break, but they reduced the arrears a little over a minute into the second half when James Justin's header from Facundo Buonanotte's free-kick struck Havertz on its way in.

Justin doubled his personal tally in spectacular fashion shortly after the hour mark, meeting Ndidi's left-wing delivery with a swerving volley that beat David Raya via the inside of the post.

If Arsenal were momentarily stunned by Leicester's recovery, they soon recovered their poise and Mads Hermansen produced two superb saves to keep the Foxes level, denying Havertz with a point-blank stop before keeping out Trossard's shot - moments after giving the ball away inside his own area.

But Trossard's late effort was deflected past the Danish goalkeeper by Ndidi before Havertz struck from close-range to complete the scoring. Victory lifts Arsenal level on points with Manchester City, who could be overtaken by Liverpool if they beat Wolves at Molineux in

Saturday's late game.

Gunners survive

almighty scare. Arsenal fans must have been scratching their heads as the game entered second-half stoppage time, as Leicester closed in on a draw that had barely seemed possible at the halfway point of the contest.

Notwithstanding a Justin shot which was blocked by Riccardo Calafiori, the first 45 minutes took place almost entirely inside the Leicester half, with Bukayo Saka and Martinelli both going close before the Brazilian's 20th-minute opener.

Calafiori stung Hermansen's palms and Havertz sent a header narrowly wide from Trossard's cross, before the Belgian - back from suspension after his dismissal against City last weekend - gave the home side a richly deserved two-goal cushion.

## Lake City Panthers to lock horns with UMT



FAISALABAD (Monitoring Desk): After 13 matches and 16 days, two teams - UMT Markhors and Lake City Panthers have emerged as the contenders for being crowned the inaugural winners of the Bahria Town Champions One-Day Cup 2024.

The final, set to begin at 3pm on Sunday at the Iqbal Stadium, Faisalabad, will be the third occasion in this tournament where these two teams will face each other with both having won one game each previously.

In the tournament opener on 12 September, the Markhors got the better of Panthers with a 160-run win while the Panthers defeated Markhors in the qualifier by seven wickets to reach the final. Markhors on the other hand advanced to the final based on their top standing in the league stage after their eliminator clash against the Nurpur Lions was called off without a ball being bowled.

In total the Panthers have so far played five matches in the tournament winning four and losing just one while the Markhors have played six games reaping three wins, two losses while their last game was a washout.

Markhors and Panthers have both seen changes in their squads after the Pakistan's Test squad for the England series was announced. In the Markhors

squad, Mohammad Rizwan, Naseem Shah and Salman Ali Agha have been replaced by Bismillah Khan, Niaz Khan and Zain Abbas.

Danish Aziz and Sajid Khan have replaced Mubasir Khan and Saim Ayub in the Panthers squad. While Saim was named in the Test squad, the all-rounder Mubasir was ruled out due to a thumb fracture. Lake City Panthers' Usman Khan leads the runs scoring charts in the tournament with 259 runs at an average of 64.75 in five matches with one hundred. Allied Bank Stallions' Tayyab Tahir sits on the second spot with 249 runs at 49.80 while Kamran Ghulam of UMT Markhors has scored 248 runs in the five matches at 49.60 including two hundreds. Usman and Kamran will look to finish as the top run-scorers of the tournament.

On the bowling front, Panthers' Mohammad Hasnain is the leading wicket-taker with 14 wickets followed by Stallions' Jahandad Khan, Lions' and Markhors' Zahid Mehmood who have 10 each to their names.

UMT Markhors

Captain, Iftikhar Ahmed "The Bahria Town Champions One-Day Cup has been a fantastic tournament and to stake a claim for becoming the inaugural champions of this domestic competition is an exciting

prospect for the UMT Markhors. "I will look to instill my experience of playing for Pakistan in high-pressure games to the young players in our squad. The fans will surely get to see a highly-competitive final tomorrow."

"We are hopeful to repeat the opening game heroics against the Lake City Panthers. Despite the departure of Mohammad Rizwan, Naseem Shah and Salman Ali Agha, the Markhors team is committed to giving the best performance in the final and lifting the trophy."

Lake City Panthers

Captain, Shadab Khan "I'm really excited to be leading the Lake City Panthers in the final of the Bahria Town Champions One-Day Cup and I'm pretty sure this occasion will bring the best out of our players."

"After our win in the Qualifier, we had four off days where we took ample rest and trained for the final as well which has set up the Panthers squad in the best stead possible to compete in a high-profile game."

"We will miss Saim Ayub's presence with the ball and bat but so many of the other players are ready to put their hand up and give their best. The final is going to be a cracking contest and I hope the fans turn up in big numbers as they have done throughout the tournament".





## In brief

### Syedaal meets with Secretaries

ISLAMABAD (APP): Deputy Chairman of the Senate, Syedaal Khan, met with various officers, including federal secretaries, to discuss important issues and initiatives. He expressed gratitude to all attendees and received a briefing from Federal Secretary Arshad Majeed regarding the Ministry of Energy, highlighting the challenges faced by Balochistan. During the meeting, he also engaged with Federal Secretary Dr Muhammad Fakhr Alam to gain further insights into pressing matters. Dr. Abdul Rauf Rafiqui head of the Allama Iqbal Academy in Lahore, presented a gift of books to the Deputy Chairman and extended an invitation to visit the academy. Syedaal Khan commended Rafiqui's contributions, stating that Iqbal's philosophy is particularly significant for today's youth in the current circumstances.

Fareed Dogar, a Supreme Court lawyer and former Deputy Attorney General from Quetta, during a meeting, said the people of Balochistan have high expectations for the Deputy Chairman of the Senate. Additionally, a group of young lawyers from Balochistan, led by Advocate Qari Nazeebullah, met with Syedaal Khan to discuss the challenges faced by lawyers from Balochistan working in Islamabad. The Deputy Chairman assured them of his commitment to resolving their issues.

