

**BNP-M Senator resigns**  
**F.P. Report**  
QUETTA: Balochistan National Party (BNP) senator Qasim Roonjho resigned from his seat on Tuesday. Roonjho submitted his resignation to the secretary Senate. The senator was also BNP-Mengal's parliamentary leader in the House. The BNP chief had demanded resignations from both party senators Roonjho and Senator Naseema Ihsan for voting for the 26th constitutional amendments.

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**Three labourers killed**  
**F.P. Report**  
PARACHINAR: Terrorists on Tuesday killed three laborers in Khoiadkhel area of Central Kurram, police informed on Tuesday. Police said laborers working at a coal mine, owned by Mulla Nabi, were attacked by the terrorists, resulting in the deaths of three laborers. The heartless terrorists killed the laborers by slitting their throats.

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ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif chairing the federal cabinet meeting.

## Tarar brushes aside Opp leader's allegations

**F.P. Report**

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Information and Broadcasting, Attaullah Tarar on Tuesday brushed aside the Opposition Leader's allegations of forced polling during the 26th Constitutional Amendment and exhorted him to manage Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI)'s internal conflict within his party.

He was addressing the sixth meeting of the 10th National Assembly session that commenced with the recitation of Holy Quran. Speaker National Assembly, Sardar Ayaz Sadiq chaired the proceedings. Tarar while responding to Opposition Omar Ayub Khan said the 26th Constitutional Amendment was not done in haste but rather it took two and a half months.

"The Constitutional Amendment Bill was delayed on the request of Maulana Fazal Ur Rehman who demanded to hold it after the SCO summit. It was a consensus-based document with the input of all political parties," he said. The minister while deriding the Opposition Leader's accusations underlined the fact the two clauses of the Amendment Draft were removed on the objections of the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) members and agreement was met on the Constitutional Amendment.

He said that the decision of party voting on the Amendment Bill was to be made by the Parliamentary Leader in his or her parliamentary party's meeting which was not participated by the Opposition Leader's party members. "These were four people who were identified by the media sitting in the press gallery which could be verified through photographic evidence. They were independent members and cast their votes as per their will and were not bound to the directions of the Parliamentary Leader," Minister Attaullah Tarar said.

The minister claimed that he had met all four members of the National Assembly from the Opposition Benches who had confirmed that they had attended the meeting on their own will and voted as per their conviction. Tara alleged that the PTI was facing internal conflicts, whereas its members in the Lower House of Parliament had participated in the Constitutional

Amendment process on their will.

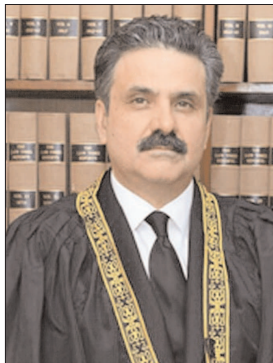
"The PTI had bargained on the amendment bill and got their demands approved. The Opposition Leader should handle his party conflicts within their house as his party has disintegrated into four groups that are fighting among each other on the floor of the House. He should have accountability within his party," he said. Earlier, Opposition Leader, Omar Ayub Khan at his point of order apprised the Speaker that allegedly unknown individuals had entered the premises of the National Assembly in the uniform of Sergeant at Arms which should be probed by the committee formed by the Speaker comprising sergeants and the Assembly staff.

The Opposition Leader said that he would provide photos of the alleged sergeants and also share them on the social networking site X. Speaker National Assembly, Sardar Ayaz Sadiq rejected the accusations of the Opposition Leader saying, "The press gallery was jam-packed on the day of the Constitutional Amendment passage. Nothing can evade the eyes of media even if erect walls before them they can precisely unearth hidden things," he said.

Meanwhile, Federal Minister for Information, Broadcasting, National Heritage and Culture Attaullah Tarar offered Fateha for the soul of the late mother of Ashiq Hussain Sheikh, Director General of the Internal Publicity Wing, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting.

Expressing his heartfelt condolences to DG IP Wing Ashiq Hussain Sheikh, he noted that there is no substitute for a remarkable person like a mother. The minister described her passing as an irreparable loss and a profound shock to the bereaved family. He prayed to Allah Almighty to grant eternal peace to the departed soul and to provide the family with the strength to endure this loss with fortitude. Also present at the occasion were Prime Minister's Media Coordinator Badr Shahbaz Waraich, Federal Information Secretary Ambrin Jan, and Principal Information Officer Mubasher Hassan.

## Committee picks Justice Yayha Afridi as next CJP



**F.P. Report**

ISLAMABAD: The Special Parliamentary Committee, constituted for the first time in the country's history for the appointment of Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP), has agreed on the name of Justice Yayha Afridi's as the next chief top judge of the country, Planning Minister Ahsan Iqbal said.

Justice Afridi, third on the seniority list, has been nominated by the committee members with two-thirds majority. The development came after first round of in-camera meeting of the parliamentary panel comprising government and opposition members held on Tuesday, at room no 5 of the Parliament House. However, the members belonging to the opposition Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI)-backed Sunni Ittehad Council (SIC) skipped the meeting, prompting the committee members to meet again tonight.

## Bilawal pays tributes to Nusrat Bhutto

**F.P. Report**

ISLAMABAD: Chairman of Pakistan People's Party (PPP) Bilawal Bhutto Zardari has paid glowing tribute to Madar-e-Jamhooriat Begum Nusrat Bhutto, acknowledging her exceptional contributions and unparalleled sacrifices in the struggle for democracy, justice and equality in the country.

In a statement on the occasion of her 13th death anniversary, he expressed profound reverence for Begum Nusrat Bhutto's unwavering dedication to the democratic cause. "Begum Bhutto is a symbol of selfless sacrifice, having given everything in the pursuit of democracy. Her courage and determination in the face of relentless challenges are a testament to her extraordinary legacy," he said.

Bilawal Bhutto highlighted that Madar-e-Jamhooriat Begum Nusrat Bhutto's influence goes beyond politics. She stood as a beacon of resistance against dictatorship and oppression, guiding Pakistan through some of its darkest days. "Begum Bhutto's leadership during times of intense personal and political adversity is a source of enduring inspiration. The history of Pakistan's political struggle is incomplete without her name," he added.

He emphasized that Begum Nusrat Bhutto's tireless efforts to uphold democratic values and protect the rights of the people continue to guide the PPP's mission for a progressive and inclusive Pakistan. "On this occasion, the PPP reaffirms its commitment to the principles that Madar-e-Jamhooriat dedicated her life to.

instructions, he said they should remain peaceful and carry out the movement in a political way. On voting by some of the PTI-backed parliamentarians in favour of the legislation, Gandapur said those who "backstabbed" the PTI founder would be thrown out of the party.

Names of those who sold their votes had surfaced and the party would issue a show-cause notice to them, he said. "It has established now that my decision to not give ticket to Mubarak Zeb was right. Mubarak Zeb betrayed the party by using the PTI founder's picture," he stated.

## Amend: Gandapur warns of countrywide protests

**F.P. Report**

PESHAWAR: Without giving a date, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister Ali Amin Gandapur on Tuesday said he would lead the PTI nationwide protests against the recent constitutional amendment.

Addressing the media persons in Peshawar, Gandapur said the PTI did not accept the constitutional tweaks focused on judicial reforms. "The amendment is an onslaught on independent judiciary. We will raise our voice against this 'illegitimate' tweaks to the Constitution," he said, vow-

ing that his party would revoke the amendment. Through this legislation, he alleged, the incumbent rulers would get judges of their choice appointed for favourable verdicts. The KP chief minister said his party would continue the protest until they got rid of the incumbent government, which was taking decision in their own interests rather than for the masses.

"Our workers are united and I will lead the protests, which will be extended to the entire country. We will block whole Pakistan," he said. Giving the party workers

# The Frontier Post

**F.P. Report**

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Tuesday said that the 26th Constitutional Amendment Bill passed by the parliament with a two-thirds majority would prove to be a milestone for the country's political and economic stability and public welfare.

The prime minister, addressing the meeting of the federal cabinet he chaired, said the new legislation would surely bring ease for the common man who had to suffer owing to inordinate delays in seeking justice. Besides, he said the 26th constitutional amendment, passed following an in-depth consultation among the ruling coalition and opposition parties, was also an accomplishment of the vision of the Charter of Democracy signed by Shaheed Benazir Bhutto and Mian Nawaz Sharif in 2006.

He said the tireless efforts led to the successful legislation which also manifested a true spirit of consultation. Prime Minister Shehbaz thanked the leadership of the supportive political parties including President Asif Ali Zardari, Bilawal Bhutto Zardari of PPP, JUI-F's Maulana Fazlur Rehman, Muttahida Qaumi Movement, National Party, Awami National Party, Balochistan Awami Party and, also the independent candidates for their vote.

The prime minister also congratulated on the successful holding of the 23rd meeting of the SCO Council of Heads of Government (CHG) in Islamabad, which he said had uplifted Pakistan's image. Holding the summit despite challenges with terrorism and security on top, was a great success for the country, he said and appreciated the efforts by the ministries of foreign affairs, information and broadcasting, and interior, law enforcement agencies, police, Pakistan Rangers, Pakistan Army and intelligence agencies.

Also appreciating the Capital Development Authority for beautifully adorning the federal capital on the occasion, he said the prime ministers of China and Russia had specifically

## Premier for immediate relief aid to Palestine, Lebanon

**F.P. Report**

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif directed the authorities concerned to immediately dispatch two plane-loads of relief goods to Gaza and Lebanon and called for using both land and aerial routes for the aid supply. The prime minister, chairing a meeting to review the relief activities for Palestine and Lebanon, asked for improving coordination with Pakistan's ambassadors in Palestine, Lebanon, Jordan and Egypt to ensure a better supply of relief goods. Stressing for an accelerated pace of relief aid, he called for ensuring that the relief goods reached the deserving people.

Prime Minister Shehbaz reiterated his appeal to the countrymen and the expatriates to donate generously to the PM Fund Fund for Gaza and Lebanon with Account No. IBAN:PK11SBPD0000001111114292. He also instructed the relevant authorities to run an awareness drive to acquaint the people with the Relief Fund established by the government. In the briefing on the relief activities, the prime minister was told that relief goods including winter tents, clothes, blankets, medicines and eatables were being dispatched for the people suffering the Israeli barbarism in Gaza and Lebanon. It was told that the Israeli attacks and siege were impeding the supply of relief goods to the affected areas. The meeting was told that the government would also facilitate the NGOs desiring to send relief aid to Gaza and Lebanon. Federal ministers Ahsan Iqbal, Ahad Khan Cheema, and Attaullah Tarar, Minister of State Shiza Fatima Khawaja, Special Assistant to PM Tariq Fatemi, chairmen of the Higher Education Commission, and National Disaster Management Authority and senior officers attended the meeting.

**Shehbaz seeks report on surge in polio cases; calls for emergency strategy:** Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif sought a report on the growing number of polio cases in the country and directed the authorities concerned to immediately formulate a comprehensive strategy on the matter.

The prime minister, chairing a meeting of the federal cabinet, expressed his concern over the surge in polio cases and called a meeting to discuss the situation. Discussing the 26th Constitutional Amendment Bill recently passed by the parliament, the prime minister said the legislation was inevitable for judicial reforms and improvement of judicial system. Expressing his gratitude to the political parties and leadership for their support, he said the amendment was also the accomplishment of the vision of Charter of Democracy, signed in 2006. The prime minister also thanked for the successful holding of the 23rd meeting of the SCO Council of Heads of Government and appreciated the performance of the departments involved.

lauded the beauty of Islamabad. He also mentioned the "successful" bilateral visit of Chinese Premier Li Qiang - after a hiatus of 11 years - which led to the further strengthening of the bilateral relationship. The prime minister highlighted the improving national economy with inflation down to 6.9% and the declining policy rate.

Coming to the unabated Israel's barbarism in Gaza and Lebanon, he

said the resolution of the UN Security Council and the rulings by the International Court of Justice had been thrown into the "dustbin of history." Reiterating his appeal for donations to the PM Relief Fund on Gaza and Lebanon, he said the government was working on a comprehensive plan to send relief supplies to Gaza and Lebanon as a committee was working under Planning Minister Ahsan Iqbal.

## Putin seeks to rival West with Brics summit

MOSCOW (AFP): Two dozen world leaders gathered in Russia on Tuesday for the opening of a three-day summit of the Brics group, an alliance of emerging economies that the Kremlin hopes will challenge Western "hegemony". With the summit, the biggest such meeting in Russia since it ordered troops into Ukraine, President Vladimir Putin is seeking to show Western attempts to isolate Moscow over the two-and-a-half-year offensive have failed.

Chinese leader Xi Jinping, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan — all key partners for Russia — are scheduled to join the gathering, hosted in the western city of Kazan from October 22 to 24. Putin, Modi and South African President Cyril Ramaphosa have already arrived in Kazan, Russian media reported, while Chinese state broadcaster CCTV said Xi had landed.

Moscow has made expanding the Brics group — an acronym for core members Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa — a pillar of its foreign policy. The main issues on the agenda include Putin's idea for a Brics-led payment system to rival SWIFT, an international financial network that Russian banks were cut off from in 2022, as well as the escalating conflict in the Middle East.

The Kremlin has touted the gathering as a diplomatic triumph that will help it build an alliance to challenge Western "hegemony". Ahead of the meeting, Modi praised what he called the "special and privileged strategic partnership" between Moscow and New Delhi, and said issues including climate change would be on the agenda. The United States has dismissed the idea that Brics could become a "geopolitical rival" but has expressed concern about Moscow flexing its diplomatic muscle as the Ukraine conflict rages.

Moscow has been steadily advancing on the battlefield in eastern Ukraine this year while strengthening its ties with

China, Iran and North Korea — three of Washington's adversaries. By gathering the Brics group in Kazan, the Kremlin "aims to show that not only is Russia not isolated, it has partners and allies," Moscow-based political analyst Konstantin Kalachev told AFP.

The International Criminal Court (ICC) issued arrest warrants for Putin in 2023 over the illegal deportation of children from Ukraine, and the Russian leader abandoned plans to attend the previous summit in ICC member South Africa. This time round, the Kremlin wants to show an "alternative to Western pressure and that the multipolar world is a reality," Kalachev said, referring to Moscow's efforts to shift power away from the West to other regions.

Putin is set to individually meet Modi and Xi as well as the leaders of South Africa and Egypt on Tuesday, followed by separate talks with Erdogan and Iran's President Masoud Pezeshkian on Wednesday. UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres is also undertaking his first trip to Russia since April 2022 to attend the summit. He will sit down with Putin on Thursday, according to a programme shared by Ushakov.

Ahead of the summit, AFP journalists in the city reported heightened security measures and a visible police presence. The surrounding Tatarstan region, which is some 1,000 kilometres (620 miles) from the border with Ukraine, has previously been hit by long-range Ukrainian drone attacks. Movement around the city centre is being limited, residents advised to stay home, and university students moved out of dormitories, local media reported. The West believes Russia is using the Brics group to expand its influence and promote its own narratives about the Ukraine conflict. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky has warned other countries could feel emboldened if Putin wins on the battlefield in Ukraine.

## US pressures India for quick accountability in Sikh separatist murder plot

WASHINGTON (Reuters): US officials have told their Indian counterparts they want a speedy result and more accountability after their investigation into Indian involvement in a foiled murder plot against a Sikh activist in the United States, according to a US official.

An Indian Enquiry Committee visited Washington last week to discuss India's own investigations after the Justice Department alleged an Indian intelligence official had directed plans to assassinate dual US-Canada citizen Gurbatwant Singh Pannun, a Sikh separatist, last year. "We've communicated really clearly that the US government isn't going to feel fully satisfied until we see that meaningful accountability takes place," said a US official who declined to be named. "We have been emphasizing that we hope that India will move as quickly as possible through their inves-

tigative process."

The Indian embassy in Washington did not immediately respond to a request for comment. Washington's message to Indian officials has not been previously reported. Last week, an unsealed indictment showed that the United States had charged Vikash Yadav, described as a former officer in India's Research and Analysis Wing spy service, with directing the plot against a Sikh separatist in New York City.

The indictment alleged that beginning in May 2023, Yadav, described as an employee of the Indian government at the time, worked with others in India and abroad to direct a plot against Pannun. The accusations have tested Washington's relations with India, which the Biden administration sees as a potential counterbalance to China's ambitions in the Indo-Pacific.

"India remains an incredibly important and valuable strategic partner," the US official said. "We also have to have trust and an ability to work through very difficult issues like this transparently." India has labeled Sikh separatists as "terrorists" and threats to its security. Sikh separatists demand an independent homeland known as Khalistan, which would be carved out of India. An insurgency in India during the 1980s and 1990s killed tens of thousands. Pannun, the Sikh separatist, has alleged that Yadav was a "mid-tier soldier" assigned the task of organising the assassination by higher-level Indian officials. India has said little publicly since announcing in November 2023 it would formally investigate the allegations, and it has separately continued a diplomatic dispute with Canada over the June 2023 assassination of another Sikh leader.





# CM inaugurates Rs6bln uplift projects across city

KARACHI (APP): Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah inaugurated approximately worth of Rs6 billion major infrastructure and energy projects across the city during a five-hour visit.

Murad said that these initiatives are aimed at enhancing the city's recreational facilities, road infrastructure, and energy sustainability.

Accompanied by his cabinet members Sharjeel Memon, Nasir Shah, Saeed Ghani, Haji Ali Hassan Zardari, and Waqar Mahdi, the chief minister left CM House and inaugurated two road projects, two solarisation projects, and a football ground at Manzoor Colony, the constituencies of MNA Asad Alam Niazi, Saeed Ghani, and Deputy Speaker Anthony Naveed.

The CM inaugurated three crucial road projects in Districts West and Central. The reconstruction of Mirza Adam Road, a 1.6 km dual carriageway, was completed for Rs 901 million. This road, which connects Sher Shah Chowk to Mirza Adam Khan Road, includes a stormwater drainage system to prevent flooding.

The Café Piyala Road, a 4.05 km dual carriageway linking Sakhi Hassan to Rashid Minhas Road, was constructed for Rs 9.753 million. This route provides easier access to important healthcare facilities, such as Cardio Hospital and Mamji Hospital. Shahrah-e-Noor Jahan Road, another significant project, now offers a 6.1 km main dual track and a 4.35 km dual service track, construct-

ed for Rs 3,367.735 million. This road will ease traffic flow through North Nazimabad and North Karachi, providing a vital alternative to Shahrah-e-Sher Shah Suri.

Solarization of Key Public Buildings: In a move towards sustainable energy, the CM inaugurated solar energy projects at Dow University Hospital, Ojha Campus, and Central Jail Karachi. Dow University Hospital has been provided with 2.32 MW of solar power, part of a Rs 290 million project that is expected to generate significant savings over the next 25 years. Twelve key hospital buildings, including the OT ward and digital library, have been equipped with solar panels.

Similarly, Central Jail Karachi now benefits from a 614.8 KW solar energy system, with surplus energy being sent to the KE Grid under net metering regulations. The project, costing Rs 216 million, will pay for itself within three years and is expected to generate annual savings of Rs 64.26 million. These initiatives reflect the Sindh government's commitment to improving infrastructure and embracing renewable energy, which will benefit the people of Karachi in the long term. Shaheen Football Ground and Park Rehabilitation: One of the key projects inaugurated was the newly rehabilitated Shaheen Football Ground and Park in Manzoor Colony, District East. The project, which cost Rs 213 million, was part of the CLICK schemes for the finan-

cial year 2022-23.

Spread over 5.5 acres, the football ground features seating for 400 spectators, a clubhouse with modern amenities, and a fully lit playing area. The adjoining family park, covering 2.04 acres, includes walkways, a children's play area, and upgraded facilities for visitors. A newly constructed road and rehabilitated boundary wall complete the project. During the inauguration at Manzoor Colony, the Football ground event turned into a public meeting, which the chief minister addressed.

Addressing a public meeting at Shaheen Football Ground, the Chief Minister announced that his government has launched a 400 MW solar power project, with the solar project in Karachi being in an advanced stage. He said that his government would not rely on NTDC for the evacuation of solar power from the Solar Park being established at Manjhahd, and would instead lay a provincial transmission line.

Additionally, 50 government buildings were provided with solar energy in the first phase of solarization, and in the second phase, Dow University Hospital, Ojhal, and Central Jail Karachi have been solarized today. "Both projects are expected to recover their investment cost within two years," he said and added that the government has also initiated a project to provide home solar systems to 200,000 households and is working on a 400 MW solar power system at Keejhar Lake.



KARACHI: Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah meets with Iranian Consul General Mr. Hassan Nourian at CM House. —APP Photo

## CM Punjab visits home of "Apni Chhat, Apna Ghar" beneficiary

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif visited the under-construction home of Subiya Munir, a beneficiary of the "Apni Chhat, Apna Ghar" program at Kot Lakhpat Andron Pindi Rajput, here on Tuesday.

During her visit, the chief minister observed the lantern slab installation process on the three-marla plot, where the walls have already been constructed. "Alhamdulillah, the work of installing lantern slab on the first house under the 'Apni Chhat, Apna Ghar' program has begun," she stated.

Subiya Munir was overwhelmed with joy upon meeting the CM, expressing her heartfelt gratitude.

CM Maryam Nawaz embraced Subiya and congratulated her, while Subiya's daughters, Tayyaba and Ayesha, pre-

sented flowers to the Chief Minister. CM Maryam Nawaz also handed Subiya Munir the second cheque of her loan installment and directed relevant authorities to provide essential household furniture.

The CM encouraged Subiya to educate her daughters, assuring her that the Punjab government would cover their educational expenses. "Muhammad Nawaz Sharif is very happy to see your home and sends many prayers and greetings," she added. Expressing her own joy, she said, "Seeing your house being built under the loan scheme brings me happiness as if my own home is being constructed. A personal home is a right for every citizen; I am not doing anyone a favor."

Subiya Munir informed the CM that she purchased the plot but struggled finan-

cially to build the house. "Thanks to Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif, my dream of having a roof over my head is being fulfilled," she said. She also shared that she received the loan cheque on October 2 and began construction within fifteen days, with plans for a drawing room, bedroom, attached bathroom, and kitchen within the three marla space.

Subiya expressed her gratitude, saying, "After seeing the advertisement, I applied through the portal and received the loan. Alhamdulillah, my house will be completed in a few months. I send heartfelt prayers for Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif."

The chief minister praised the construction team and urged them to work diligently. Subiya Munir, a single parent, works as a decorator in an event management team.

## Palestinian artists organized theater

KARACHI (APP): On the 27th day of the 38-day "World Culture Festival Karachi," organized by the Arts Council of Pakistan Karachi, a theater workshop titled "Cultural Resistance from Palestine" was held at the Haseena Moin Hall. Palestinian artists Ahmed Tobasi and Zoe Lafferty led the workshop, teaching acting techniques to students passionate about theater.

The artists emphasized the importance of self-identity in creating societal change, stating that individuals cannot bring about significant transformation unless they recognize themselves. Students learned new acting techniques, warmly welcomed the Palestinian artists. The enthusiastic participation of a large number of students reflected their deep interest in the arts.

## Continuous learning essential for judicial officers: DG PJA

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Judicial Academy (PJA) Director General, Justice (ret'd) Sardar Ahmad Naeem on Tuesday emphasised the importance of continuous learning for judicial officers.

Speaking at the inaugural session of the third six-day training course on the analysis of revenue documents, here, DG Sardar Ahmad Naeem underscored that judicial officers must stay updated on the latest legal developments to effectively fulfill their duties, highlighting the significance of the training programme.

He noted that renowned teachers with extensive experience in legal education and training had been invited to lead the programme. The training course would cover complex topics such as the analysis of revenue records, he added.

Advisor PJA/Director Admin, Hafeez Ullah Khan, Director Program Mansoor Ahmed Khan, Director Research Ms. Bushra Zaman, Director Training Ms. Irum Ayaz, and Senior Instructors of the Academy, including Mehmood Azam, Ms. Ayesha Khalid, and Muhammad Khalid Khan, were also present on the occasion.

Thirty judicial officers, including civil judges, senior civil judges, and additional district and sessions judges, were participating in the third batch of training program. The course would conclude on October 26 and includes a literary session for the participants, featuring prominent personalities from across the country.

The Punjab Judicial Academy remains committed to providing high-quality training to judicial officers to enhance their skills and knowledge.



ISLAMABAD: Governor of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Kundi called on by Ambassador of Hungary in Pakistan H.E. Bela Fazekas.

## Minister reviews preparations for birthday celebrations of Baba Guru Nanak

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Minister for Minorities Affairs Sardar Ramesh Singh Arora chaired an important meeting at the Home Department to review the arrangements for the 555th birthday celebrations of Baba Guru Nanak Dev Ji, here on Tuesday.

Secretary of Home Punjab Noorul Amin Mengal provided a detailed briefing on the security arrangements for Sikh pilgrims.

According to the details, over 80,000 Sikh pilgrims from around the world are expected to participate in the celebrations in Punjab from November 14 to 23. During this time, the pilgrims will visit Gurdwara Janam Asthan Nanakana Sahib, Farooqabad, Sheikhpura, Hassan Abdal, Kartarpur, Aimanabad, and Lahore.

Addressing the meeting,

Provincial Minister Ramesh Singh Arora instructed representatives from all relevant departments to make such excellent arrangements for the Sikh pilgrims that they return shouting "Pakistan Zindabad." He emphasized that this is a great opportunity to project a positive image of Pakistan, and all administrations should dedicate themselves to this cause.

The minister stressed that security, transportation, medical, and food arrangements must be exemplary. He stated that this is a matter of Pakistan's dignity, and therefore, no negligence should be tolerated. He urged all departments concerned to ensure timely completion of arrangements to provide the best facilities for the Sikh pilgrims. Home Secretary Mengal directed Deputy

Commissioners and District Police Officers from all relevant districts to complete arrangements with the assistance of other security agencies, leaving no loopholes. He emphasized the importance of ensuring a safe and comfortable journey and accommodation for the pilgrims.

He stated that all departments must be on the same page and ensure compliance with government directives, adding that all pilgrims are guests of Pakistan and should be treated with utmost respect. The meeting was also attended by Special Secretary of Home Punjab Fazal-ur-Rehman, DIG Operations Punjab Waqas Nazir, Additional Secretary for Minorities Affairs, Deputy Commissioners, District Police Officers, and representatives from all security agencies.

### E.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Additional Deputy Commissioner (R&HR) Uzma Mukarram visited Hamza Foundation Welfare Thalassemia Center and Blood Transfusion Services Peshawar, on Tuesday.

ADC Peshawar Uzma Mukarram was warmly welcomed by Founder Chairman Ijaz Ali Khan, Dr. Tariq Khan, Engr. Hamza Ejaz and Dr. Kashmala Shah. One of the Thalassemia Major kid

Imran has presented bouquet to the chief guest.

Ijaz Ali Khan and Dr. Tariq Khan gave detail briefing to the chief guest about different welfare activities of the organization and she visited different sections of the organization and met with Thalassemia and Hemophilia patients and their parents.

On that occasion Respected madam Uzma Mukarram said that such a pleasure visiting the Hamza Foundation Thalassemia Centre and Hospital in

Peshawar.

The Foundation is doing a remarkable job under the able leadership of Ijaz Ali.

Organizations like Hamza Foundation play a crucial role in providing essential healthcare services and support for thalassemics and hemophiliacs patients. The work of dedicated individuals and organizations in this field is truly invaluable. On that occasion Founder Chairman Ijaz Ali Khan presented shield of HF to the chief guest.

## Proposals for regularization of housing schemes reviewed

LAHORE (APP): Various aspects of regularization of illegal housing schemes were reviewed during a meeting of the special committee formed by Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif, held under the chair of Local Government Minister Zeeshan Rafiq at the Civil Secretariat, here on Tuesday.

Co-convenor of the committee, Minister for Agriculture and Livestock Syed Ashiq Hussain Kirmani, Senior Member Board of Revenue Nabeel Javed, Director General LDA Tahir Farooq, Special Secretary Local Government Ms Asia Gull and others attended the meeting. SMRB Nabeel Javed gave a briefing on regularizing the commercial use of agricultural lands.

Minister Zeeshan Rafiq said that Chief Minister

Maryam Nawaz Sharif had directed to propose measures regarding illegal schemes. He expressed his determination that the Punjab government will ensure the protection of public rights in private housing schemes. He figured out that preparation of effective master plan was necessary before approval of housing schemes. He asserted that administrative and environmental problems arise due to establishment of illegal schemes. It is important to regularize illegal housing societies so that maximum facilities can be provided to the residents dwelling there, he said.

The minister noted that delay in approval of housing schemes by government agencies also creates complications. The minister directed the DG LDA to review the introduction of

one-window operation in the Deputy Commissioner's office in this regard.

The meeting also reviewed the proposal to reduce the number of departmental NOCs for LDA schemes. The minister said that the deficiencies in the current procedure will be eliminated through the forming authority at the provincial level. He said that the facilities given in the master plan of the housing schemes shouldn't be changed later on.

Minister for Agriculture and Livestock Syed Ashiq Hussain Kirmani said that apart from Lahore, a systematic procedure must be devised in other districts as well. Earlier, Director General LDA Tahir Farooq gave a presentation on various aspects to the committee.

## 10 guards injured as students attack security staff

LAHORE (APP): As many as 10 security guards of Punjab University have been injured in an attack by activists of some students groups outside Institute of Education and Research here on Tuesday.

The Punjab University spokesperson said that the students attacked the university guards with glass bottles, stones and sticks which caused serious injuries to the heads and other parts of the body.

He said that the before their rally, student organisations had assured that

they would not involve themselves in provocative speeches.

He said that some students gave their speeches according to the SoPs, but the last student started a very provocative speech.

He said that the head of the student organisation was immediately informed by the security staff about the provocative speech but he did not intervene. Upon which, the spokesman said, the guards took the student aside for making a provocative speech and meanwhile the stu-

dents attacked the guards.

Punjab University Vice Chancellor Dr Muhammad Ali took strict notice of the incident and strongly condemned the attack on the guards. The VC also issued instructions for the best treatment of the injured security guards. The PU VC has directed strict action against students involved in the hooliganism in the light of the eyewitnesses and videos. The spokesman said that some elements are trying to disturb the peaceful atmosphere of the university.

38%. The Information Minister said the "Fitna Party" called for protests in 26 districts, but only 40 to 50 people gathered in 11 districts. Whenever the "Fasad Party" calls for a protest, they faced failure, she added.

She said the Punjab government was filing cases against vehicles emitting smoke and those burning crop residues to combat smog. Controlling the winds was challenging, but the Punjab government was taking all possible measures to keep the environment clean.

She further stated that the PTI had crossed all limits of hypocrisy regarding the 26th Amendment. They were present in the parliamentary committee; if they did not intend to participate, why did they provide their names? The Disruption Party withdrew their names under pressure, she added.

## PTI and hypocrisy go hand in hand: Azma

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Information Minister Azma Bokhari said that PTI and hypocrisy go hand in hand.

At a press conference at the DGPR, she said following Punjab, the people of KP had also rejected the "Fitna Party". "The local elections in KP are sufficient to awaken the PTI. In Punjab, food prices are the lowest compared to other provinces. There has been a significant reduction in not only inflation but also crime in Punjab," she added.

She mentioned that "Apni Chat Apna Ghar" was the flagship program of the Punjab government. "Those building their homes are receiving 1.5 million rupees. Maryam Nawaz not only makes promises but also follows through on them.

In Kot Lakhpat, a woman who was paying 23,000 rupees for a one-room

rent has now started building her own home. Seeing the construction, the Chief Minister looked as happy as if it were his own home," she added.

Azma Bokhari noted that a separate department had been established in Punjab to monitor the prices of essential food items round the clock, keeping the government informed about supply and demand.

"The Chief Minister has taught other provinces how the 'Sasti Roti' is important for people. The Chief Minister personally monitors the bidding in markets, resulting in the lowest prices for potatoes, tomatoes, onions, milk, and lentils in Punjab," she said.

She reported that crime in Lahore had decreased by 43%, adding that motorcycle thefts were down by 34%, car thefts by 29%, robberies by 47%, kidnappings by 80%, and murders by



### PUBLIC NOTICE

### AUCTION OF GOLD

Branch: Mingora Auction Date: 28-10-2024 Branch code: 0026 Time: 10:00 AM

Finance facilities were extended by Mobilink Bank against the security of deposit and pledge of gold to the customers mentioned below. The customers who have neglected and failed to repay the finance extended to them by Mobilink Bank along with the markup thereon.

Customer Name	CNIC #	Address	Gold Weight (GM)	Detail of Gold Ornaments
Javed Khan	15602-0669105-3	Puladiram Post Office, Khawaza Khaila, Swat	50	1 Adad Necklace
Umar Zeb Khan	15602-0738129-7	Tarokay Post Office, Totano Bandai Qalagay, Swat	26.1	1 Adad Necklace, 1 Jorra Bali

Notice is hereby given to the customers in above mentioned that if payment of entire outstanding amount financed along with markup is not made by them to Mobilink Bank within 1 day of the publication of this notice, Mobilink Bank shall auction the gold ornaments and no further Public Notice shall be issued to call upon the customers to make the payments.