### 195,700 cusecs water released

ISLAMABAD (APP): Indus River System Authority (IRSA) on Saturday released 195,700 cusecs water from various rim stations with inflow of 181,800 cusecs. According to the data released by IRSA, water level in River Indus at Tarbela Dam was 1536.77 feet and was 138.77 feet higher than its dead level of 1,398 feet. Water inflow and outflow in the dam was recorded as 112,700 cusecs and 95,000 cusecs respectively. The water level in River Jhelum at Mangla Dam was 1217.80 feet, which was 169.80 feet higher than its dead level of 1,050 feet. The inflow and outflow of water was recorded 13,400 cusecs and 45,000 cusecs respectively. The release of water at Kalabagh, Taunsa, Guddu and Sukkur was recorded as 117,300, 83,500, 85,000 and 33,600 cusecs respectively. Similarly, from River Kabul, a total of 20,700 cusecs of water released at Nowshera and 6,600 cusecs released from River Chenab at Marala.

### Police hold flag march

RAWALPINDI (APP): The police conducted flag march in the leadership of City Police Officer (CPO) Syed Khalid Hamdani on the major city roads to demonstrate their commitment to maintaining law and order. Senior police officers, along with teams from the District Police, Elite Force, Dolphin Squad, and Traffic Police, participated in the march. The march passed through key areas, including Rawal Road, Murree Road, Mall Road, Chauhar Chowk, and the Motorway. According to police spokesman, the purpose of the march to express the police's readiness and determination to uphold the rule of law. Security has been tightened across Rawalpindi, and Section 144 has been imposed which bans public gatherings. Police have been deployed at all main entry and exit points of the city. Police have warned that no illegal processions or rallies will be tolerated, and strict action will be taken against any violations. "Anyone disrupting the peace will be dealt with firmly," he added.

# Chairman PMYP held meeting with S.Korean Envoy

ISLAMABAD (APP): To enhance bilateral ties and promote youth collaboration, Chairman of the Prime Minister's Youth Programme (PMYP) Rana Mashhood Ahmed Khan, met with the Ambassador of the Republic of South Korea, His Excellency Park Ki Jun here on Saturday.

According to the PMYP office, the discussions focused on strengthening relations between Pakistan and South Korea, emphasising empowering the youth of both nations.

Both dignitaries expressed their mutual commitment to enhancing youth development initiatives during the meeting.

They discussed various strategies for youth engagement, skills development, and digital empowerment, particularly through educational and cultural

exchange programs.

Chairman PMYP Rana Mashhood highlighted Pakistan's ongoing initiatives, including the Smart Pakistan Scheme and the National Innovation Award, which aim to equip the younger generation with essential tools for the future.

His Excellency Park Ki Jun expressed keen interest in fostering greater cooperation in the areas of technology, culture, and education. He also underscored the significance of building stronger ties through collaborative youth programs that can benefit both nations in areas such as innovation and entrepreneurship.

Both leaders expressed enthusiasm for the upcoming Korean Cultural Week, set to take place in October 2024 which aims to promote cultural exchange and

deepen understanding between the two countries. The cultural week will include performances, exhibitions, and workshops that celebrate the rich cultural heritage of both Pakistan and South Korea.

Chairman Rana Mashhood Ahmed Khan reaffirmed Pakistan's commitment to expanding opportunities for youth collaboration, stating that the event will be a testament to the strong and growing relationship between the two countries. "This is an exciting opportunity to not only celebrate our cultural ties but to also open new doors for the youth of both nations," he remarked.

The meeting concluded with both sides expressing optimism about the future of Pakistan-Korea relations, particularly in the field of youth empowerment.



ISLAMABAD: Chairman Prime Minister's Youth Programme Rana Mashhood Ahmed Khan in a meeting with Ambassador of Republic of Korea Park Kijun. —APP Photo

## Police nab 25 criminals, narcotics, arms seized

ISLAMABAD (APP): Islamabad Police apprehended 25 criminals involved in different criminal activities, including drug peddling and possessing illegal weapons in different raids during last 24 hours.

A public relations officer told APP on Saturday that police teams also recovered drugs and weapons with ammunition from their possession. In this regard, the Islamabad Police Aabpara, Sumbal, Tarnol, Sangiani, Industrial Area, Noon, Shams Colony and Koral police station teams took legal action against accused involved in drug peddling, selling liquor and possessing illegal weapons.

Police teams arrested 13 accused involved in drug peddling and possessing illegal weapons and recovered 1,375 gram heroin, 3,500 gram hashish, 110 gram Ice, 10 Liters of liquor, two daggers and five pistols with ammunition from their possession. Moreover, 12 absconders were also arrested during the last 24 hours.

Inspector General of Police (IGP) Islamabad, Syed Ali Nasir Rizvi, said that the Islamabad Police are actively working to ensure the safety of citizens' lives and property in the federal capital, emphasizing that no elements will be allowed to disrupt citizens' peace.

Protecting the lives, property, and dignity of citizens is the Islamabad Police's top priority, he added. Citizens are urged to report any suspicious activities to the relevant police station, emergency helpline "Pukar-15," or the "ICT 15" app to help make the city crime-free through cooperation between the police and the public.

## Ayaz lauds tireless efforts of media

ISLAMABAD (APP): Speaker of the National Assembly, Sardar Ayaz Sadiq, on Saturday, expressed appreciation for the tireless efforts of media organizations, journalists, and press associations across Pakistan in promoting truth, transparency, and democracy.

In a message on the occasion of World News Day, he acknowledged the media's vital role in safeguarding democracy and promoting accountability within society.

He said, "By providing accurate, reliable, and timely information, the media helps build an informed and engaged public."

"Responsible journalism not only informs the public but ensures their participation in the democratic process," Ayaz Sadiq said.

"The media acts as the voice of the people, bringing their concerns to the corridors of power," he added.

Ayaz Sadiq also highlighted the importance of journalism in upholding the principles of truth, justice, and equality.

He noted the growing challenge of combating misinformation and fake news in the digital age, urging journalists to fulfill their duty by ensuring fact-based, impartial reporting. "Journalists must play

a key role in ensuring fact-based and unbiased news," he stressed.

Sadiq paid tribute to journalists working under difficult and dangerous conditions to uncover the truth, honoring their sacrifices and dedication.