# KPIC acknowledges RTI advocates with awards

**F.P. Report**

PESHAWAR: Aiming to promote citizen's participation in governance and to make the public institutions more transparent through citizen participation, the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Information Commission (KPIC) in collaboration with non-governmental organizations namely Centre for Peace & Development Initiatives and Centre for Governance & Public Accountability arranged a consultative session titled 'Reflecting on the Achievements and Shaping the Future', here at a local hotel in Peshawar on Tuesday.

Chief Information Commissioner KPIC, Mrs. Farah Hamid Khan along with Ex-Commissioners of KPIC, Commissioner RTS, Public Information Officers (PIOs) of various government departments, members of civil society organizations, journalists, and students in a large number participated in the said consultative session. Taking recommendations and suggestions from the participants was the main objective of the session.



The highlight of the ceremony was the presentation of RTI Awards in various categories to acknowledge outstanding efforts to individuals who have championed the cause of transparency and public interest through the practice of Right to Information (RTI) laws.

Public Servant Category: Mr. Abdul Qayum Khan, Assistant Director, Elementary and Secondary Education Department, was recognized with the RTI Award in the Public Servant Category. His dedication and facilitation of citizens in accessing information under RTI laws have significantly contributed to transparency and accountability in the

region.

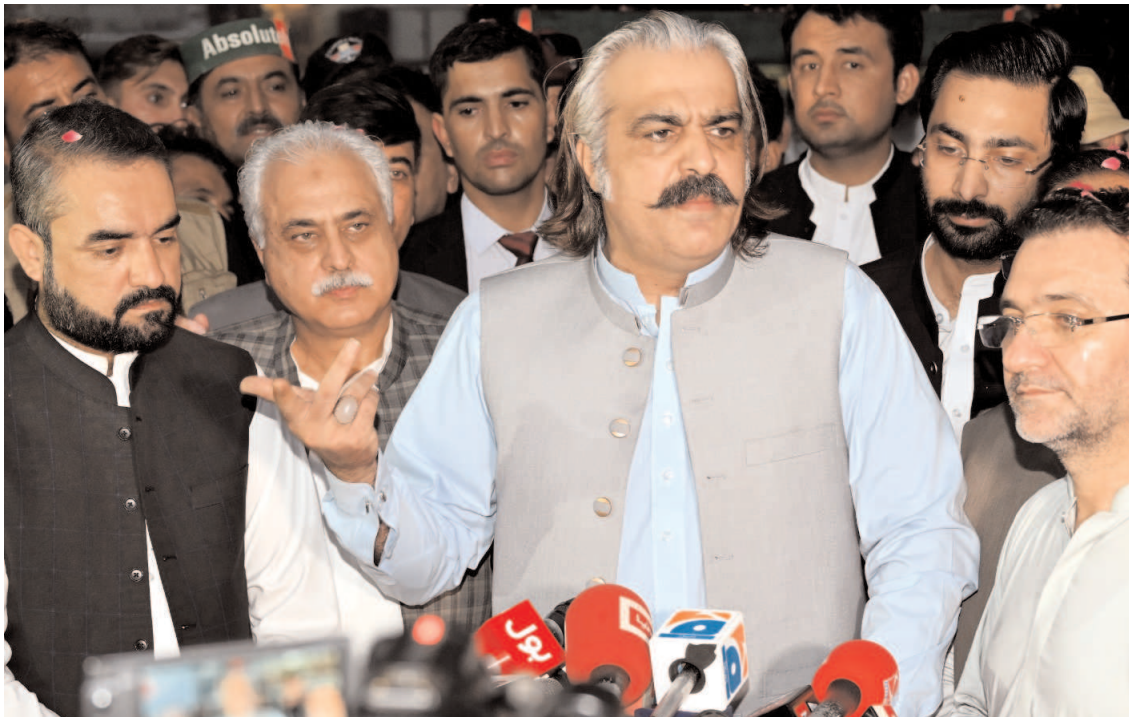
Journalist Category: In the Journalist Category, Musaarat Ullah Jan was honored with the RTI Award. His commitment to investigative journalism and reporting in the public interest has set a high standard in the field. Musarrat Ullah Jan's unwavering dedication to investigative journalism under RTI law has shed light on critical public interest issues, furthering the cause of transparency.

Citizen Category: Ahmed Ilyas, hailing from district Hangu was awarded in the Citizen Category for his exemplary practice of RTI laws to address public interest issues, demonstrating that ordinary citizens can make a significant impact when armed with the right to access information.

The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Information Commission, through this ceremony, not only celebrated the International Right to Information Day but also reaffirmed its commitment to promoting transparency, accountability, and public interest in the region. The awardees serve as role models for others to follow, encouraging the responsible use of RTI laws for the betterment of society.

Addressing to the participants Mrs. Farah Hamid Khan said that citizens being tax payers are the real owner of institutions-held information. "Institutions will be more transparent if citizens use their constitutional right of access government-held information. As Right to Information (RTI) empowers them to keep eyes on institutions in managing public affairs" Mrs. Farah added.

KPIC welcomed suggestions from the consultative session, and pledged to take measures for further improvement.



PESHAWAR: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister Sardar Ali Amin Khan Gandapur talking to media here on Tuesday.

## Spiders beat Panthers in PPC Media Cricket League

**F.P. Report**

PESHAWAR: In the ongoing RMI Media Cricket League, organized by the Peshawar Press Club with the collaboration of DHA Peshawar and RMI two more matches were decided. The first match of the league held at the Gymkhana Cricket Ground was played between PPC Spiders and PPC Panthers. The Panthers won the toss and opted to bat first scoring 83 runs for the loss of five wickets. Kamran played a brilliant knock scoring 53 runs with five boundaries and one six. Wahid took three wickets for 17 runs. In reply the Spiders chased down the target with the loss of four wickets. Wahid Khan after impressing with the ball shone with the bat as well scoring 29 runs with three sixes. Waqar contributed 20 runs while Khyber's Waqar added 16 runs. Zahid Imdad took two wickets for the Panthers. Wahid Khan was awarded the Man of the Match for his all-round performance. Senior journalist Zahir Shah Shirazi who was the chief guest presented the Man of the Match award along with the Chairman of the Sports Committee Abid Khan.

In the second match PPC Eagles won the toss and opted to bat first posting 127 runs for the loss of two wickets in the allotted overs. Zarshed played a magnificent innings scoring 67 runs with the help of eight sixes. The other openers Zahir Shah Shirazi scored 26 runs which included four boundaries. Together they added 95 runs for the first wicket. Arif Ikram and Bilal took one wicket each. In reply PPC Bulls also put up a strong batting display scoring 107 runs in the allotted overs but fell short by 20 runs. Adnan played an outstanding unbeaten innings of 68 runs which included eight sixes and four boundaries while Arif Ikram added 18 runs. Zarshed and Hussain Tanoli took one wicket each. Zarshed was awarded the Man of the Match for his brilliant performance.

## Saif flays passage of 26th Amend without KP representation

**F.P. Report**

PESHAWAR: Barrister Dr. Saif, Advisor to the Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa for Information and Public Relations has stated that a constitutional amendment has been passed in the Senate without the representation of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, raising serious questions. He emphasized that passing such a significant amendment without the representation of a major province is highly questionable.

While discussing the passing of the 26th Constitutional Amendment in the National Assembly and Senate, Barrister Dr. Saif said that even the constitutional benches formed as a result of this disputed amendment will not be able to resolve the issue. He added that passing an amendment through an incomplete parliament is a strange phenomenon that no one seems to understand.

# Meeting of task force for polio eradication held

**F.P. Report**

PESHAWAR: The Provincial Task Force for the eradication of Polio convened here on Tuesday at the Civil Secretariat Peshawar to assess the ongoing polio eradication efforts in the province. Chief Secretary Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Nadeem Aslam Chaudhary presided over the meeting.

The meeting was attended by relevant administrative secretaries, senior officials from law enforcement agencies, the Coordinator of the Emergency Operations Center (EOC), and representatives from international aid organizations including UNICEF and the World Health Organization (WHO). Commissioners, Deputy Commissioners, District Health Officers and officials from the National Emergency Operations Center (NEOC) Islamabad participated via video link.

During the meeting, the Special Secretary of Health and the Coordinator of the

Provincial Emergency Operations Center (PEOC) briefed the participants on the current situation of polio in the province.

The meeting reviewed the progress made on the decisions taken during the previous Task Force meeting.

The Chief Secretary conducted a comprehensive analysis of the implementation status of the decisions taken in previous meetings. The Chief Secretary directed to ensure strict implementation of the protocols during the polio vaccination campaign and emphasized accountability for any lapses in this regard.

The Chief Secretary underlined the importance of accurate and comprehensive data, stating that 100% data accuracy is crucial for eradicating polio. He called for strengthening the surveillance system to ensure reliable and timely information for decision-making.

Addressing the emergence of polio cases in certain districts, the Chief

Secretary highlighted the need for thorough research and investigation into the root causes. The Chief Secretary directed to deploy all necessary resources to contain the further spread of the virus.

Additionally, the Chief Secretary called for a revival of public awareness campaigns. He urged the establishment of user-friendly systems to facilitate the public in getting their children vaccinated at health facilities and hospitals. To ensure the quality of services, he committed to personally visiting medical centers to inspect the vaccination processes.

The meeting also highlighted the introduction of the "District Score Card" to regularly monitor the performance of districts in the polio eradication campaign. The Chief Secretary praised this initiative, as well as the findings from the household social surveys, which are aimed at evaluating the effectiveness of house-to-house visits conducted by polio teams.

# KP Food Authority concludes 7-day mobile food testing drive

**F.P. Report**

PESHAWAR: The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Food Safety and Halal Food Authority successfully concluded its seven-day free mobile food testing campaign, during which 848 samples of various food items, including milk, water, oil and ghee, spices, vinegar, black tea, salt, and beverages, were tested free of charge.

A spokesperson for the Food Authority shared details of the campaign, stating that food safety teams, under the directives of Minister for Food, Zahir Shah Toru and Director General of the Food Authority, Wasif Saeed conducted the seven-day testing campaign across all divisions of the province. The spokesperson revealed that a total of 848 samples were collected and tested on-site using mobile food testing laboratories. A total

of 255 samples were collected from the Peshawar Division, followed by 121 from Mardan, 81 from Bannu, 63 from Dera Ismail Khan, 55 from Kohat, 110 from Hazara, and 163 from the Malakand Division.

Out of the 848 samples, 664 were found to be satisfactory, while 184 were deemed substandard. The breakdown of samples tested included 332 samples of milk, 156 of water, 30 of beverages, 49 of spices, 78 of tea leaves, 78 of oil and ghee, and 22 of salt.

The public and businesses involved in the food industry widely appreciated the initiative of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Food Authority, with many calling for such campaigns to continue in the future.

Director General of the Food Authority Wasif Saeed commended the efforts of the food safety

teams for the successful completion of the campaign. He emphasized that more testing drives and crackdowns would be carried out to further enhance food safety standards in the province.

Minister for Food Zahir Shah Toru, also praised the food safety teams for their performance and reiterated the provincial government's commitment to provide safe and quality food to the public. He highlighted that seven mobile food testing labs are currently operational in the province, with five more to be activated soon.

The minister further noted that the Food Authority's static laboratory in Hayatabad continues to test milk using modern MilkoScan machines, as part of efforts to upgrade the authority's testing capabilities using the latest scientific methods.

# First public sector hospital KTH conducts 1000 Bariatric surgeries

**F.P. Report**

PESHAWAR: On the 22nd of October 2024, the main auditorium of Khyber Teaching Hospital was filled with joy and celebration as the 1,000 Lives Transformation Surgeries success was commemorated. The distinguished Chief guest of the event was Mr. Ihtisham Ali, Health Advisor to CM-KP. In his address, he expressed gratitude to the Surgery Department and the Management for the invitation. He emphasized the government's unwavering commitment to prioritizing healthcare and education. Mr. Ihtisham Ali pledged to address various hospital issues, such as completing the new BOG team, procuring essential resources, recruiting necessary staff, and establishing district-level hospitals to alleviate the patient burden on facilities like LRH, HMC, and KTH. He also lauded the dedication of Prof. Zarin and his teams, announcing

intentions to organize an international event to honor Prof. Zarin's remarkable achievement.

Even though unable to attend in person, Dean Khyber Medical College, Prof. Dr. Mahmud Aurangzeb, conveyed his appreciation through an online video message. He commended Prof. Zarin and his team for their dedication to achieving this significant milestone. Prof. Dr. Mahmud Aurangzeb highlighted the global history of Bariatric Surgery spanning four decades and expressed pride in bringing this advanced technology to Khyber Teaching Hospital, citing the fantastic results.

Chairperson of the Surgery Department at KTH, Prof. Mah Muneer, offered congratulations to the Surgery Department for this remarkable feat. He stressed the importance of prevention over cure and hinted at an upcoming event to celebrate the transformation of 2,000 lives. Expressing delight at the

remarkable achievement, Prof. Dr. Muhammad Ayaz Khan congratulated the department and urged the Mr. Ihtisham Ali to allocate funds to address the shortage of Human Resources and procure necessary equipment and materials.

The esteemed Laparoscopic and General Surgeon, Prof. Dr. Mohammad Zarin, expressed appreciation for the support of the Dean KMC, the Chairperson of the Surgery Department, and the Management. He underscored the pride in realizing their vision through dedication and commitment to achieving their goal, at last, he requested Mr. Ihtisham Ali to fund the establishment of the Dedicated Bariatric Surgery Unit at KTH and include surgeries on 'Sehat Sahulat Card' for vulnerable people.

Additionally, Prof. Dr. Imran Marwat emphasized the profound impact of life-changing surgeries in curing obesity-related dis-

eases. He credited the collaborative efforts of various departments including Anesthesia, Cardiology, Endocrinology, Pulmonology, Psychiatry, and Medicine in making this miracle possible. Prof. Dr. Imran Marwat extended his admiration to Prof. Zarin and his talented team for their exceptional teamwork.

After the successful completion of the event, Assistant Professor Dr. Nisar Ahmad expressed his gratitude and recognition for the individuals whose efforts and support were instrumental in making the event a reality, marking it as a proud moment for the entire KTH Family.

Following the conclusion of the event, a cake-cutting ceremony was held to commemorate this significant accomplishment. The ceremony was attended by consultants, faculty members, staff, and students, further enhancing the celebration of this remarkable achievement.

# Seminar on World Polio Day highlights role of healthcare professionals and medical students in eradication initiatives

**F.P. Report**

PESHAWAR: In recognition of World Polio Day, Khyber Medical University (KMU) hosted a seminar to underscore the pivotal role of healthcare professionals and medical students in the ongoing Eradication Initiative Peshawar. The event, organized by the District Emergency Operation Centre (DEOC) Peshawar in collaboration with KMU Institute of Public Health and Social Sciences, Pakistan Polio Eradication Programme, Public health Association KP and the Pakistan Pediatric Association Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, aimed to raise awareness about the importance of eliminating preventable diseases like polio.

The seminar attracted a large audience, including students, faculty members, and healthcare professionals, who shared their perspectives on disease prevention and public health. Dr. Khalid Rehman, Director of the KMU Institute of Public Health and Social Sciences (IPH&SS), emphasized the vital role of healthcare professionals in ensuring effective coordination between public health bodies, medical students, and communities to combat polio. He highlighted that sustained efforts, especially in high-risk areas, are crucial to achieving long-term health goals.

Dr. Saima Abid, President of the Pakistan Healthcare Association (PHA) and Head of Community Medicine at Pak International Medical College (IMC), acknowledged the key contributions of medical students in public health campaigns. She urged students to take an active role in community health initiatives and deepen their understanding of disease prevention to help create a lasting impact on Pakistan's healthcare system.

# Resilience building in our society

**TO protect society from the risk of radicalisation, violence, and destabilisation, resilience against extremism is essential. Even if radical beliefs are still prevalent around the world, building resilience is essential to stopping the rise of violent extremism and advancing societal cohesion, peace, and stability.**

Resilience against extremism is a comprehensive strategy that strengthens communities' capacity to resist and recover from its effects while addressing the root causes of extremism. It goes beyond solving security issues and debunking exaggerated rumours. Resilience-building initiatives seek to enable people and communities to reject violence and extremism while promoting tolerance and critical thinking through community empowerment, education, youth involvement, and inclusive governance.

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) has to be resistant to extremism due to the region's history of conflict, unrest, and extremist activity. Given its border region status and complex

**Kamran Khan**

sociopolitical landscape, KP has been particularly vulnerable to radical groups and ideologies.

To create resilience against extremism in KP, a comprehensive plan that addresses the underlying causes of radicalisation, promotes community empowerment, and strengthens social cohesion must be developed. In KP, resilience-building initiatives work with local communities, religious authorities, and civil society organisations to refute extremist narratives, address grievances, and foster a sense of identity and belonging based on harmony, tolerance, and common values.