"A free and independent media is essential for Pakistan's progress and prosperity," he reiterated.

He saluted those who risk their lives for the sake of public awareness.

"A free media is essential for the country's progress and prosperity," he said, assuring that the National Assembly will continue to protect freedom of expression," he added.

## Mushaal thanks PM for championing Kashmir cause

ISLAMABAD (APP): Mushaal Hussein Mullick, renowned peace activist and wife of jailed Senior Kashmiri leader Mohammad Yasin Malik Saturday expressed her gratitude to Pakistan's Prime Minister Shahbaz Sharif for his unwavering support of Kashmir at the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA).

In her video message on the PTV news, she acknowledged the Prime Minister's efforts to raise world awareness about the human rights violations in Kashmir and his unwavering commitment to the Kashmiri people's right to self-determination.

She praised that the Prime Minister effectively highlighted India's terror-

ism in Kashmir at the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA).

The Prime Minister's address emphasized India's role in perpetuating violence in the region, which has led to numerous human rights violations, she added.

She said Pakistan's Prime Minister has exposed the sham elections in Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK) and highlighted the illegitimacy of the Indian army's presence, which numbers over 1 million troops.

The Prime Minister's address effectively highlighted the tensions between India and Pakistan, which escalated after India revoked the

special status granted to Jammu and Kashmir by abrogating Article 370 of the Constitution, she added.

She also commended the Prime Minister's commitment to Pakistan's unwavering moral, diplomatic and political support to the Kashmir Cause.

"I appreciate the efforts of PM for raising the issue of the Muslim world and the way he defended religion against false propaganda," she mentioned.

The international community should realize that Kashmir is a flash point between two nuclear states and any misadventure can result in massive catastrophe, she concluded.

## Police intensifies social media crackdown

ISLAMABAD (APP): Law enforcement authorities tightened their grip on individuals orchestrating organized propaganda against the government and state institutions.

According to sources, a Joint Investigation Team (JIT) meeting was held on Saturday under the chairmanship of Inspector General (IG) of police, Syed Ali Nasir Rizvi, to assess the prevailing situation.

The JIT has already interrogated eight individuals linked to the online anti-state campaign. It was discussed in the meeting that Gibran Ilyas, a prominent figure in the movement, was summoned for questioning in the next meeting. They claimed

that Gibran Ilyas played a central role in the subversive activities targeting state institutions and the government.

The investigators discovered crucial evidence connecting more individuals to the online efforts led by Ilyas. The JIT is reportedly collecting further data on these associates to broaden its inquiry.

The JIT found out that Gibran Ilyas was identified as a key player in the anti-state campaign, working in collaboration with both domestic and foreign elements. It was suggested that he had been active in various efforts to destabilize public order and spread discontent within the country.

His involvement in the coordinated use of social media platforms to undermine the government's authority has drawn the attention of law enforcement agencies, it added.

While further details regarding Gibran's network continue to emerge, investigators remain focused on gathering additional evidence.

The crackdown reflected the government's resolve to counter what they saw as deliberate attempts to destabilize the country through misinformation and manipulation.

The investigation is expected to widen, with more individuals potentially being called for questioning in the coming days.



ISLAMABAD: CDA electric buses on route FR9 begin their new route from Karnal Sher Khan Shaheed Road (IJP Road) to Faizabad, heading towards Peshawar Road in the Federal Capital.

## PPP Human Rights body urges use of RTI for transparency, accountability and democracy

ISLAMABAD (APP): The 'World Right to Information Day' here on Saturday is an occasion to reflect on the critical importance of the Right to Information (RTI) and the progress made and the issues faced in the implementation of the landmark legislation namely "Right to Information Act-2017" was passed by the parliament over seven years ago.

In a statement today ex-senator Farhatullah Babar president Human Rights Cell of the PPP said that democracy is not merely holding of periodic elections

and political parties taking turns. It is a governance structure that rests on the pillars of rule of law, transparency, right to information and accountability.

The 18th Amendment introduced for the first time Article 19-A which states, "Every citizen shall have the right to access to information in all matters of public importance subject to regulation....". Under it the RTI Act 2017 was enacted by the Parliament and Pakistan

Information Commission also set up to address complaints against non

compliance with the law.

He said that although great strides have been taken there are serious challenges in the implementation of the law. The Tosh Khan case exposing uncomfortable truths was the result of information disclosed under the RTI. Initially the Supreme Court declined to disclose information under it but later it graciously recognized a citizens' right to information and willingly provided the information asked from it.

He said that under the law the parliament also is required to

provide information but it has been reluctant. Some years ago the senate secretariat refused to disclose information about the appointments in it and even an aborted attempt was made to exempt it from the RTI legislation.

Farhatullah Babar deplored that defense establishment has refused to comply with the law and even refused to comply with unambiguous orders by the independent Pakistan Information Commission (PIC).

In one case, he said, the PIC even ordered that the informa-

tion asked must be placed on its web site but in vain. The impunity with which it continues to defy the RTI law and the orders of the PIC is unsettling and does not shine any bright light on all those involved.

The President HR Cell of the PPP urged all media persons to make extensive use of the RTI law in the interest not only of democracy but also their professionalism.

There are more than 220 public and private universities in the country with more than 2 million students and tens of thou-

sands of academics. If only 1% of them asked just one question under RTI once in two months the total number of disclosures made will exceed one hundred thousand a year. And if only 1% of the disclosures made revealed irregularities and corruption it will immeasurably serve the cause of transparency, accountability and democracy, he said.

"Let today every citizen pledge to use the RTI tool to tear apart the shroud of secrecy and promote transparency, accountability and democracy without fear".



Minister participates in forum

KABUL (BNA): Mullah Hidayatullah Badri, Acting Minister of Mines and Petroleum, attended the 7th International Energy Forum in Russia, following an official invitation. According to the Ministry of Mines and Petroleum, the summit took place in Moscow, with the participation of Russian President Vladimir Putin, senior officials from the energy sectors of 55 countries, and a significant number of representatives from major global energy, oil, and gas companies.

Lotfullah received award

KABUL (Khaama press): The joint annual Canada-UK award for free media in Afghanistan was presented, with Lotfullah Najafzadea, CEO of Amu TV, accepting it on behalf of the country's media outlets. UK has stated that this award reflects a lasting commitment to supporting free journalism. The award was presented by Melanie Joly, Canada's Foreign Minister, and Lord Collins of Highbury, UK's Deputy Foreign Minister, during a ceremony on the sidelines of UN General Assembly.

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

# Afghan Steel Plant begins second phase



KABUL (BNA): In a notable development for Afghanistan's industrial sector, the second phase of the Afghan Steel Iron Smelting Plant in Herat has officially commenced.

The inauguration was attended by senior officials, including Mullah Khairullah Khairkhwa, Acting Minister of Information and Culture, and Nooruddin Azizi, Acting Minister of Industry and Trade. The new phase is being developed with a substantial investment of \$30 million USD.

At the ceremony, Hayatullah Nazari, Chairman of Afghan Steel, highlighted the accomplishments of the

plant, noting that the first phase was completed with a \$20 million investment, which has already provided employment for 500 individuals. With the second phase now underway, Nazari projected that over 1,000 new job opportunities would be created, further boosting local employment.

Nazari emphasized that the plant's current production of 300 tons of girders per day is of superior quality, meeting international standards and competing favorably with products from other countries.

In his address, Mullah Khairullah Khairkhwa underscored the signifi-

cance of the industrial developments in Herat, expressing hope that such projects would encourage further investment across the country. He reiterated that Afghanistan's economic challenges are being steadily resolved, and called on both the government and citizens to cooperate in overcoming these difficulties.

Minister Khairkhwa also affirmed the Islamic Emirate's commitment to supporting domestic production by imposing restrictions on the import of goods that can be produced locally, thereby strengthening Afghanistan's industrial

self-reliance.

Speaking at the event, Nooruddin Azizi, Acting Minister of Industry and Trade, announced that Afghanistan is on the cusp of an industrial revolution. He urged Afghan traders to prioritize local manufacturing and export, stressing that reliance on imported basic materials would soon be reduced, leading to greater national self-sufficiency.

Azizi noted the rising interest in investment within Afghanistan, particularly in Herat's industrial towns, and reaffirmed the government's pledge to fully support domestic industries.

Additionally, Mawlawi

Noor Ahmad Islamjar, Governor of Herat, lauded the favorable investment environment in the province, citing improved security and infrastructure as key drivers of investor confidence. He called on Afghan entrepreneurs abroad to return and invest in their homeland, highlighting Herat as a prime location for growth.

Islamjar concluded by noting that Herat's security and economic conditions have drastically improved in recent years, and expressed optimism about the province's rapid economic growth in the near future.

## Historic sites in Shibar Bamyan at risk: Residents

BAMYAN (TOLONews): Residents of Shibar district in Bamyan province say that dozens of historical relics in this district are at risk of destruction.

They are urging the government and both domestic and international organizations to make efforts to preserve and restore these historical sites.

Taqmechi Qala, located in the Iraq region of Shibar district, is one of the historical remnants from the legendary reign of King Zahhak, dating back over a thousand years.

According to residents, military equipment was manufactured in this location in ancient times, and goods transported through

this route were controlled and inspected by the military of that era.

Ramazan, one of the residents of Shibar district, said, "There are many caves in the upper part of this area. It is said that spears, swords, shields, and arrows were made here, which is why this area is called Iraq."

Mohammad Hussain, another resident, said, "This fortress is very tall and has very beautiful and attractive spots. The top of this fortress is carved and decorated in such a way that you would want to look at it for hours."

However, parts of this historical site have been damaged due to public neg-

lect, snowfall, rainfall, and other natural factors, and require serious attention.

Gul Mohammad Afghanzada, a resident, said: "Historical sites must be fully preserved as they represent the heritage and history of ancient times."

Zaman Ali, another resident, said, "Historical sites should be cared for by both the people and the authorities."

The head of Bamyan's Department of Information and Culture assures us that these historical sites will be attended to.

Safiullah Raed, head of Bamyan's Department of Information and Culture, said, "We have started work in some places. You

are aware that work is ongoing in the center, and it will gradually expand to the districts. We will go to the Forty Towers of Yakawlang and survey other areas, and then we will determine how much work is needed."

Bamyan is one of the provinces that houses dozens of historical and archaeological sites. These historical remnants were symbols of ancient civilization in this province.

The existence of these historical sites and Bamyan's natural and touristic attractions has led to thousands of tourists visiting these attractions from across Afghanistan and the world every year.

## Floods in Nangarhar leave 3 dead, 20 injured

JALALABAD (Khaama Press): Local media reported that at least three people have died and 20 others have been injured due to flooding in Kuz Kunar district, Nangarhar province. The floods have also destroyed around 150 houses in the district, according to the report.

The Bakhtar News Agency, under Taliban control, stated that heavy rains and floods in Mehtarlam city, the capital of Laghman province, and in the Alingar district of the province have caused significant financial damage to the local population.

Previously, the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) announced on September 10 that 245 villages in 32 provinces of Afghanistan had been affected by rainfall and flooding during the first seven months of this year.

OCHA added that 58 people had died, and 380 others had been injured due to July floods in the northern and northeastern regions of the country.

The UN humanitarian office also noted that July rainfall severely affected approximately 2,000 Afghan families in Badakhshan, Baghlan, Kunar, Laghman, Nangarhar, and Nuristan.

The recent floods in Nangarhar and Laghman provinces highlight the ongoing vulnerability of local communities to natural disasters, particularly during the rainy season, exacerbating their hardships.

Continued support from international humanitarian organizations is crucial to help people recover from such disasters, and further measures are needed to prevent future losses and mitigate the effects of climate-induced calamities.

## Turkmen Language Day celebrated



FARYAB (TOLONews): Turkmen Language Day was celebrated in Faryab province with a book fair, handicrafts exhibition, display of traditional clothing, and poetry readings. Several poets, cultural figures, and residents from the northern provinces participated in the event, calling for the strengthening and preservation of the authentic Turkmen culture.