It is through inclusive governance, economic opportunity, and education that KP can fortify its resistance against extremism. Many states have countered this problem from sectarian violence in Netherlands to drug cartels in Philippines.

The Brussels neighbourhood of Molenbeek, Belgium, came to the attention of the world after the 2015 Paris terrorist attacks as a hub for radi-

calization and recruitment to extremist groups. The terrorist organisations in South Africa are an example of these groups. Singapore also faced similar challenges but effectively countered it with P/CVE and deradicalisation programs.

Denmark's Community-Based Rehabilitation Programme, the Strong Cities Network (SCN), and the Tunisian Strong Cities Network are examples of community-based strategies used to combat violent extremism. Denmark's Aarhus model focuses on early intervention and rehabilitation for those at risk of radicalization, involving collaboration between social services, law enforcement, local government, and civil society organizations.

The SCN has been successful in preventing radicalization and assisting reintegration back into society. In Kenya, the Global Community Engagement and Resilience Fund (GCEF) funds initiatives empowering young people to combat violent extremism. Tunisia's Kairouan has

launched neighborhood-based programs, fostering social cohesion and strengthening resistance to extremism.

Nigeria's CVE programme aims to strengthen community resilience and interfaith engagement in Boko Haram-affected areas. These community-based strategies have shown promising outcomes in bolstering resilience and advancing peace and stability.

In the context of Pakistan, the following case studies of resilience-building initiatives against violent extremism are presented:

Peshawar's Community-Based Counter-Extremism Initiatives.

The Youth Engagement Programme of the National Counter Terrorism Authority (NACTA). The Peace Education Programme of The Edhi Foundation. Karachi's Strong Cities Network (SCN). The women empowerment programs in KP. More programs like these are required to counter extremism and radicalisation in society.

**Writer is Principal Research Officer KPCVE**





## In brief

### Stray dogs injure 11 children F.P. Report

MALAKAND: In Batkhela tehsil of Malakand district, at least 11 children were bitten by the stray dogs, Rescue 1122 informed on Tuesday. The unfortunate incident took place in Sharif Abad Muhalla of Batkhela where stray dogs bit 11 children who were rushed to DHQ Batkhela in injured condition. However, due to unavailability of anti-dog-bite vaccine, they were referred to Saidu Sharif Hospital, Swat. The area people strongly protested unavailability of the vaccine and blocked the main GT Road in Batkhela. When contacted, the MS Batkhela Hospital, Dr Irfan ud Din said the vaccine would be available within 24 hours. He said, condition of all the injured children was out of danger; however, upon the insistence of the parents, the children were referred to Saidu Sharif Hospital.

### Cheques distributed F.P. Report

KOHAT: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Minister for Higher Education, Meena Khan Afridi on Tuesday visited Kohat University of Science and Technology (KUST) and distributed scholarship cheques among students. Member National Assembly, Shahid Khattak, Member Provincial Assembly including Daud Afridi and Shafiullah Jan, Vice Chancellor, Professor Dr. Naseeruddin, faculty members and students were also present. The minister said that the government was working to promote higher education in the province and to improve the standard of education aiming the capacity building of students. He said that the government desired to increase investment in the education sector and adopt the student-friendly policies. He also urged the students to utilize their abilities for the development of the country and to meet the challenges of the contemporary world. He also directed administration of KUST to focus the university ranking, student enrollment and introduce market-oriented subjects for students.

### Police continue operation F.P. Report

D I KHAN: D I Khan police continued their search and strike operation against anti-state and criminal elements to ensure security in the district. The operation was carried out under a special plan in various areas adjacent to City as part of their ongoing efforts to maintain law and order in the area. According to the police spokesman, on the direction of District Police Officer Dera Nasir Mahmood, District Police conducting search and strike operation and snap checking within their respective circles for which they urged masses to extend cooperation. The teams conducted thorough checks and searches, focusing on potential security threats and any illegal activities in the region. The latest efforts reflect Dera police's commitment to combating crime and ensuring the safety and security of the community.

### DHO chairs meeting F.P. Report

KARAK: District Health Department's decision to take coordinated measures to prevent dengue mosquito, DHO gave instructions to immediately spray IRS in all affected houses and raise public awareness about preventive measures.



HYDERABAD: Al-Khidmat Foundation distributing ration to poor Hindu community people.

## Diabetic patients demand provision of insulin

F.P. Report

HAFIZABAD: Patients of Diabetics demanded the Chief Minister Punjab Maryam Nawaz Sharif, Secretary Health and Chief Executive Officer Hafizabad to ensure provision of insulin in all hospitals of the district including DHQ, THQ, RHCs and basic health Units of the district so lives of diabetics could be survived.

Gulzar Chohan and other people said that insulin for diabetic patients is not available in DHG for common people as a result of which a large number of diabetics' patients suffering from difficulties to save their lives. They demanded to ensure provision of insulin at DHQ, THQ Hospitals, RHCs and Basic Health Units for availability of insulin to patients at local level, presently diabetic patients come to DHQ hospital for getting insulin from far flung areas to expend money but they return back with disap-

pointment when DHQ hospital Management refuse to give insulin.

**Kabaddi match held:** Under the auspices of District Sport Department Hafizabad, Istekham-e-Pakistan Kabaddi Match held between Hafizabad and Mandi Bahauddin Teams to express solidarity with Pakistan Army, to promote sports activities in the areas.

DC Abdul Razzaq was chief guest on this occasion while ADCG Hamadullah AC Hafizabad Sohail Riaz, President District Kabaddi Association Hafizabad Shahbaz Ahmad Chadhar and a large number of spectators witnessed the match. Hafizabad Kabaddi team won the match.

Addressing on this occasion, DC said that the Punjab government was taking all possible measures to promote sports and healthy recreational activities in the province. He said that this gathering of spectators in the ground reflected that the whole nation

was standing with Pakistan Army shoulder by shoulder and they proved that they were patriots and peace living nation. At the end of match, prizes were distributed among players and officials.

DC visits RHC: Deputy Commissioner Abdul Razzaq visited Rural Health Centre Jalalpur Bhattian and reviewed pace of work on revamping schemes being completed with the cost of Rs.50m million. He also checked provision of medicines and other treatment facilities being provided to patients in the RHC. He directed the officer of concerned departments to ensure use of quality material in execution of the scheme and complete construction timely.

Later, DC inspected under construction road from Jalalpur Bhattian to Hafizabad. On this occasion, Deputy Director Development Tassawar Abbas gave briefing to the DC about construction of road.

### Jirga to continue protest F.P. Report

BANNU: Former Provincial Minister Syed Hamid Shah has said that Bannu Qaumi Jirga will continue the protest until all the demands are approved.

The release and dismissal of the police officers should be immediately issued rehabilitation orders. They will continue to fight for the rights of the nation until the last drop of blood. They have always fought peacefully to solve national problems.

He expressed these views while addressing the participants of the protest dharna camp set up by Bannu Qaumi Jirga and business organizations at Bannu Police Line Chowk. On this occasion Malik Mamur Khan and other leaders were also present. He said that the provincial government And the district administration is doing the work of inciting the nation by nominating some of the leaders of the National Jirga in schedule four.

Rehabilitate the dismissed officers and release the former police officer and hand them over to the nation because the people of the nation are currently suffering from severe problems and are continuing peaceful protests to get their rights. He said that the government should ensure the immediate implementation of the 16-point demands of the Banu Qaumi Jirga and play a role in redressing the deprivations of the Banu.

### Goods transport strike continue F.P. Report

NEWSHERA: The wheel-jam strike of goods transport entered its second consecutive day on Tuesday in Nowshera causing long queues of heavy vehicles alongside the GT Road. The strike announced by All Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Goods Transport Federation was against heavy and frequent fines, demand for an increase in loading capacity and confiscation of vehicles in the province.

The strike caused long queues of heavy vehicles at Nowshera, Khairabad and Kabul River Bridge where the protesting drivers were blocking the route of vehicles at the joining point of Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The members of the transport association said they will not call off the strike until all their demands are accepted. They also demanded that vehicle fitness certificates should likewise be accepted on all routes of the country.

### Rescue 1122 receives 50% fake calls F.P. Report

BUNER: Rescue 1122 district Buner In-charge Control Room has confirmed that 50% calls are fake and asked public do not engage control room by making fake calls so as to let receive emergency calls. According to the in-charge of the control room, a total of 2764 calls have been received by the control room this week, including 1500 unnecessary calls, 1200 dropped calls and only 64 emergency calls.

## Gujjar tribe demands relaxation in wood cutting for domestic use

F.P. Report

LOWER DIR: The Gujjar tribe demanded the government and high ups of the forest department to relax the forest rules for owners so that they could use its woods for their domestic use. The demand was made during a grand jirga of the Gujjar clan held at Chakdara during which Gujjars from various districts were in attendance. Malik Raza Khan Khatankhil, Engineer Yousuf Zaman, Malik Naseem Jan, chairman of the Gujjar Youth Forum, Malik Umar Khittab, Maulana Muhammad Ishaq Seemab, Ameer Sultan and others spoke on the occasion.

The participants said that the Gujjar tribe had made many sacrifices for the sake of the country and the nation but it had always been neglected in the distribution of national resources. The speakers said that the majority of the Gujjar tribe resided in the mountainous areas of Malakand division and they played a vital role in developing and protecting the forests by living in the mountains, but now the tribe was being forcibly evicted from its forests.

They said the forest department should allow the forest owners to use its timber for their domestic use. The speakers said that through mutual consultation, it would be possible to hold a Gujjar Qaumi Jirga consisting of thousands of people under the leadership of the provincial and central leaders, for which the time and place would be determined soon. They said the Gujjar tribesmen would present their demands from the state regarding all their deprivations.

**One killed:** One Daud Khan 41 s/o Dilawar Khan, a resident of Mian Kalay, was killed when unknown attackers opened indiscriminate firing on him near the Mayor Bridge in the limits of Mayor police station, residents and police said. They said the attackers fled from the crime scene.

The Mayor police reached the spot and collected circumstantial evidence. They said the deceased had an old enemy. The Mayor police registered a case and started further investigations.

**Salt lodization stressed:** The Lower Dir health department arranged a seminar under the Universal Salt Lodization Program at the district health officer's office. The DHO Dr Nisar Khan, TB control programme focal person Dr Noor Hamid, Universal Salt Program's zonal manager Syed Hameed Khan and others spoke on the occasion. They said that iodine was an essential component of the human diet and its deficiency always led to very complicated diseases.

The speakers said that iodine deficiency also affected children's intelligence. They asked community elders, teachers and prayer leaders to play their active role in making the masses aware of the iodine importance.

Meanwhile a function and an awareness walk were held at the Category D hospital Talash regarding malnutrition of mothers and children. The lady health workers, lady health supervisors, officials of the health department and social activists attended the events.

The hospital MS Dr Arshad Ali, DMS Dr Gulzar Khan, district nutrition manager Ahmad Ali, nutrition coordinator Bakht Zarin and others addressed the function.

## Food Authority concludes seven days campaign

F.P. Report

MARDAN: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Food Authority concluded seven-day Mobile Food Testing Campaign wherein 848 Samples of Various Food Items Tested Across the Province? The relevant officials told here on Tuesday that the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Food Safety and Halal Food Authority successfully concluded its seven-day free mobile food testing campaign, during which 848 samples of various food items, including milk, water, oil and ghee, spices, vinegar, black tea, salt, and beverages, were tested free of charge.

The officials while sharing details of the campaign, stated that food safety teams, under the directives of Minister for Food, Zahir Shah Toru and Director General of the Food Authority, Wasif Saeed conducted the seven-day testing across all divisions of the province.

They revealed that a total of 848 samples were collected and tested on-site using mobile food testing laboratories. A total of 255 samples were collected from the Peshawar Division, followed by 121 from Mardan, 81 from Bannu, 63 from Dera Ismail Khan, 55 from Kohat, 110 from Hazara, and 163 from the Malakand Division.

Out of the 848 samples, 664 were found to be satisfactory, while 184 were deemed substandard. The breakdown of samples tested included 332 samples of milk, 156 of water, 30 of beverages, 49 of spices, 78 of tea leaves, 78 of oil and ghee, and 22 of salt. The public and businesses involved in the food indus-

The speakers said that the majority of the poor families did not care about their children's nutrition. They asked parents to feed their children a balanced diet for their overall development.

**Homeopathic practitioners demand isolation of homeopathy council from Tibb Council:** The Pakistan Tibbi Conference Khyber Pakhtunkhwa chapter on Tuesday demanded the federal government to review its decision regarding the merger of Homeopathy Council and Tibb Council. The demand was made during an urgently called meeting of homeopathic professionals held at Chakdara with Prof Hakim Abdul Wahid Shamsi in the chair. Homeopathic practitioners from different parts of the province attended the meeting.

Prof Shamsi, homeo-doctor Badshah Waheed, Hakim Muhammad Zeeshan, Hakim Noor Faqir, homeo-doctor Syed Zamin and others spoke on the occasion.

The speakers complained that the merger of Homeopathy Council (National Council for Homeopathy Pakistan) and Tibb Council (National Council for Tibb) were two separate councils for regulating homeopathic practices. They said the government had decided to merge both of them to take austerity measures without taking homeopathic practitioners into confidence.

They said the merger would badly affect the homeopathic treatment of patients. The speakers alleged the government wanted to abolish homeopathy in the country. They said the government should recognize the importance of both the Homeopathic Council, Pakistan and Tibb Council as both had their separate set up. They said that it was tantamount to deprive the people of cheap homeopathic treatment. They were of the view that the government had made amendments to the Tibb Act, 1965 by merging both the councils.

They said neighbouring India had not only developed Tibb and homeopathic treatment but was still taking steps to strengthen that kind of medical care. They said that patients from other countries visited India to get homeopathic treatment while the government had established several world class Tibb universities in India. The participants demanded the government to review its decision regarding the merger of both the councils and instead take measures for strengthening homeopathy and Tibb in Pakistan.

**Deworming campaign:** The elementary and secondary education department on Tuesday demanded to launch a deworming campaign in all public and private sector schools from Nov. 4. An official of the department told local journalists at Timergara that male and female staff had been provided with adequate training to give deworming tablets to children. He said the campaign would last till Nov 8. He said that 441,000 school going children in Lower Dir would be given deworming tablets at schools.

He said that enough stock of tablets had been provided to the trainees which they would distribute among students of the schools. The official said the campaign was aimed to eradicate the soil transmitted helminths (STH) that affected child growth and intelligence. He said the deworming tablets had no adverse reaction, so the parents and children should not hesitate to take it.

## Commissioner inspects performance of institutions

F.P. Report

KOHAT: Commissioner Kohat Division Syed Motasim Billah Shah along-with the Deputy Commissioner Karak Shakeel Ahmad Jan has under the Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Program Awami Agenda visited various hospitals, Rescue 1122 office, control room and central area of the city last night and inspected their performance.

The Regional Information Office said on Tuesday that on this occasion he ordered disciplinary action against many employees of the Health and Local Government

Department for poor performance, while praising the overall performance of many employees and Rescue 1122 Karak. Commissioner Kohat also gave directions for further improvement in service delivery.

The relatives of the patients in the hospital appreciated the administrative officers for inquiring about their health at midnight and ensuring treatment facilities. Meanwhile, Commissioner Kohat along-with Deputy Commissioner Kohat also visited the Welfare Home Kohat where he was given a detailed briefing by the authorities concerned about

the activities and services of the Welfare Home.

Commissioner Kohat and Deputy Commissioner Kohat deeply reviewed the services and facilities provided to the orphans. He directed the authorities concerned to take immediate steps to improve the quality of life of the orphans. Commissioner Kohat and Deputy Commissioner Kohat also met the children of Sweet Home and promised to provide all possible facilities for their wellbeing. Their care and love put smiles on the faces of the children that showed that the government functionaries are serious about the welfare of the children.

## SBBU holds conference on Sirat-ul-Nabi (SAW)

F.P. Report

LARKANA: Shaheed Benazir Bhutto Medical University (SBBMU) Larkana organized a conference on the Prophet's Muhammad Peace Be Upon Him (PBUH) life. Speaking at the conference, Vice Chancellor Professor Dr. Nusrat Shah said, "Yes, we are lucky," that we got a prophet like the holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) is a teacher, a leader, a prophet and his whole life is a lesson of patience, his whole life is a great example for all of us, by doing it and there is no such example in the history of the world, on Tuesday.

Principal Chandka Medical College Professor Dr. Zameer Ahmad Soomro said that our prophet with his character and character Proved that there is no one like him and there will be no one, the entire life of the Prophet (peace be upon him) is a great example for us, he taught the rights of women, the rights of neighbors, the rights of teachers and the rights of servants, Mufti Abdul Qayyum Arain said in his address to the conference that the

Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) is a mercy to both worlds.