Najibullah, one of the residents, said, "We should be provided with scholarships so that our young people can study abroad. Additionally, the number of government positions allocated to us is not proportional to our population."

Cultural activist Hasan Sardash said: "Today, a large carpet production town was established in the four districts of Andkhoy, but the work remains incomplete. Our demand

from the leadership of the Islamic Emirate and the international community is to support the carpet town."

Teacher Chari-Qul said "Our request from the current government is to work towards strengthening our language and elevating its status. This is our demand from the Islamic Emirate."

Cultural activist Zalmi Sardash added, "Organizing programs to promote and enrich languages, especially the Turkmen language, is undoubtedly effective and encourages our new gener-

ation to take pride in their mother tongue."

Local officials in Faryab emphasized the strengthening of the authentic Turkmen language and culture during the event and urged people to resist the invasion of foreign cultures.

Shamsuddin Mohammadi, Director of Information and Culture of Faryab, said, "All people have a religious, national, and Afghan duty to consciously resist the invasion of foreign cultures and prevent these cultures from affecting our rich traditions and customs."

Meanwhile, several young people and cultural figures in Iran, Turkey, Pakistan, and Saudi Arabia also celebrated Turkmen Language Day and emphasized the preservation and continuation of the authentic Turkmen culture in the country.

## Deputy Minister calls for timely information sharing



KABUL (BNA): In recognition of International Day for Universal Access to Information, Muhajer Farahi, the Deputy Minister for Publications at the Ministry of Information and Culture, reiterated the duty of government spokespersons to ensure that information and data are made available to the public promptly and accurately.

World Day for Universal Access to Information,

and enhanced communication between government entities and media organizations, the information-sharing process has seen considerable improvements. Government spokespersons are now mandated to provide relevant information from their respective departments to the media in a timely and structured manner.

Farahi further explained that a dedicated directorate within the Ministry of Information and Culture has been actively working to facilitate access to information. This directorate has organized multiple seminars aimed at improving coordination between government spokespersons and the press, thereby fostering a stronger and more efficient relationship over time.

The Deputy Minister

stressed that, just as the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan remains committed to upholding its promises to the media, media institutions should continue their activities while respecting Islamic values, national interests, and Afghan cultural traditions.

Additionally, the Directorate of Access to Information had earlier organized an explanatory session regarding the decree issued by the esteemed Supreme Leader of IEA that outlines the duties of spokespersons.

The decree stipulates that all spokespersons within the Islamic Emirate are required to effectively communicate the policies, achievements, and activities of their respective ministries and departments, in alignment with the operational guidelines.

observed annually on Saturday, aims to emphasize the right to access information. The Deputy Minister Farahi noted in an interview with Bakhtar News Agency that media operations across Afghanistan are functioning smoothly and that significant progress has been made in addressing previous challenges to accessing information.

He highlighted that through targeted seminars

## Farmers struggle with lack of market in Kabul



KABUL (TOLONews): Farmers who have brought their products from various provinces to Kabul for sale are complaining about the lack of a suitable market.

The farmers told TOLONews that low prices, high transportation costs, and the absence of a market have posed significant challenges for them.

Jan Agha, who brought his melons from Kunduz to Kabul, said he spent over 50,000 Afghani on his land but has not yet recovered the money due to the lack of a market.

Jan Agha told a TOLONews reporter: "The cost of transporting each 7 kilograms of melons is 30 afghani, and now it sells for 40 afghani; only 10 afghani remain for us. This amount does not even cover the costs of our year-long labor. We sell the large melons for 90 afghani and the smaller ones for 40 afghani, which leaves us with no profit."

Habibullah, another farmer from Kunduz, said: "Watermelons sell for 40 or 50 afghani in Kabul, which does not cover our expenses. There are many problems along the way, and the Ministry of Agriculture makes promises to us but does not fulfill them."

Some farmers criticize the challenges they face in exporting agricultural products, adding that the lack of a market and high costs have prevented them from even recovering the transportation costs of their products to Kabul.

Mohammad Ghayas, another farmer, said: "We don't have a proper market for our agricultural products.

Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan, but unfortunately, those countries do not buy from us. Pakistan, which does buy from us, has problems; customs duties are high, and the routes are closed."

Another farmer, Ismail, said: "They should solve our problems and save us from these challenges. The problems we face when transporting products, from high rental costs to rough roads, prevent us from even recovering our expenses."

Meanwhile, the Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation, and Livestock talks about efforts to provide facilities and create a market for agricultural products.

Misbahuddin Mustaeen, the spokesperson of the Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation, and Livestock, told TOLONews: "The Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation, and Livestock is trying to work with traders to increase the export of agricultural products so that farmers can earn more income from selling their products."

This comes as some farmers say that this year, due to the lack of markets both inside and outside the country, the shortage of cold storage facilities, and other trade challenges with neighboring countries, a large portion of their produce has spoiled.

## Afghanistan embassy closed

KABUL (Pajhwok): An expected development, Afghanistan's embassy in London has been closed.

The embassy closure comes after the interim government severed relations with the diplomatic missions set up by the former Afghan government.

A notice displayed on the gate to the consular section read: "The embassy of the Republic of Afghanistan is closed." But Afghanistan's flag was still flying.

Earlier in the month, Afghan ambassador Zalmi Rassoul had announced the embassy would close "at the official request of the host country".

But a Foreign Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) spokesperson insisted: "This decision was not made by the UK government."

The spokesperson said: "The State of Afghanistan decided to close the embassy in London and dismiss its staff. We continue to support the people of Afghanistan and provide humanitarian assistance to those most in need."

Although it has not recognised IEA, London says there is "no alternative to engaging pragmatically with the current administration of Afghanistan".

## 320 shoe manufacturing factories operating



HERAT (TOLONews): Local officials in Herat have told TOLONews that there are currently 320 small and large shoe manufacturing factories operating in this province, producing up to 50,000 pairs of shoes daily.

Among these factories, there are ten large industrial shoe manufacturing plants that have recently started their operations in Herat.