It is not for any jinn or human to describe the life of our prophet, the life of our prophet has been described by God Himself. Maulana Osama Haleji, Professor Shahid Jamal Siddiqui, Director Academic Dr. Shahid Hussain Soomro also addressed the ceremony. In the conference, recitation, Naat-Khwani, speeches and quiz competitions were also organized among the students, as a result of which Dr. Abdul Qadeer in Quran Recitation, Dr. Tayyab Shehbab in Recitation Competition, Dr. Amina Imrani in Speech Competition, Dr. Urijor Rehman in Quiz and got shields. Sheikh, Prof. Abdul Rauf Khaskheli, Vice Principal Chandka Dr. Fauzia Chandio, Dr. Masood Qureshi, Chief Librarian Mumtaz Ali Buriro, Security Officer Sultan Ahmad Bhutto, Adnan Aziz, Zubair Ahmad Leghari and Sajjad Ahmed, and a large number of faculty officers and students. Participated fully.

**Almost seven killed:** Seven people died in vari-

ous incidents and road accidents near Larkana, while more than 5 were injured and were shifted to the hospital for medical assistance. As a result of which two persons, Faiz Muhammad Lark and Amir Kori, were crushed to death on the spot, while the police handed over the bodies of the deceased to their relatives after conducting post-mortem at the local hospital. And as a result of a collision during the crossing of Waya Mori in Changchi rickshaw, a resident of Waya Mori village died while 5 people each Sajid, Zamir Hussain and others were injured.

A high-speed coach going to Karachi ran over the oncoming motorcycle at Indus highway thareri Hashim stop a result of which two motorcyclists, Abdul Majeed son of Barkat Ali Wako and Ali Raza son of Abdul Ghafoor Sheikh resident of resident of Larkana died. The driver of the car overturned near Chawra village as a result of which the driver Gulzar died on the spot while Sohail and Ramchand were seriously injured while the injured were shifted to the hospital with the help of the villagers.

unknown persons armed with daggers entered and attacked my two companions Salman alias Salmaan and Sabir alias Nazika and killed both of them by stabbing them successively with daggers while I ran away in the bathroom out of fear.

According to the eyewitness who escaped after the incident, the attackers did not know the reasons for this double murder the staff of Police Station City registered a case against the unknown accused, the age of deceased Salman is 40 years and the age of Sabir alias Nazika is around 32 years.

**GHSS No.1 principal transfer termed illegal:** The President of School Officer Association District Mardan Noorzada Khaluzai has called the transfer of Vice Principal of GHSS No. 1 Mardan as illegal and political revenge and has said that the provincial government should cancel the transfer immediately and not force the principals to protest.

Otherwise, the principals and teachers of the entire district will come to the streets against this injustice and political interference in the education department, the responsibility of which will be on the provincial government. He expressed these views while talking to journalists in Shergarh. He said that Zafar Ali, Vice Principal of GHSS No. 1, Mardan, was arrested by the Education Department on the request of the local MPA for taking duty from a Class IV employee. High officers were subjected to political revenge or were transferred which is cruelty, injustice and political revenge.





MAPUTA: A protester throws a stone during a nationwide strike called by Mozambique presidential candidate Venancio Mondlane in Mozambique.

## US missile deployment to Philippines important: US

MANILA (AP): The US Army's recent deployment of a midrange missile system to the northern Philippines was "incredibly important" and allowed American and Filipino forces to jointly train for the potential usage of such heavy weaponry in Asian archipelago conditions, a US general said.

The Biden administration has moved to strengthen an arc of military alliances in the Indo-Pacific to better counter China, including in any possible confrontation over Taiwan and other Asian flashpoints. The Philippines has also worked on shoring up its territorial defenses after its disputes with China started to escalate last year in the increasingly volatile South China Sea.

China has vehemently opposed the increased deployment of American combat forces to Asia. But it has been particularly alarmed by the US Army's deployment in April of the Typhon missile system, a land-based weapon that can fire the Standard Missile-6 and the Tomahawk Land Attack Missile, to the northern Philippines as part of joint combat exercises in April with Philippine troops. "What it does collectively, it provides us the opportunity to understand how to employ that capability - the environmental challenges here are very unique to any other place in the region," US Maj. Gen. Marcus Evans, Commanding General of the Hawaii-based 25th Infantry Division, said when asked how the missile system has helped participants in joint com-

bat training in the Philippines.

"Last year, we also deployed long-range fires capabilities with HIMARS and we were able to move those around with fixed-wing aircraft around the archipelago environment," Evans told The Associated Press in an interview in Manila, referring to the High Mobility Artillery Rocket Systems, the truck-mounted launchers, which fire GPS-guided missiles capable of hitting distant targets. "Those are just incredibly important operations because you get to work in the environment, but most importantly, you're working alongside our partners here in the Philippines to understand how those will be integrated into their operations," Evans said without elaborating.

The Typhon missile system was supposed to be flown out of the Philippines last month, but three Philippine security officials told the AP recently that the longtime treaty allies had agreed to keep the missile system in the northern Philippines indefinitely to boost deterrence despite China's expressions of alarm. The Philippine officials spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to discuss the sensitive US missile deployment publicly. Evans flew to Manila to start talks with Philippine army counterparts on holding annual military exercises by the allied forces in the Southeast Asian country next year, particularly the Salaknib drills, which aim to boost the combat-readiness of thousands of American and Filipino troops in

increasingly realistic settings.

"Conceptually, it is scheduled to be a larger, more complex exercise," Evans said adding that there could be joint training maneuvers from the jungles in the northern Philippines to former US military bases in the region. "We're also planning on bringing new equipment to train alongside our Filipino army teammates that last year we did not have," he said without providing details. "Our job is to get 1% better each day alongside our Filipino army teammates in terms of readiness," he said. "Those relationships that are built, the readiness that is developed, should remove any doubt about the importance of our alliances and the work we do here with the Philippine army." Evans and other US Army officials attended a ceremony marking the anniversary of a historic moment in US-Philippine relations when US Gen. Douglas MacArthur fulfilled his promise to return to the Philippines in October 1944 by wading ashore into the coast of central Leyte province to help lead the liberation of the country from Japanese occupation forces.

Evans and his men laid a wreath in an austere ceremony at the American Cemetery in metropolitan Manila, the largest such US World War II cemetery and memorial in the world. The Leyte Gulf ceremony reflected the long history that had bonded American and Filipino forces in war and peace, he said. "That trust was built over eight decades," Evans said.

## Putin gathers allies to show West pressure isn't working

MOSCOW (BBC): Imagine you're Vladimir Putin. The West has dubbed you a pariah for invading Ukraine. Sanctions are aiming to cut off your country's economy from global markets. And there's an arrest warrant out for you from the International Criminal Court.

How can you show the pressure is not working? Try hosting a summit. This week in the city of Kazan President Putin will greet more than 20 heads of state at the Brics summit of emerging economies. Among the leaders invited are China's Xi Jinping, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian. The Kremlin has called it one of the "largest-scale foreign policy events ever" in Russia. "The clear message is that attempts to isolate Russia have failed," thinks Chris Weafer, founding partner of consultancy firm Macro-Advisory. "It's a big part of the messaging from the Kremlin that Russia is withstanding sanctions. We know there are severe cracks beneath the surface. But at a geopolitical level Russia has all these friends and they're all going to be Russia's partners." So, who are Russia's friends? Brics

stands for Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa. The grouping, often referred to as a counterweight to the Western-led world, has expanded to include Egypt, Ethiopia, Iran and the United Arab Emirates. Saudi Arabia, too, has been invited to join. The Brics nations account for 45% of the global population. Added together, members' economies are worth more than \$28.5tn (£22tn). That's around 28% of the global economy. Russian officials have indicated that another 30 countries want to join Brics or seek closer ties with the club. Some of these nations will take part in the summit.

In Kazan this week expect a lot of talk about Brics representing the "global majority". But apart from providing Vladimir Putin his moment on the geopolitical stage, what is the event likely to achieve? Keen to ease the pressure from Western sanctions, the Kremlin leader will hope to convince Brics members to adopt an alternative to the dollar for global payments. "A lot of the problems Russia's economy is facing are linked to cross-border trade and payments. And a lot of that is linked to the US dollar," says Mr Weafer.

"The US Treasury has enormous power and influence over global trade simply because the US dollar is the main currency for settling that. Russia's main interest is in breaking the dominance of the US dollar.

It wants Brics countries to create an alternative trade mechanism and cross-border settlement system that does not involve the dollar, the euro or any of the G7 currencies, so that sanctions won't matter so much." But critics point to differences within Brics. "Likeminded" is not a word you would use to describe the current membership. "In some ways it's a good job for the West that China and India can never agree about anything. Because if those two were really serious, Brics would have enormous influence," notes Jim O'Neill, former Chief Economist of Goldman Sachs. "China and India are doing their best to avoid wanting to attack each other a lot of the time. Trying to get them to really co-operate on economic things is a never-ending challenge." It was Mr O'Neill who, at the turn of the century, dreamt up the acronym "Bric" for four emerging economies he believed should be "brought into the centre of

global policy making". But the four letters would take on a life of their own, after the corresponding nations formed their own Bric group - later Brics, when South Africa joined.

They would attempt to challenge the dominance of the G7: the world's seven largest "advanced" economies (Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the UK and the US). It's not just India and China who have their differences. There is tension between two of the newest Brics members, Egypt and Ethiopia. And, despite talk of detente, Iran and Saudi Arabia have long been regional rivals. "The idea that they're all going to fundamentally agree on something of great substance is bonkers really," believes Mr O'Neill. And while Russia, fuelled by anti-Western sentiment, talks about creating a "new world order", other Brics members, like India, are keen to retain good political and economic relations with the West. In Kazan, Vladimir Putin's task will be to skim over the differences and paint a picture of unity, while showing the Russian public - and the international community - that his country is far from isolated.

## US consults allies about NK troops in Ukraine

NEW YORK (Reuters): It would be a "dangerous and highly concerning development" if North Korea was sending troops to help Russia in Ukraine, the United States said as South Korea and Britain warned of the high price Moscow would likely have to pay Pyongyang.

"We are consulting with our allies and partners on the implications of such a dramatic move," deputy US Ambassador to the UN Robert Wood told the 15-member United Nations Security Council. Russia invaded neighboring Ukraine in February 2022. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy has accused Pyongyang of preparing to send 10,000 soldiers to Russia. Ukraine's UN Ambassador Sergiy Kyslytsya told the Security Council: "These troops are expected to be ready for war against Ukraine by November 1."

South Korea's spy agency said last week that North Korea had shipped 1,500 special forces troops to Russia's Far East for training and acclimatising at military bases and that they were likely to be deployed for combat in Ukraine. "If true, this marks a dangerous and highly concerning development and an obvious deepening of the DPRK, Russia military relationship," Wood said of the reports, using North Korea's formal name - the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. The Kremlin declined to directly answer a query on whether North Korean troops were going to fight in Ukraine, but spokesman Dmitry Peskov said Moscow's cooperation with Pyongyang was not directed against third countries.

Russia's UN Ambassador Vassily Nebenzia accused Western countries of becoming "distracted by circulating scare mongering with Iranian, Chinese and Korean bogeymen, each one of which is more absurd than the one before." Britain's UN Ambassador Barbara Woodward said it was "highly likely" that North Korea was sending troops. "It seems that the harder (Russian President Vladimir) Putin finds it to recruit Russians to be cannon fodder, the more willing he is to rely on DPRK in his illegal war," she said. "We can be certain that the DPRK leadership will ask a high price from Russia in return." South Korea's UN Ambassador Joonkook Hwang also warned the council of the implications of such a move. "North Korea will expect a generous payoff from Moscow in return for its troop contribution. It could be either military or financial assistance. It could be nuclear weapons-related technology," he said. North Korea has been under UN sanctions since 2006 for its nuclear and ballistic missile programs, and those measures have been strengthened over the years - with Russia's support.

## Murder suspects appear in court after man dies

ESSEX (BBC): Two men have appeared in court charged with the murder of a 30-year-old man in a residential street. A member of the public found Kieran Shepherd unresponsive in Meadgate Avenue, in Great Baddow, Essex, on 15 October. Chelmsford Magistrates' Court was told.

Joseph Dawe, 20, of Greenland Gardens, Great Baddow, and Zack O'Keefe, 19, of Stafford Green, Langdon Hills, were remanded into custody and will appear at Chelmsford Crown Court. Harrison Carpenter, 19, of Ben Wilson Link, Springfield, appeared before magistrates in connection with the incident and will appear at Chelmsford Crown Court on Tuesday. Mr Dawe and Mr O'Keefe spoke only to confirm their names, dates of births, and addresses, and were not asked to enter a plea for one charge of murder each. Mr Shepherd's family have described him as a "kind and loving son, brother and father". A statement read: "Our lives will never be the same without him; he will be forever in our hearts."

## S Korea calls for withdrawal of NK troops in Russia

SEOUL (AP): South Korea demanded the immediate pullout of North Korean troops allegedly deployed in Russia as it summoned the Russian ambassador to protest deepening military cooperation between Pyongyang and Moscow.

South Korea's spy agency said it had confirmed that North Korea sent 1,500 special operation forces to Russia this month to support Moscow's war against Ukraine. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy earlier said his government had intelligence that 10,000 North Korea soldiers were being prepared to join invading Russian forces. During a meeting with Russian Ambassador Georgy Zinoviev, Vice South Korean Foreign Minister Kim Hong Kyun "condemned in the strongest terms" North Korea's troop dispatch that he said poses "a grave security threat" to South Korea and the international community, the South Korean Foreign Ministry said in a statement.

Kim said that South Korea in collaboration with the international community will mobilize all available means to deal with an act that threatens its vital national security interests, according to the statement. The Russian Embassy quoted Zinoviev as saying that the Russian-North Korean cooperation is not aimed against the security interests of South Korea. In a telephone call with NATO Secretary-General Mark Rutte, South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol said that Seoul won't sit idly by "reckless" military cooperation between Pyongyang and Moscow. Yoon said South Korea will soon send a delegation to NATO to exchange information about Russian-North Korean cooperation, according to Yoon's office. Rutte wrote on X that North Korea possibly fight-

ing alongside Russia would "mark a significant escalation."

The US and NATO haven't confirmed that North Korean troops were sent to Russia. But the reports of their presence have already stoked concerns in South Korea that Russia might provide North Korea with sophisticated technologies that can sharply enhance the North's nuclear and missile programs in return for its troop dispatch. North Korea's advancing nuclear arsenal is a major security threat to South Korea, North Korean leader Kim Jong Un recently took steps to permanently terminate all relations with South Korea and threatened to use nuclear weapons preemptively.

Some observers say South Korea will likely consider supplying weapons to Ukraine if Russian transfers of high-tech nuclear and missile technologies to North Korea are verified. South Korea has joined US-led sanctions against Moscow over its invasion of Ukraine in February 2022. But South Korea hasn't directly provided arms to Kyiv, citing its longstanding policy of not supplying weapons to countries actively engaged in conflicts.

Russia has earlier denied using North Korean troops in its war with Ukraine. North Korea's state media hasn't commented on the matter. Ukrainian officials released a video allegedly showing North Korean soldiers lining up to collect Russian military clothes and bags at an unknown location. The Associated Press couldn't verify the footage independently. Asked about the North Korean troops during a conference call with reporters, Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said that "we are seeing a lot of contradictory information." "South

Koreans say one thing, then the Pentagon says it has no confirmation of such statements. There is a lot of contradictory information," Peskov said. "It must be treated as such."

At a UN Security Council meeting on Ukraine, Western ambassadors raised the South Korean intelligence, but none confirmed it. US deputy ambassador Robert Wood said that if true, it marks "a dangerous and highly concerning development" and noted that the US was "consulting with our allies and partners on such a dramatic move." Britain's UN Ambassador Barbara Woodward said it's "highly likely" North Korea agreed to send troops in support of Russia's war.

Russia's UN Ambassador Vassily Nebenzia dismissed the South Korean assertion as well as Western allegations of Iran supplying Russia with missiles and China providing arms components. He accused the West of "circulating scare-mongering with Iranian, Chinese and Korean bogeymen, each one of which is more absurd than the one before." North Korea's troop deployment to Russia would be its first participation in a major war since the end of the 1950-53 Korean War. Many experts question how much North Korean troops would help Russia on the battlefield, citing their lack of combat experience. Cooperation between North Korea and Russia has flourished over the past two years. The US, South Korea and their partners have accused North Korea of supplying conventional arms to Russia in return for economic and military assistance. In June, Kim and Russian President Vladimir Putin signed a pact stipulating mutual military assistance if either country is attacked.