Abdul Wahab Amini, the head of the Shoe Manufacturers Union in Herat, told TOLONews: "50,000 pairs are produced daily. If the shoe industry is supported, it could reach up to 200,000 pairs per day."

Imports of shoes from neighboring countries have negatively impacted the business of local shoe

manufacturers.

However, statistics show that shoe production in Herat has increased by ten percent compared to last year.

Mustafa Darwishi, the head of one of the shoe manufacturing factories, said: "When foreign products enter the country, their prices are very low. The customs duty is low, and sellers sell them cheaply. If the customs duty is increased, their prices will rise, and as a result, we will also be able to earn a living."

Mohyiddin, an employee at a shoe manufacturing factory, said: "Shoes come in large quantities from other countries like Iran, Pakistan, and China, and this causes our work to weaken."

More than 4,000 people

are employed in shoe manufacturing factories in Herat.

These individuals have become skilled workers by learning the craft of shoe production.

Ghulam Habib, an employee at a shoe manufacturing factory, told a TOLONews reporter: "We are not dependent on the people of the country; we work here. We produce boots in winter and slippers in summer."

In recent years, nearly seventy shoe manufacturing factories in Herat have ceased operations due to the import of shoes from abroad.

In the shoe production workshops in Herat city, various types of men's, women's, children's, spring, and winter shoes are produced.

## Minister affirms Special Forces' resolve to protect Afghanistan's sovereignty

KABUL (BNA): The Acting Minister of National Defense affirmed the unwavering commitment of the nation's military to safeguard Afghanistan's security and independence during the graduation ceremony of the Special Forces Brigade. 947 commandos completed intensive training and graduated in a formal ceremony held at the Special Forces Command Training Center. Mawlawi Mohammad Yaqoob Mujahid, the Acting Minister, lauded the Special Forces as an unyielding and formidable defense against those who threaten the country and its Islamic system. He emphasized that, armed with modern equipment and specialized training, these forces stand ready to counter any threat to Afghanistan's security and sovereignty. The newly trained commandos, in full advanced military gear, demonstrated their skills with tactical displays, showcasing their strength and readiness to defend the nation's values.



# Nepal floods and landslides kill 66 people

KATHMANDU (Reuters): At least 66 people have been killed in Nepal since early on Friday as persistent downpours triggered flooding and landslides, closing major roads and disrupting domestic air travel, officials said on Saturday.

The death toll could rise, they added, with another 69 people reported missing, and 60 injured since Friday morning, home ministry official Dil Kumar Tamang told Reuters. Rain-related disasters are common in South Asia during the monsoon season from June to September, but experts say climate change is increasing their frequency and severity.

Large swathes of Nepal have been inundated since Friday, prompting disaster authorities to warn of flash floods in multiple rivers. "So far, there are 59 dead, 36 wounded and 44 missing," Nepal police spokesman Dan Bahadur Karki told AFP. Karki said more than 200 incidents of

flood and landslides have been reported and that the toll was likely to increase further.

Rivers around the capital Kathmandu burst their banks, inundating nearby houses. Survivors were seen standing on top of buildings or wading through murky waters to get to safety. Basanta Adhikari, a spokesman for Nepal's National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Authority, said authorities were working to rescue and get relief to those impacted by the floods.

More than 3,000 security personnel were deployed to assist rescue efforts with helicopters and motorboats. Rescue teams were using rafts to pull survivors to safety. Landslides have blocked several highways, leaving hundreds of travellers stranded. "We have around eight locations, all of them have been blocked due to landslides in different sections of the

road," said Kathmandu traffic police officer Bishwaraj Khadka.

All domestic flights out of Kathmandu were cancelled from Friday evening, affecting more than 150 departures. The summer monsoon brings South Asia 70% to 80% of its annual rainfall. Monsoon rains from June to September bring widespread death and destruction every year across South Asia, but the numbers of fatal floods and landslides have increased in recent years.

Experts say climate change has worsened their frequency and intensity. A landslide that hit a road in Chitwan district in July pushed two buses with 59 passengers aboard into a river. Three people were able to escape alive, but authorities managed to recover only 20 bodies from the accident, with raging flood waters impeding the search. More than 220 people have died in Nepal in rain-related disasters this year.

## Skirmishes stops in Kurram

F.P. Report

PARACHINAR: District Administration has succeeded in halting skirmishes and ongoing firing between rival tribal groups in all areas of district Kurram.

According to Deputy Commissioner District Kurram, Javaid Ullah Mehsud, skirmishes between fighting tribal groups in Peewar, Trimengal, Kunj Alizai Maqbal and Para Chamkani Kurman have been stopped with the help of local elders, Jirga members, law enforcers and district administration.

He said that fifty persons have been killed and 120 injured in firing between warring tribal groups during last eight days. He said that personnel of police and security forces have been deputed on the post of rival of groups.

Deputy Commissioner said that firing started between rivals on construction of a post eight days back ensuing skirmishes in various areas of district Kurram. He said that efforts would be made with the help of local elders to maintain peace in the area. District administration said that heavy weapons were used in fighting that claimed lives of fifty persons and injuring 120. Local elders of Turi tribe including Jala Hussain and Tajamul Hussain and elders of Bangash tribe, Malik Fakhar Zaman and Haji Salim Khan have urged people to play role for establishing lasting peace in district Kurram. Member National Assembly of the area, Hamid Hussain has also advised people to remain calm and join hands to establish peace and serenity in Kurram.

## Hafiz Naeem sticks to 29th protest plan

F.P. Report

HYDERABAD: Jamaat-e-Islami Emir Hafiz Naeemur Rehman said on Friday protests would be held all over Pakistan on Sept 29 (Sunday).

"First we went for shutter-down strike, now we will go for a wheel-jam strike," he warned the government while addressing a rally in Hyderabad. "Look at the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI)... after the arrest of their leader the party is divided. They want to run political parties as one-man show, but Jamaat-e-Islami has proper electoral setup," he added.