## Russia investigates claimed shoot-down of a cargo jet

DUBAI (AP): Sudan's paramilitary Rapid Support Forces said they shot down a cargo jet in the country's far western reaches of Darfur, a claim that Russian diplomats said they were trying to investigate in the war zone. Mobile phone footage showed what appeared to be a debris field with fighters from the paramilitary force, known as the RSF, showing off what appeared to be identity documents recovered from the crash.

However, documents also shown in the footage from the crash site suggest the aircraft was affiliated with an airline previously linked to an effort by the United Arab Emirates to arm the RSF in the war, something that has been strenuously denied by the UAE despite evidence. A message from Russia's Embassy in Khartoum confirmed its diplomats were investigating the incident in Sudan's Malha region in northern Darfur near the border with Chad. The embassy's message said Russians may have been on board at the time.

The RSF has been at war with the Sudanese army since April 2023. The paramilitary force claimed in a statement it shot down a "foreign warplane" that had been aiding the Sudanese military. It alleged without providing evidence that the aircraft had been dropping "barrel bombs" on civilians. "All foreign mercenaries aboard the aircraft were eliminated in the

operation," the statement said. Mobile phone footage showed fighters among the burning wreckage, claiming they shot down the aircraft with a surface-to-air missile. Identity documents shown included a Russian passport and an ID that linked back to a UAE-based company, whose phone number was disconnected. A crumpled safety card, also purportedly from the aircraft, identified the plane as an Ilyushin Il-76 flown by New Way Cargo of Kyrgyzstan. Civil aviation officials in Kyrgyzstan did not respond to a request for comment.

The group Conflict Observatory, which is funded by the US State Department and has been monitoring the Sudan war, linked New Way Cargo's Ilyushin Il-76s to arming the RSF in a report this month. It said the airline had facilitated the UAE arms transfers through flights to Aéroport International Maréchal Idriss Deby in Amdjarass, Chad - flights the UAE has claimed have been for supporting a local hospital. Amdjarass is just across the border from Malha, where the shoot-down reportedly happened. "The UAE has used the airport as a way-point to facilitate weapons to the RSF," the report said, noting that the Emirates offered a \$1.5 billion loan to rapidly expand the airport. "Absent evidence of a significant local humanitarian crisis and a lack of significant Sudanese refugees

in the area casts significant doubt on the UAE's claims that the airport construction is only for a hospital." United Nations experts have said accusations that the UAE armed the RSF were "credible." Emirati officials did not immediately respond to a request for comment over the reported plane shoot-down.

Sudan's war has killed over 24,000 people so far, according to the group Armed Conflict Location and Event Data, which has been monitoring the violence since the conflict's start. The Sudanese army has been pursuing an intensified offensive near Khartoum, while forces allied with it have been battling the RSF in Darfur. Sudan has been unstable since a popular uprising forced the removal of long-time dictator Omar al-Bashir in 2019. The short-lived transition to democracy was derailed when two generals, the army's chief Gen. Abdel-Fattah Burhan and Gen. Mohammed Hamdan Dagalo of the RSF, joined forces to lead a military coup in October 2021. They began battling each other in 2023. Al-Bashir faces charges at the International Criminal Court over carrying out a genocidal campaign in the early 2000s in Darfur with the Janjaweed, the precursor to the RSF. Rights groups and the UN say the RSF and allied Arab militias again are attacking ethnic African groups in the war.

## Ukraine blasts Guterres

KYIV (Reuters): Ukraine's Foreign Ministry blasted UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres for what it said was his acceptance of an invitation from Russian President Vladimir Putin to a BRICS summit, while staying away from a "peace summit" on the war in Ukraine. "The UN Secretary General declined Ukraine's invitation to the first Global Peace Summit in Switzerland," the ministry said in a post on the X social media platform. "He did, however, accept

the invitation to Kazan from war criminal Putin. This is a wrong choice that does not advance the cause of peace. It only damages the UN's reputation."

Putin hosts a summit of BRICS nations in the central Russian city of Kazan from Tuesday, aimed at showcasing the clout of non-Western countries. Leaders attending include Chinese President Xi Jinping and Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi. A Russian Foreign Ministry spokeswoman earlier this month said Guterres had told Minister

Sergei Lavrov at the UN General Assembly last month that he intended to go to Kazan. But deputy UN spokesperson Farham Haq, when asked if Guterres would attend, said: "Announcements on his future travels will be later on down the line."

The peace summit in a Swiss mountain resort in June, which brought together more than 90 countries, denounced Russia's invasion of Ukraine and sought a way to end the conflict, though Russia was not invited and dismissed it as meaningless.

## Vietnam parliament elects army general as state president

HANOI (Reuters): Vietnam's parliament elected army general Luong Cuong as the new state president in a widely anticipated move that is expected to bring some stability to Vietnamese politics after a turbulent phase of departures and reshuffles.

Cuong, 67, takes over the role from To Lam, who was appointed president of the Communist-run, one-party country in May and then also took on the more powerful job of party chief

following the death in July of general secretary Nguyen Phu Trong. Cuong was elected with the vote of all the 440 deputies who attended the parliament session.

In his inaugural speech he committed to boosting defence capabilities and pursuing an independent and multilateral foreign policy. He vowed to "strengthen national defence and security, build up an army force that is revolutionary, well-trained,

nimble and modern". Vietnam has long been seeking to diversify its arsenal from mostly Russia-made weapons but has not reported any significant deal in recent years. Before the election, Cuong held a key position in the secretariat of the Communist Party, which made him the fifth-highest ranking official in the country after party chief, president, prime minister and parliament's chairman. Cuong is also a member of

the Politburo, the party's top decision-making body. The state president holds little direct power but represents the country in high-level meetings with foreign dignitaries. In his short spell as president, Lam has met the leaders of China, Russia and the United States, among others. In Vietnam, the party chief has become the most powerful figure since the late Truong effectively expanded the role's powers in his 13-year tenure.



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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

## The global economy would benefit from greater variety

**F**EW issues are as consequential – or as contentious – as the way in which countries, companies and individuals do business across national borders. As the International Monetary Fund, World Bank and G20 finance ministers hold important meetings in Washington this week, the US dollar and the western-led payments system continue to dominate global trade, much as they have done since the end of the Second World War.

The dollar today represents 58 per cent of the value of foreign reserve holdings worldwide; the second-most-used currency, the euro, comprises only 20 per cent. Earlier this month, a Chatham House paper described the dollar as being to international finance “what the English language is to international communication”. Belgium-based Swift, the world’s leading interbank messaging system, works with 11,000 institutions and accounts for \$150 trillion in transactions each year.

However, as the world becomes increasingly multipolar, the vulnerabilities that arise from over-reliance on one currency or, indeed, western banks have meant several leading and ambitious economies are investing in efforts to explore alternatives. The Brics group of nations, which is convening for a two-day summit in the Russian city of Kazan is a good example of this. It is already a consequential body on the world stage, its current members account for close to 45 per cent of the global population and if observer member Saudi Arabia were to join, the Brics nations would account for 44 per cent of global crude-oil production.

Therefore it is understandable that further discussions are expected on setting up a new model of international payments – the Brics Bridge. This proposed platform of digital currencies would expand opportunities and make it more difficult to isolate any one country’s banking sector from the global economy.

Advocates for an alternative system point out that in a dollar-dependent world, sanctions are often only meted out to those who cross Washington’s interests. That one-sidedness does little to inspire trust among countries caught in the middle of great power politics. More importantly, the global economy has become more diverse and requires flexibility and variety to match.

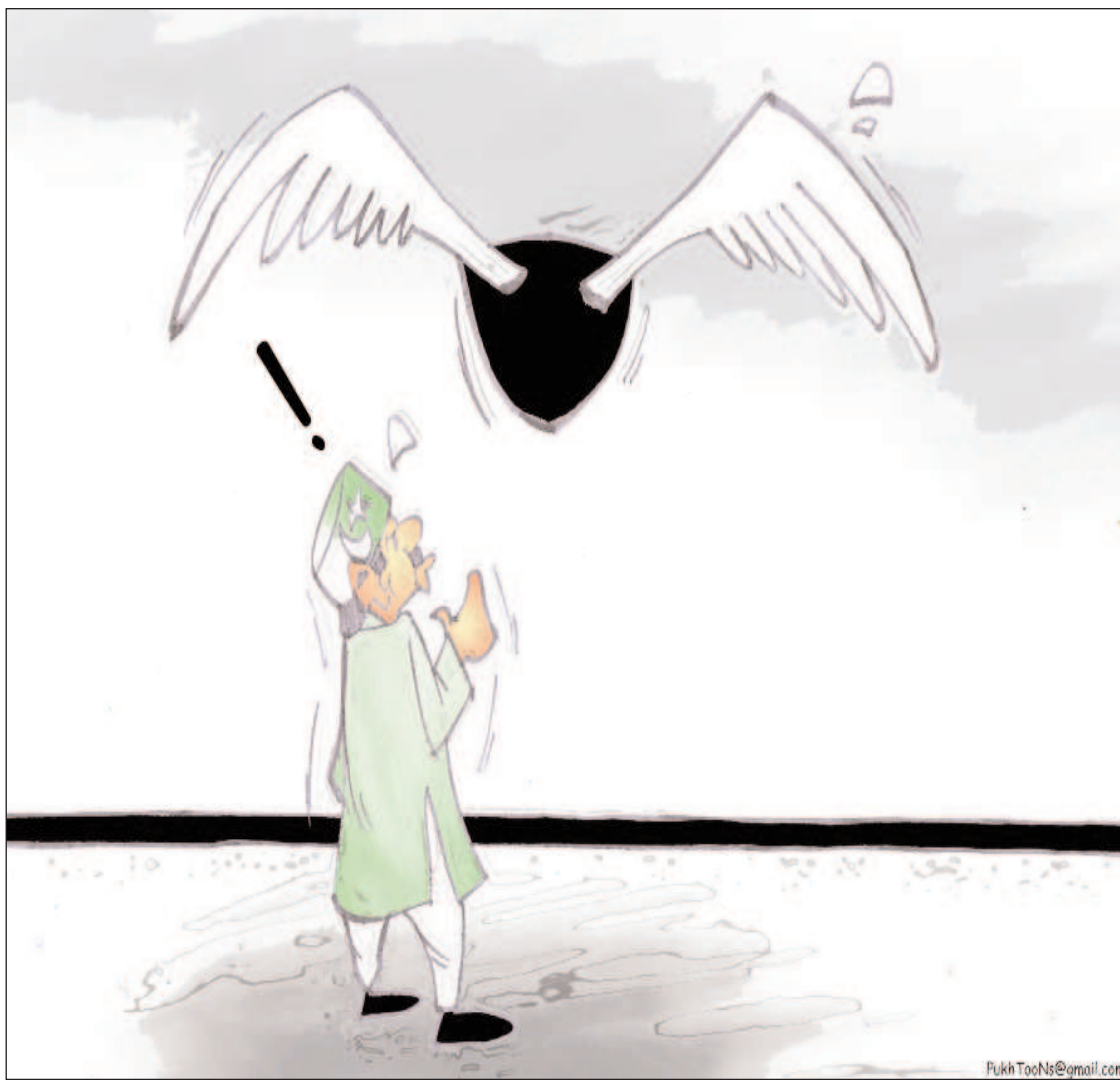
The system under discussion at the Brics summit, moreover, is similar to another cross-border multi-central bank digital currency project called mBridge, under trial since 2019. This attempt to reduce the time and costs involved in making international transactions involves the central banks in the UAE, China and Thailand, and the monetary authority of Hong Kong, as well as the Basel-based Bank for International Settlements, which has been a lynchpin of the western-led international financial order since its foundation in 1930. Saudi Arabia joined the project in June.

The Cold War ended 33 years ago, and it is unrealistic to think that a world in transition would permanently adhere to one national currency and banking system for globalised trade. In addition, having international payments and credit intrinsically bound up with a western-dominated banking system also gives those countries that control it a huge amount of leverage on the international stage. Given the above, it should not surprise anyone that projects like the Brics Bridge are emerging.

The exploration of different digital currencies and payments systems could also speed up the tentative moves away from the US dollar that are already taking place. According to the IMF, although the dollar remains the world’s pre-eminent reserve currency it “continues to cede ground to non-traditional currencies in global foreign exchange reserves”. The Fund also adds that if the Brics group makes tangible progress on its digital currency ambitions, the resulting “economic fragmentation and the potential reorganisation of global economic and financial activity into separate, non-overlapping blocs could encourage some countries to use and hold other international and reserve currencies”. Those interested in international finance and trade should keep a close eye on Kazan over the next two days.

### Important Notice

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



## A journey through Pakistan’s 1973 Constitution Amendments, power, and democracy

Muhammad Mohsin Iqbal

**I**n a parliamentary form of government, the Constitution serves as the cornerstone that defines the structure, powers, and limitations of the state. It ensures the separation of powers between the executive, legislative, and judiciary, providing a system of checks and balances to prevent any branch from overpowering the others. A constitution also safeguards the rights and freedoms of citizens, guaranteeing that governance remains accountable and democratic. In the context of parliamentary democracy, the constitution outlines the role of the elected representatives, ensuring that the government's legitimacy stems from the will of the people. It is essential for maintaining order, stability, and justice, as it provides a framework for the peaceful transfer of power, the rule of law, and the protection of minority rights, ultimately strengthening the democratic process.

The 1973 Constitution of Pakistan stands as a landmark in the country's political, parliamentary and legal history, symbolizing the aspirations of a democratic republic. However, over the decades, it has undergone significant changes to adapt to shifting political landscapes. The Constitution has been amended 26 times since its adoption, each amendment reflecting the prevailing political circumstances and the interests of various actors. A deep dive into these amendments reveals the motivations behind them, the figures involved, and the beneficiaries.

The First Amendment was enacted on May 4, 1974, during the tenure of Zulfikar Ali Bhutto. It expanded the scope of Articles 1, 8, 17, 61, 101, 127, 193, 199, 200, 209, 212, 250, 259, 260, and 272 concerning political parties, restricting their activities mainly to prevent foreign influence alignments. Introduced as a protection against internal and external destabilization in a time of political turbulence, the amendment redefined Pakistan's boundaries and eliminated references to East Pakistan.

The Second Amendment was passed on September 17, 1974, expanding the scope of Articles 106 and 260, defining a Muslim, and designating Ahmadis as a minority and 'non-Muslim'. The Third Amendment, introduced under Bhutto's leadership on February 18, 1975, broadened the scope of Articles 10 and 232, and increased the period of preventive detention without trial from two to three months. The Fourth Amendment, enacted on November 21, 1975, widened the scope of Articles 8, 17, 19, 51, 54, 106, 199, 271, 272, and 273, allocated additional seats for minorities, and

removed the judiciary's power to grant bail to anyone held under preventive detention.

The Fifth Amendment, enacted on September 5, 1976, expanded the provisions of Articles 101, 160, 175, 179, 180, 187, 192, 195, 196, 199, 200, 106, 212, 260, and 280, and increased the restrictions on the High Courts. The Sixth Amendment, passed on December 22, 1976, broadened the scope of Articles 179, 195, 246, and 260, and stipulated that the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court would retire at the age of 65, while High Court judges would retire at 62.

Following Bhutto's removal, the Seventh Amendment was enacted on May 16, 1977, introducing provisions for a national referendum to affirm the government's policies. It expanded the scope of Article 101, 245, and added Article 96A. The most significant and contentious amendments occurred during General Zia-ul-Haq's tenure. The Eighth Amendment, passed on November 11, 1985, drastically changed the Constitution's structure by bestowing extensive powers upon the President, including the authority to dissolve the National Assembly. Enacted under Zia's martial law, it tipped the balance of power towards the President and diminished the role of Parliament. It broadened the scope of Articles 48, 51, 56, 58, 59, 60, 75, 90, 91, 101, 105, 106, 112, 116, 130, 144, 152, and 270.

The Ninth Amendment, proposing the imposition of Shariah law as the supreme law of the land, was passed by the Senate but failed to pass in the National Assembly due to its dissolution. This bill sought to expand the scope of Articles 2 and 203. Conversely, the Tenth Amendment, which was enacted on March 25, 1987, dealt with procedural aspects concerning the length of parliamentary sessions, specifically setting the maximum interval between National Assembly sessions at 130 days, thereby broadening the scope of Articles 54 and 61.

The Eleventh Amendment, enacted on August 28, 1989, during Benazir Bhutto's tenure, aimed to reestablish parliamentary dominance by limiting the President's powers. However, it did not significantly change the political dynamics. The Twelfth Amendment, introduced on July 28, 1991, created special courts for terrorism and severe crimes. The Thirteenth and Fourteenth Amendments, passed on April 4 and July 3, 1997, respectively, under Nawaz Sharif's administration, played a pivotal role in reducing presidential authority. The Thirteenth Amendment revoked the President's authority to dissolve the National Assembly, reinforcing parliamentary sovereign-

ty. The Fourteenth Amendment bolstered political parties by mandating party discipline and restricting defections, thereby tightening party leaders' grip on their members. The Fifteenth Amendment, proposed on August 28, 1998, aimed to establish Shariah law as the land's supreme law but was not enacted. The Sixteenth Amendment extended the duration of the quota system stipulated in the 1973 Constitution from 20 to 40 years.

General Pervez Musharraf's regime also witnessed substantial amendments, with the Seventeenth Amendment passed on December 31, 2003, which restored the President's power to dissolve the National Assembly, undoing Nawaz Sharif's efforts. It reflected the military's dominance over civilian institutions and reinstated a semi-presidential system.

The Eighteenth Amendment, enacted on April 19, 2010, during the Pakistan People's Party (PPP) tenure, marked a significant milestone in Pakistan's constitutional journey. It overturned numerous alterations imposed by military regimes, reinstated parliamentary supremacy, and transferred considerable authority to the provincial governments. This amendment was a move toward fortifying democracy and addressing local concerns, thus serving the populace by fostering federalism and diminishing central control.

Subsequently, the Nineteenth Amendment on January 1, 2011, focused on judicial reforms, while the Twentieth Amendment on February 28, 2012, concentrated on guaranteeing free and impartial elections. Together, these amendments signified the democratic government's commitment to reinforcing the institutional framework for a more open and accountable political system.

In the aftermath of APS Peshawar Attack, Military Courts were established for speedy trials of terrorists and their sponsors under Twenty-first Amendments on 7 January 2015. In Twenty-second Amendments, ECP powers deputed to Chief Election Commissioner on 8 June 2016. The 23rd Amendment was passed to re-establish the military courts for further two years till 6 January 2019.[3] In 2015, National Assembly passed the 21st Amendment and created the military courts for the period of 2 years. The period of two years was expired on 6 January 2017 hence this 23rd Amendment was passed to re-establish the military courts for further two years till 6 January 2019. At the end of this period all the amendments will be expired/removed automatically.

The Twenty-fourth Amendment, enacted on 22 December 2017, reallocated National Assembly seats among federating units and permitted election authorities to revise constituency boundaries based on the provisional outcomes of the 2017 Census of Pakistan. Subsequently, the Twenty-fifth Amendment, on 31 May 2018, integrated the Federally Administered Tribal Areas into Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

On October 20, 2024, Pakistan's Senate and National Assembly passed a significant 26th Constitutional Amendment, aimed at enhancing the governance structure and addressing key political reforms. This amendment focuses on strengthening democratic institutions by introducing measures to ensure greater accountability, transparency, and efficiency within the government. It includes provisions for judicial reforms, strengthening the role of the Election Commission, and increasing parliamentary oversight over executive actions. Additionally, the amendment tackles the issue of decentralization by granting more autonomy to provincial governments, ensuring a more balanced distribution of power. This landmark amendment reflects Pakistan's commitment to evolving its constitutional framework in response to the changing political and social landscape.

A comparative analysis of these amendments reveals a clear divide. Amendments during democratic regimes, have focused more on governance, devolution of power, and judicial reforms, with the potential to improve public services and accountability. On the other hand, amendments under dictators' rule were primarily about entrenching power in the executive branch, offering little to the public in terms of improved services or democratic participation.

In summary, the 26 Amendments to Pakistan's 1973 Constitution reflect the nation's struggle with its identity, governance, and the tension between democratic and authoritarian impulses. While some amendments have been pivotal for political stability or national security, others have aimed at power consolidation or addressing immediate political crises. Often, the ruling elite have been the primary beneficiaries of these amendments, but recent changes have begun to more directly meet the populace's needs. The ongoing challenge is to ensure that future amendments prioritize the public interest, fortify democratic institutions, and foster equitable development throughout the nation.

This is essential for the Constitution to truly act as the cornerstone of a fair and democratic governance system.

## Saudi Arabia's biopharma sector on the cusp of a transformative era

Dr. Ibrahim Juffali

**I**N the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, nations across the globe have underscored the importance of biopharma resilience to safeguard their populations from disruptions in pharmaceutical supply chains. Saudi Arabia is no exception. The Kingdom is now actively working to build capacity in biopharmaceutical manufacturing, both for domestic needs and as a competitive player in the global market. This national imperative aligns with the broader goals of Vision 2030, which seeks to diversify the economy and enhance critical industries.

A key milestone in this effort is the recent agreement between Lifera Biologics, a contract manufacturing arm of Lifera, and Novo Nordisk, the second-largest global pharmaceutical company and a global leader in diabetes care and obesity. This partnership will ensure that Lifera produces more than 50 percent of Saudi Arabia's insulin needs. Lifera, established by the Public Investment Fund, is committed to two national objectives: bolstering biopharma resilience and advancing the Saudi National Biotechnology Strategy.

The collaboration with Novo Nordisk is just the beginning. Lifera's first manufacturing facility, set to be operational by 2026, will produce 80 million units of injectables annually, including insulin and monoclonal antibodies. An ambitious expansion by 2029 will increase this capacity to 250 million units, incorporating vaccines, peptides including anti-obesity therapeutics and other biologics. Lifera's manufacturing scale will align with the best global standards, providing the region with a resilient supply chain.

However, the true value of these advancements lies not only in manufacturing capacity but in the development of local expertise. The key challenge globally in biopharma is not necessarily the availability of capital, equipment or interest — it is in fact the availability of skilled talent. Lifera has already begun sending employees abroad for advanced training at partner sites. By 2027, more than 120 individuals will be trained in biologics manufacturing, helping to build a skilled workforce capable of driving Saudi Arabia's biopharma ambitions. By developing the right workforce, along with various other incentives provided by the Saudi government, we expect to see significant increases in foreign investment and partnerships with Saudi private sector companies as Saudi Arabia establishes itself as a leading global player in the biopharma sector.

Crucial to this endeavor has been the support of various Saudi government entities. The Ministries of Industry, Health and Investment, alongside the Local Content and Government Procurement Authority and Nupco, the public sector healthcare general procurement organization, have played key roles in establishing the necessary frameworks to attract both foreign and domestic investment in biopharma. These efforts are not just about industrial growth, but are central to achieving Saudi Arabia's broader national goals of economic diversification and health sector transformation.

This is an exciting time for Saudi Arabia's biopharma sector. The localization of pharmaceutical production, including vaccines, is gaining momentum. In 2023, Lifera signed a memorandum of understanding with Sanofi, a leading global vaccine innovator protecting 500 million people per year, through which Sanofi and Lifera will produce vaccines locally, with plans to address more than half of Saudi Arabia's needs as part of the National Immunization Schedule. More such partnerships are expected soon, increasing trust in Saudi Arabia's biopharma sector.

Lifera is also advancing precision medicine through its subsidiary,

Lifera Omics. Launched in January, Lifera Omics aims to establish world-class genetic testing and drug discovery capabilities in Saudi Arabia. With the appointment of globally renowned Saudi human geneticist Prof. Fowzan Alkuraya as chief medical and genomics officer, Lifera Omics seeks to address the unique needs of Saudi patients by leveraging a rich genomic biobank, perhaps one of the largest in both the public and private sector, focused on rare diseases and expanding into cancers and metabolic disorders. Alkuraya in 2020 became the first non-US recipient of the prestigious Curt Stern Award from the American Society of Human Genetics and he has served on the Adjunct Faculty of Harvard Medical School. His discoveries have significantly advanced understanding of the intricate relationship between human genes and health.

The ability to map disease risks through genomic data is a critical advancement in moving from reactive to preventive healthcare, which will serve as a cornerstone of Saudi Arabia's future health system. With Lifera Omics, the Kingdom aims to be a key player in the discovery of new therapies in the global race to unlock the full potential of precision medicine. To support this, we are in advanced discussions with a leading Saudi tertiary care hospital to develop cell and gene therapy manufacturing, personalized for the needs of patients in Saudi Arabia and serving as a regional hub for this advanced and precise treatment modality.

These developments come at a pivotal moment. Global supply chains are being reshaped by the rapid pace of drug discovery and the rise of advanced therapeutics. The pandemic showed how swiftly new therapies can be developed when international collaboration is prioritized. With the acceleration of drug discovery, Saudi Arabia's biopharma sector is well positioned to capitalize on these shifts. Increased investment will not only boost economic growth but also create valuable opportunities for both Saudi and expatriate talent. The Saudi Health Sector Transformation Program, a forward-thinking initiative aligned with the National Biotechnology Strategy, is playing a pivotal role in this growth and is perhaps one of the most ambitious national health programs globally.

Growth of the Saudi biopharmaceutical sector will generate high-value jobs, increase local content in the healthcare industry and support Saudi Arabia's ambition to become a global hub for biotechnology. With a young, digitally savvy population and a rapidly advancing healthcare infrastructure, the Kingdom is well positioned to capitalize on the potential of biotechnology and biopharma to improve public health and drive economic growth.

Looking ahead, the Kingdom's focus on research and development, supported by clinical and commercial-scale manufacturing, promises to yield a pipeline of innovative treatments tailored to the health challenges specific to Saudi Arabia and the broader region. These advancements will improve access to cutting-edge therapies for the Saudi population and contribute to global clinical innovation. Saudi Arabia is emerging as a prime destination for the discovery of new medicines, particularly for diseases with a higher prevalence in the region, such as sickle cell disease, spinal muscular atrophy and inherited retinal disorders.

Saudi Arabia's biopharma sector is on the cusp of a transformative era, one that will catalyze the Kingdom's economic and healthcare landscape. Lifera is proud to play a central role in this transformation, helping to position Saudi Arabia as a global leader in biopharmaceutical innovation and enabling citizens and residents to enjoy longer, healthier lives.

— Arab News



# How Liz Cheney tried to give GOP women permission to vote for Harris

REPUBLICAN women can vote for Kamala Harris — and they don't need to tell anyone about it.

That was the most striking takeaway from Liz Cheney's blue wall swing-state tour with the vice president on Monday, as the hardline conservative and former congresswoman created a permission structure of personal empowerment for suburban Republican and independent women to snub Donald Trump and back the Democratic nominee.

The mother of five, who was staunchly anti-abortion as a lawmaker and who cheered the demise of Roe v. Wade, also warned women aren't getting needed reproductive health care after the Supreme Court's momentous 2022 decision and said that only Harris had the compassion to deal with the issue.

Cheney repeatedly made clear she still opposes abortion but explained in Waukesha County, a swing district just outside Milwaukee, that "I have been very troubled, deeply troubled by what I have watched happen in so many states." She added, "I have been troubled by the extent to which you have women who, as the vice president said, in some cases, have died, who can't get medical treatment that they need because providers are worried about criminal liability."

She added: "We are facing a situation today where I think that it's an untenable one."

Cheney was speaking in her third event of the day with Harris, which included earlier stops in Pennsylvania and Michigan and in which she often made a more expansive case against the Republican nominee than the vice president has made herself.

Earlier, in a Detroit suburb, Cheney had noted that some Republicans feared reprisals, even violence, if they came out against Trump. "I would just remind people, if you're at all concerned, you can vote your conscience and not ever have to say a word to anybody," Cheney said, as she sat side-by-side with Harris. "There will be millions of Republicans who do that on November 5."

Cheney was once on the fast track to the top of the GOP. But she was toppled as House GOP conference chair for condemning her party for covering up for Trump over the January 6, 2021, attack on the US Capitol. A pro-Trump challenger then took her Wyoming seat in a 2022 primary.

But her appearance alongside Harris shows she's not given up on principled politics simply because she lost power. It also points to one of the most critical factors in the final days of the general election campaign — whether the Democratic vice president can win over significant numbers of Republicans.

Why Trump may need to turn to Haley

The Harris campaign is appealing to GOP voters who are disaffected with Trump's wild and vulgar behavior, perceived threats to the Constitution and propensity to pal around with tyrants in a way that horrifies the hawks of the Bush and Reagan administrations — including Cheney's father, former Vice President Dick Cheney.

Some of those voters may come from the tens of thousands of Republicans who voted for former South Carolina Gov. Nikki Haley in her failed primary campaign against Trump earlier this year. Trump has suggested in recent days that he may appear with his former rival to try to appeal to the same voters. But even if Harris can enlist a small fraction of those voters, or convince them not to back Trump, it could be decisive in swing states with razor-thin margins.

But she can't do it

Cheney, who would have known her daylong remarks would case a stir, was willing to engage on this topic. In Pennsylvania, for example, she intervened in the discussion after Harris addressed the subject. And she spoke after the vice president pledged to sign a law restoring the nationwide right to an abortion if she is president and Congress passes it. Cheney's voice on this issue was a clear sign that the Harris campaign believes that her value to the vice president goes far beyond highlighting Trump's autocratic instincts and threat to democracy. Cheney may have become a bridge to millions of Republican women, especially in the critical swing-state suburbs, who may be staunchly opposed to abortion but do not support policies that may threaten their health. Cheney's appearances with Harris came as the vice president seeks to further widen a massive gender gap with the ex-president among women voters. A New York Times/Siena College poll this month showed Harris leading women voters by 56% to 40% over Trump. The GOP nominee was up 53% to 42% among men. The former president has struggled to discuss abortion and to effectively address women during this campaign. He trawls for credit for the Supreme Court's momentous ruling while seeking to avoid its political consequences. He's claimed falsely that all women were happy with the decision. He's overbearingly promised to serve as their "protector" if he wins back the White House and claimed bizarrely last week, at a town hall with an all-female audience, that he was the "father" of IVF. Harris' events with Cheney raised the question of just how many Republican voters might be in reach for her. The New York Times poll found that 9% of likely Republicans planned to vote for her and only 3% of Democrats expected to vote for Trump. If that happened in November's election, it would represent a significant challenge to Trump's chances. Still, given the country's polarization, there are still real doubts that large numbers of Republicans or even conservative-leaning independents will break toward the Democratic nominee. But the Trump campaign appears to understand the risks. The former president said in Philadelphia on Sunday that Haley "wanted to join" him on the campaign trail. And CNN reported last week that the campaign had been in talks with the former South Carolina governor about a first appearance with Trump, who has held events in recent weeks tailored to female voters, including with his former White House press secretary, Arkansas Gov. Sarah Huckabee Sanders.

alone. Such voters need to be approached gently since she's asking dissident Republican voters to shelve some of their most cherished political positions. That's why Cheney could be so valuable for Harris. She has huge credibility among some voters because of her untamed conservative ideology and her defense of what she regards as America's most fundamental principles.

"I'm a conservative. And I know that the most conservative of all conservative principles is being faithful to the Constitution," Cheney — who was the vice chair of the House select committee investigating January 6 — said in Chester County, Pennsylvania, a suburb of Philadelphia. "You have to choose in this race between someone who has been faithful

Stephen Collinson

to the Constitution, who will be faithful, and Donald Trump, who — it's not just us predicting how he will act. We watched what he did after the last election. We watched what he did on January 6," Cheney warned.

A stark warning on women's health care

Cheney's fears for the Constitution were largely familiar. More notable were her remarks on the aftermath of the Supreme Court — with a conservative majority built by Trump — overturning the federal constitutional right to an abortion.

She is not repudiating her life-long opposition to abortion. But Cheney cited what she said were discussions about the Texas attorney general suing for women's medical records. She also appeared to be rebuking conservative legislatures and officials whose hard-line steps have resulted in

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Trump may not have helped his deficit with women voters or disaffected Republicans over the weekend with his wild antics and vulgar comments about late golfer Arnold Palmer's anatomy, although such crude politics could enhance his authenticity with many of his loyal base voters.

"If you're talking about the kind of Republican who has found Trump's influence on the party to be noxious, you look at this and you go, 'See, I can't vote for that guy. I can't do this,'" Republican pollster Kristen Soltis Anderson told Kasie Hunt on "CNN This Morning" on Monday. "But at the same time, is there somebody who doesn't care at all about politics but sees these clips in his life behind that as kind of funny? They really do exist, and they are part of Trump's coalition."

Trump's team also sought to mine another seam of his appeal in its efforts to discredit Cheney. The former president pointed out that her father had been a Bush administration architect of the Iraq and Afghan wars, which caused deep fatigue with foreign interventions and helped paved the way for his own political rise.

"Dick Cheney is an irrelevant RINO, along with his daughter," Trump wrote on Truth Social, while adding Harris to a triumvirate that he said supported "Endless Nonsensical Wars" that wasted lives and cost trillions of dollars.

Ultimately, the ostracizing of the Cheneys from the Trump-era GOP points to the ex-president's extraordinary transformation of the party. And only one side of the Republican Party's family schism will be happy after the election.

— CNN

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— CNN

# Lebanon would not benefit if the US sanctioned Berri

Michael Young

ISRAEL'S assassination of Hezbollah secretary general Hassan Nasrallah and its apparent subsequent elimination of his likely successor, Hashem Saffieddine, has left a vacuum in the group's political leadership. This creates considerable space for the senior Shiite politician in Lebanon's governing structure, Nabih Berri, the Speaker of Parliament.

For years, Mr Berri has represented a facade for Hezbollah in the Lebanese state. A highly influential politician, he has also benefited by being the main intermediary with the group, which dominated the political system. In a recent speech, Naim Qasem, Nasrallah's deputy, described Mr Berri as Hezbollah's "big brother". But that praise hid a warning to the Speaker: don't transgress Hezbollah's red lines, or else.

There have been

himself within his own community on behalf of the Biden administration.

For many Lebanese, Mr Berri embodies everything that's wrong about Lebanon's political class. He has been in office since 1992, is regarded by many people as lacking ethics, and was a main defender of the corrupt structure that led to the financial collapse of 2020, depriving millions of Lebanese of their savings. This is undeniable.

Yet it's also true that Mr Berri is a pragmatist. As he watches the ruin of particularly the Shiite community, because of Israeli bombing, he must surely be thinking of what this means for him and his authority. Though he is 86, the Speaker still clings to power and probably realises that the weakening of his community will necessarily make him weaker. Therefore, he has a vested interest in reaching

struggles with how to care for more than 1.2 million angry, dislocated and humiliated Lebanese.

Mr Berri, as head of the last functioning governing institution in the state (the presidency is vacant and the cabinet is ruling in a caretaker capacity), will be essential in shaping which candidate prevails — or more likely what kind of compromise will be reached around a candidate. He will also play a key role in persuading Hezbollah to rally to any accord, even if he will probably have to deal with a party doubly suspicious and intransigent.

One potential direction he may explore with other members of the political leadership is to propose a dialogue to discuss a national defence strategy for Lebanon. Such a strategy has been a code word in the past to integrate Hezbollah's weapons into the state. Hezbollah has refused to engage in any such discussion, but

Some influential American voices on the Middle East, such as Robert Satloff of the Washington Institute, have mentioned that there is talk in the US capital of sanctioning Mr Berri if he refuses to hold such a parliamentary session. It is doubtful, however, that the Biden administration would do such a thing, as it would only further block the political system in Lebanon and achieve nothing. Understandably, Mr Berri has resisted holding an election, arguing that for this to happen, a consensus must exist around a candidate. He knows that Hezbollah would view a forced election as an American, and Israeli, effort to exploit its vulnerabilities today to impose on it a candidate it does not want. Mr Berri will not isolate himself within his own community on behalf of the Biden administration. For many Lebanese, Mr Berri embodies everything that's wrong about Lebanon's political class. He has been in office since 1992, is regarded by many people as lacking ethics, and was a main defender of the corrupt structure that led to the financial collapse of 2020, depriving millions of Lebanese of their savings. This is undeniable. Yet it's also true that Mr Berri is a pragmatist. As he watches the ruin of particularly the Shiite community, because of Israeli bombing, he must surely be thinking of what this means for him and his authority.

reports recently that the administration of US President Joe Biden is trying to push Lebanon's political class to bring in a new president. Since Parliament elects presidents in the country, the pressure has been on Mr Berri to convene a session for a vote and hold successive rounds of voting until a candidate wins. According to media reports, Washington would like to see the army commander, Joseph Aoun, elected.

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compromises that can avert such an outcome.

Mr Berri sits at the intersection of the two logics that have prevailed in Lebanon since Hezbollah opened a front with Israel on October 8 of last year, and which escalated dramatically last month. On the one side is a logic of resistance, represented by Hezbollah, which has sustained the conflict with Israel, purportedly in support of Gaza.

On the other is a logic of the state, whereby many Lebanese feel that their country should no longer be carried into war by an armed non-state actor loyal to Iran, which has never bothered to consult the country's government.

They believe that the state must re-assess itself, as must the one institution that retains national credibility, namely the army.

When it comes to the presidency, the logic of resistance points in the direction of Suleiman Frangieh, whom Hezbollah endorsed as its candidate, supposedly because he was the person best able to "defend the resistance".

The logic of the state, in contrast, leads to Gen Aoun, because the armed forces will not only play a central role in any post-war order, but also in maintaining internal security, as the country

with many Lebanese deeply hostile to the group's military autonomy, which dangerously isolates Hezbollah, and the Shiite community devastated, it may be more willing to talk.

There is also another major problem. Mainly Shiite-majority towns, villages and neighbourhoods have been destroyed across Lebanon.

To rebuild them and avoid a backlash from its own community, Hezbollah will need assistance from the state, which alone can bring in the funds necessary for reconstruction. That means the group and the state will have to negotiate, which may compel Hezbollah to water down its refusal to compromise.

Mr Berri will be at the heart of this maelstrom, and he will try to widen his margin of manoeuvre with respect to Hezbollah, while preserving his power in the Shiite community and the leverage this gives him. Such calculations suggest he will be a dominant actor in the months ahead, if his health holds out.

The only unknown is whether Iran, which today is said to have filled the leadership vacuum in Hezbollah, will go along with the Speaker.

— The National

# Strikes on Gaza have gone up despite Sinwar's death

Michael Jansen

THE US, UK, German and French leaders have said last week's death of Hamas chief Yahya Sinwar could be "an opportunity" to end the Gaza war since they had argued he was the only or the main obstacle to a ceasefire. This is a lie. Hamas accepted the Gaza ceasefire plan on May 6th while Hamas politburo chief Ismail Hanih was in charge. Sinwar, who was head of Hamas' Gaza administration, was consulted and did not object. After US President Joe Biden endorsed the plan and circulated a belated Security Council resolution calling for implementation, Hamas has gone along despite Israel's assassination of Hanih on July 31st and Sinwar's assumption of his job in August.

Sinwar's death during a chance encounter with new

recruits on patrol in Gaza's southern Rafah province rather than by a dramatic high profile Israeli intelligence operation must be galling for Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. He had counted on public celebration of a "victory" over Hamas.

He has been the chief obstacle to a ceasefire. He has done everything he could to scupper plans put forward since last November. The US backed Netanyahu's rejectionism by vetoing UN Security Council ceasefire resolutions until May 31st when President Joe Biden latched onto the existing three-phase ceasefire plan and submitted his own resolution to the Council.

Now that Israel's alleged arch enemy Sinwar is dead, Netanyahu has again rejected ending the war and escalated air attacks on northern Gaza. To complement mili-

tary pressure, Israel has also denied food, water, and medicine and blockaded three hospitals in the area. Netanyahu's objective is to secure the evacuation of 400,000 Palestinians from Jabalia, Beit Hannoun and Beit Lahia. Residents have refused to leave because Israeli troops fire on families on the road to the south and Israel's designated "safe zone" at al-Mawasi on the coast is not safe from Israeli strikes.

On the ceasefire plan, Netanyahu has imposed conditions unacceptable not only to Hamas but to the Palestinians as a whole. He demands the right of Israeli military intervention in Gaza whenever it likes and permanent control of the Netzarim Corridor which bisects Gaza and the Philadelphia Corridor, a narrow buffer zone on the Gaza-Egypt border. The latter demand is also rejected by Cairo which argues this

would violate Egypt's 1979 peace treaty with Israel and the agreement on the deployment in the corridor of Egyptian police reached when Israel withdrew from Gaza in 2005. Hamas calls for full Israeli withdrawal from Gaza and has said it would leave power and hand over to a Palestinian national government which would govern both Gaza and the West Bank. Arab Gulf countries have proposed a pan-Arab force to restore law and order in Gaza after Israeli withdrawal but are not prepared for this force to act as Israel's subcontractor. Hamas could accept the Arab force as it could lead to reconstruction.

Netanyahu has not announced a plan for post-war Gaza, but he is under pressure from expansionist settler groups and members of his own Likud bloc to

recolonise northern Gaza once Palestinians are forced to leave.

After Sinwar's death, his Gaza deputy Khalil Hayya announced that Hamas will continue to resist Israeli occupation. This has been the case with the demise of every top Hamas leader since the movement's founding at the start of the First Intifada in December 1987. Veteran Hamas politician Khaled Mishaal has stepped in as overall interim politburo chief. He previously assumed this role in July and served until Sinwar took over following Israel's murder of Ismail Haniyeh in Tehran.

Israel has had a complicated relationship with Hamas since it emerged in Gaza. As Fatah was the instigator and driver of the uprising, Israel tried to undermine Fatah by aiding Hamas. A

Palestinian human rights activist based in Gaza who was jailed by Israel early in 1988 said he found no Hamas activists had been imprisoned while he was incarcerated. A Palestinian journalist in occupied East Jerusalem said Fatah leaflets calling for peaceful resistance were confiscated but not Hamas leaflets.

However, after winning the 1992 Israeli election on a peace platform, Prime Minister Yitzak Rabin deported 415 Palestinian activists from Gaza and the West Bank for more than a year to a hillside in Lebanon. Most were leading figures from Hamas. Following the adoption of the Fatah-negotiated Oslo Accords in September 1993, Hamas assumed a low-key posture and waited to see what would happen. Oslo generated hope among Palestinians that Israel was prepared to pull out of the West Bank,

Gaza, and East Jerusalem and allow the emergence by 1999 of a Palestinian mini state in 22 per cent of the country.

Once hopes were dashed, the Second Intifada, the rising of the gun and bomb, erupted in 2000. Both Fatah and Hamas took up arms. Israel's Prime Minister Ariel Sharon responded by re-invading the West Bank in 2002 and assassinating Hamas' co-founders Shaikh Ahmed Yassin and Abdel Aziz Rantisi in 2004. When in 2005 the Second Intifada wound down, Sharon withdrew Israeli settlers and soldiers from Gaza and focused on expanding illegal settlements in the West Bank. In 2007, Hamas overcame an attempted coup by Fatah and seized power in Gaza. Nevertheless, Netanyahu — who served as prime minister between 2009-2021 and has been in office since December 2022 until now —

continued to see restive Fatah as Israel's main antagonist and allowed funds to flow into Gaza for Hamas.

Despite Hamas' home-made rockets occasionally striking Israel, Netanyahu was lulled into believing Hamas was not a serious threat until October 7th last year when its fighters crossed the Gaza-Israel border, killed 1,139 and kidnapped 251. While this event traumatised Israelis, Netanyahu postponed blame for ignoring Hamas by waging all-out war on Gaza, repressing Palestinians in the West Bank and East Jerusalem and bombing and occupying Lebanon. Once his war ends, Netanyahu will have to pay a high price for failing to anticipate Hamas' raid and face his trial in a Jerusalem court for bribery, fraud, and breach of trust. This is why the elimination of Sinwar makes no difference to Netanyahu.





# PSX stays bullish, gains 409 more points

ISLAMABAD (APP): The 100-Index of the Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) continued with bullish trend on Tuesday, gaining 409.06 points, a positive change of 0.48 percent, closing at 86,466.58 points against 86,057.52 points on the last trading day.

A total of 722,209,194 shares were traded during the day as compared to 474,949,535 shares the previous trading day, whereas the price of shares stood at Rs25.024 billion against Rs19.659 billion on the last trading day.

As many as 451 companies transacted their shares in the stock market, 231 of them recorded gains and 149

sustained losses, whereas the share price of 71 companies remained unchanged.

The three top trading companies were K-Electric Limited with 224,204,258 shares at Rs4.23 per share, WorldCall Telecom with 30,203,770 shares at Rs1.25 per share and Fauji Foods Limited with 26,100,952 shares at Rs9.11 per share.

Unilever Pakistan Foods Limited witnessed a maximum increase of Rs426.19 per share price, closing at Rs18,166.83, whereas the runner-up was Siemens Pakistan Engineering with Rs84.15 rise in its per share price to Rs925.66.

Pakistan Tobacco Comp-

any Limited witnessed a maximum decrease of Rs71.69 per share closing at Rs1,088.11 followed by Rafhan Maize Products Company Limited with Rs71.20 decline to close at Rs7,361.88.

**Ruppee sheds 05 paisa against dollar:** Pakistani rupee on Tuesday witnessed a devaluation of 05 paisa against the US dollar in the interbank trading and closed at Rs277.73 against the previous day's closing of Rs277.68.

However, according to the Forex Association of Pakistan (FAP), the buying and selling rates of the dollar in the open market stood at Rs277.30 and Rs278.80

respectively.

The price of Euro decreased by 37 paisa to close at Rs300.90 against the last day's closing of Rs301.27, according to the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP).

The Japanese yen came down by 01 paisa and closed at Rs1.84, whereas a decrease of 42 paisa was witnessed in the exchange rate of the British Pound, which traded at Rs361.14 as compared to the last day's closing of Rs361.56.

The exchange rates of the Emirates Dirham and Saudi Riyal increased by 01 paisa each to close at Rs75.61 and Rs73.95 respectively.

## Lifesaving healthcare reaches Tharparkar: First SIEHS base station launched



### F.P. Report

NAGARPARKAR: In a major leap forward for healthcare access in one of Sindh's most remote regions, Sindh Integrated Emergency & Health Services (SIEHS-1122) has officially launched its first emergency base station in the resilient town of Nagarparkar, District Tharparkar. This new facility promises to transform emergency medical care for communities that have long battled with the harsh desert environment and limited access to healthcare.

Nagarparkar, a rugged and remote area near the Indian border, is known for its beautiful yet unforgiving landscape, where access to basic services has always been a challenge. The region's population, approximately 1.6 million strong, has shown remark-

able resilience in the face of isolation and harsh living conditions.

The launch of the emergency base station is expected to significantly reduce the long-standing delays in accessing emergency care for residents, many of whom live in villages far from the nearest healthcare facilities.

The new station will provide critical ambulance services, reaching some of the most remote villages in Sindh, ensuring that help now arrives faster and more reliably than ever before.

Qasim Siraj Soomro, MPA and Parliamentary Secretary for Health, underscored the importance of this milestone, saying, "Tharparkar has faced unique healthcare challenges for decades. This base station marks a turning point, allowing us to provide life-saving services to

those who have long been underserved. With the support of SIEHS, we are now able to offer critical care exactly where it is needed."

Brig. Tarique Quadri Lakhari (R), CEO - SIEHS, emphasized the transformative impact of the facility: "This isn't just a service; it's a lifeline. For years, the people of Nagarparkar and its surrounding areas have waited for reliable emergency care. Today, we're making that a reality."

This initiative is part of a broader effort to improve healthcare services across Tharparkar, where residents have often faced perilous journeys across challenging terrain to seek medical assistance.

By significantly reducing response times, the new base station ensures that emergency aid is now available within minutes, even in the region's most

isolated corners.

Local leaders, healthcare professionals, and community members have hailed the launch as a vital step toward addressing the region's long-standing healthcare challenges. There is hope that it will save lives and improve the overall quality of life for the entire community, whose endurance and strength in the face of adversity are well-known.

Sindh Integrated Emergency & Health Services (SIEHS) is a section 42 not-for-profit organization established in collaboration with the Government of Sindh to provide comprehensive pre-hospital emergency healthcare services. Its core offerings include ambulance services, telemedicine, and training & development, all aimed at strengthening healthcare access across Sindh.

SIEHS operates throughout the province, providing 100% coverage in all 30 districts, both urban and rural. Its services are available 24/7 via the 1122 helpline, connecting patients to emergency care. SIEHS manages a fleet of over 472 vehicles, including ambulances, mortuary vans, and the recently introduced rapid response bike ambulances and mountain bike ambulances, designed to navigate congested areas and provide swift emergency response.

## Patch repair work completed

### F.P. Report

KARACHI: The patch repair work on the loop taxiway links at Peshawar Bacha Khan International Airport has been successfully completed. The maintenance activities on the loop taxiway links were carried out as scheduled, with the repairs on Loop Taxiway Links 'J' and 'H' completed on time.

A (NOTAM) (Notice to Airmen) regarding runway unavailability was issued for the period of October 18 to 22 due to these maintenance activities.

Following the completion of the repairs on the Loop Taxiway Links, Peshawar Airport will be available for flight operations starting today.

## Shipping activity at PQ

KARACHI (APP): Shipping activity was reported at the port where seven ships, X-Press Altair, Karlskrona, Maersk Sentosa, Valentina, Orange Victoria, CI-Huaiyang and Dravin scheduled to load/offload Container, Rice, Gasoline, Palm oil and LPG berthed at Qasim International Container Terminal, Multi-Purpose Terminal, FOTCO Oil Terminal and Sui Southern Gas Terminal respectively during last 24 hours.

Meanwhile two more ships, Scarlet Rosella and Bam Bam carrying Canola Seed and