"We are running the movement for restoration of democracy and supremacy of constitution. It is our responsibility to make the young people independent and we are already running the movement of 'Haq do Hyderabad' successfully," said Naeem. "We cannot forget the people of Gaza. It's been a year that they are fighting a war and they haven't surrendered yet. As many as 45,000 people - 30,000 women and children among them - have been killed," said the JI Emir.

He reprimanded the leaders who were "eager to accept Israel" and asked them to come out for Palestine cause on Oct 7. "Whether it be the government of form 47 or 45, we have to accept it and talk to it. We must ask the government to spare one hour and lead people to speak up for Palestine," he emphasised. He also asked students to come out of their institutions to show solidarity with Palestinians. "The rulers who burdened us with illegal power bills should compensate consumers of power distribution companies. We will fight their case with full force," said Naeem.

## 9 injured of Swabi blast under treatment

F.P. Report

SWABI: Police and hospital sources on Saturday informed that a total of 33 injured of a blast in City police station, Swabi including policemen, detainees and passersby were shifted to different hospitals, of whom 24 have been discharged while nine were still under treatment.

According to police and hospital sources, 12 injured were brought to Bacha Khan Medical Complex and Shah Mansoor Hospital Swabi, of whom one succumbed to injuries and six were discharged.



KATHMANDU: Security force members use an inflatable raft to bring residents to safety from a flooded area near the bank of the overflowing Bagmati River following heavy rains in Nepal.

# Blinken again urges diplomacy as Israel strikes Beirut

NEW YORK: US Secretary of State Antony Blinken has reiterated that the United States believes diplomacy is the best path forward as Israel continues to bombard Lebanon, pushing the region into a worsening crisis.

Speaking to reporters in New York, the top US diplomat said the Middle East and the world faced "a precarious moment". "The choices that all parties make in the coming days will determine which path this region is on, with profound consequences for its people now and possibly for years to come," Blinken said.

"The path to diplomacy may seem difficult to see at this moment, but it is there and in our judgement, it is necessary," he added. "We will continue to work intensely with all parties to urge them to choose that course." Blinken's remarks came just hours after the Israeli military launched a series of air strikes on the southern suburbs of the Lebanese capital, Beirut, against what it said was Lebanese group Hezbollah's "central headquarters". At least six people were killed and more than 70 others were injured in the attacks on the Dahiyeh area, according to the Lebanese Health Ministry, in what witnesses described as an "unprecedented" assault that flattened six residential buildings.

The death toll is expected to rise as

rescue crews dig through the rubble.

The attack followed days of Israeli bombings across southern and eastern Lebanon that have killed hundreds of people and displaced tens of thousands. The uptick in violence came after months of firings across the Lebanon-Israel border between Israeli forces and Hezbollah. The Lebanese group said it began launching rockets into northern Israel in solidarity with Palestinians under Israeli bombardment in Gaza.

The US, France and other countries presented a Lebanon ceasefire proposal this week amid the recent surge in violence, but it was almost immediately rebuffed by Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. Netanyahu told the United Nations General Assembly earlier on Friday that Israel would fight until "total victory", stressing that his government would not stop until displaced Israeli citizens can return to their homes in the north of the country.

Critics have lambasted the US administration for failing to use its leverage to pressure Israel - the country's top Middle East ally - to end its attacks both in Lebanon and in the Gaza Strip. For months, experts have warned that Israel's war on Gaza, which began in October of last year and has killed more than 41,500 Palestinians to date, risked spilling over into a wider regional conflict.

But US President Joe Biden's administration has rejected calls to condition aid to Israel to try to secure a ceasefire in Gaza or prevent further escalation in Lebanon. Washington provides \$3.8bn in military assistance to Israel annually, and Biden has authorised additional weapons sales to the country as the Gaza war drags on. His administration has also provided diplomatic backing for Israel amid international condemnation over its Gaza offensive and recent bombings in Lebanon.

Against that backdrop, Mohamad Elmasry, a professor at the Doha Institute for Graduate Studies, said Blinken's remarks on Friday were "pretty predictable". "He's got a very narrow playbook, so he repeats a lot of the same things," he told Al Jazeera. Elmasry also questioned whether the US government truly valued diplomacy, given its unwillingness to pressure Israel. "The US is not at all serious about peace and diplomacy. I think that the US would prefer it if it were possible, but it's not very high on the US's priority list," he said. "If it were high on the priority list, they would have exercised leverage over Israel many, many months ago. But they've refused to do that." — Aljazeera

# 9 dead in migrant boat shipwreck off island

MADRID (AFP): A boat carrying migrants capsized off Spain's Canary Islands overnight, killing at least nine and leaving 48 missing, the national maritime rescue service said on Saturday. Eighty-four people were on board and 27 were saved after rescuers responded to a distress call received shortly after midnight from off El Hierro, one of the islands in the Atlantic archipelago, a statement said.

This follows the death of 39 migrants in early September when their boat sank off Senegal while attempting a similar crossing to the Canaries, from where migrants hope to reach mainland Europe. Thousands of migrants have died in recent years setting off into the Atlantic to reach Europe onboard overcrowd-

ed and often dilapidated boats. The latest tragedy "again underlines the dangerousness of the Atlantic route," Canaries regional president Fernando Clavijo wrote on X.

"We need Spain and the EU to act decisively in the face of a structural humanitarian tragedy" as lives are lost "meters from Europe's southern border," he added. In late August, Spain's Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez visited Mauritania and The Gambia to sign cooperation agreements to crack down on people smugglers while expanding pathways for legal immigration. As of August 15, 22,304 migrants had reached the Canaries since the start of the year, up from 9,864 in the same period the previous year. Almost 40,000 migrants

entered the Canaries in 2023, a record on course to be broken this year as easier navigation conditions from September tend to lead to a spike in crossing attempts. The Atlantic route is particularly deadly, with many of the crowded and poorly equipped boats unable to cope with the strong ocean currents. Some boats depart African beaches as far as 1,000 kilometers (620 miles) from the Canaries. The International Organization for Migration, a UN agency, estimates that 4,857 people have died on this route since 2014.

Many aid organizations say that is a massive undercount, with Caminando Fronteras, a Spanish NGO that aids migrants, saying 18,680 have died trying to reach Europe.

# 17 killed in mass shooting in South African town

JOHANNESBURG: Seventeen people, including 15 women, have been killed in two houses in close proximity to each other in a rural town in South Africa, according to the police. A search was under way for the suspects, national police spokesperson Athlenda Mathe said in a statement on Saturday.

The shooting took place on Friday night in the town of Lusikisiki in Eastern Cape province in southeastern South Africa. Video released by police showed the shooting occurred at two houses in the same neighbourhood, which is a collection of rural homesteads on the outskirts of the town. Twelve women and a man were killed in one house and three women and a man were killed in the other house, police said. Four women, one man and

a two-month-old baby survived.

Local media reported that the people were attending a family gathering at the time of the shooting, but the motives for the killing remains unknown. Police minister Senzo Mchunu told a media briefing on Saturday that a team of detectives and forensic experts had been deployed. "We have full faith and confidence in the team that has been deployed to crack this case and find these criminals. Either they hand themselves over or we will fetch them ourselves," Mchunu said.

"We do not know the motive" and "we do not know if there is one or several suspects on the run", national police chief Fannie Masemola said on SABC public television. South Africa, a country of

62 million, recorded 12,734 homicides in the first six months of this year, according to official crime statistics from the police. That is an average of more than 70 a day. Firearms are by far the biggest cause of death in those cases. Mass shootings have also become increasingly common in recent years, sometimes targeting people in their homes. Ten members of the same family, including seven women and a 13-year-old boy, were killed in a mass shooting at their home in the neighbouring KwaZulu-Natal province in April 2023. Firearm laws are reasonably strict in South Africa, but authorities have often pointed to the large number of illegal, unregistered guns in circulation as a major problem. — Aljazeera

# Pakistan terms India's allegations baseless

NEW YORK: Responding to India at the debate titled 'Leadership for Peace' and held under the United Nations Security Council (UNSC), Permanent Mission of Pakistan to the UN termed New Delhi's allegations against Pakistan baseless and misleading.

"India continues to peddle a false narrative on this forum, relying on tactics of denial, distortion and deflection," Pakistan Counsellor Gul Qaiser Sarwani stated. India continued to sponsor terror activities not against just Pakistan but also in other countries, he said, adding that for decades, India had been the primary perpetrator, supporter and financier of terrorism.

Referring to Indian intelligence agency, Research and Analysis Wing (RAW), as a terrorist franchise, he said it had gone global with assassinations and attempted murders of political dissidents on North American soil. Earlier this month,

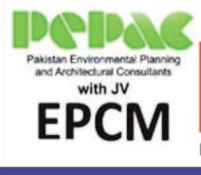
General Counsel of pro-Khalistan group Sikhs for Justice (SFJ), Gurpatwant Singh Pannun, through his attorneys, had filed a civil lawsuit in the US Federal District Court against the Government of India and senior RAW officials for their "unprecedented attempt to assassinate a US citizen on US soil".

Legal action has been initiated at United States District Court, New York, by Pannun and his lawyers against the Indian government and senior officials of Indian intelligence agency - namely, Ajit Doval, Samant Goel, Vikram Yadav and Nikhil Gupta. The complaint alleged that senior officials at India's spy agency RAW, which report directly to India's Prime Minister Narendra Modi, engaged weapons trafficker and RAW agent Nikhil Gupta to hire assassins in the US to murder Pannun in New York. This scheme was foiled when the hitmen Gupta hired

turned out to be undercover federal agents.

The Pakistan counsellor said India's sponsorship of terrorist organisations such as Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) and the Balochistan Liberation Army (BLA) had led to the loss of thousands of innocent Pakistani lives. Sarwani said Pakistan had shared irrefutable evidence of India's involvement in terrorism with international community.


"The arrest and conviction of Kulbhushan Yadev, a serving Indian naval officer and an operative of India's intelligence agency RAW, is irrefutable evidence of India's state sponsored terrorism against Pakistan including targeted assassinations," he said. "India must end its state sponsored terrorism, cease its illegal occupation of Jammu and Kashmir and fulfil its obligations under international law," the counsellor demanded. — Agencies



**Better planning, Better urban life**

**Public Notice**

Published Under section 17(1) of the Land Use and Building Control Act, 2021



### To solicit suggestions/ opinions/ objections on the draft master plan (2024-2044) of Peshawar City

The Land Use and Building Control Authority of the Local Government Election & Rural Development Department (LGE and RDD) Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa has undertaken a significant initiative by developing a comprehensive Master Plan for the Planned growth of Peshawar City. This master plan aims to comprehensively address a range of critical urban issues, including Housing, Public Transport, Environment, Water Supply, Sanitation & Solid Waste Management, Industry & Trade, as well as the Conservation of Agricultural land and Cultural Heritage.

In this regard, the Urban Policy Unit (UPU) of the Planning & Development Department of Govt Khyber Pakhtunkhwa has developed a comprehensive master plan for Peshawar city by hiring well-reputed and experienced consulting firms (PEPAC and Associates). The draft of the Peshawar Master Plan 2024-2044 is available on the UPU website: [www.urbanpolicyunitgkp.pk](http://www.urbanpolicyunitgkp.pk) for public scrutiny.

In order to further improve the proposed Master Plan, the Land Use and Building Control Authority requests the general public, Government, Semi- Government, Non-Government, and Civil Society Organizations, and Private Sector Institutions, to send their suggestions opinions/ objections (if any) to UPU by letter, email [pdmasterplan@gmail.com](mailto:pdmasterplan@gmail.com) (WhatsApp 0334-9157932) within 15 days of the publication of this Public Notice for consideration.

**All representations shall be reviewed and accordingly incorporated in the proposed draft Master Plan (2024-2044) of Peshawar City.**

**For more details please contact:**

**Mr. Adnan Salim**  
Project Director, Master Plan Project (MPP), Urban Policy and Planning Unit (UPU), Planning and Development Department, Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

**Tel No: 091-9330301 Email: [pdmasterplan@gmail.com](mailto:pdmasterplan@gmail.com)**

**Address: House # 37-D, Circular Lane, University Town Peshawar, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa**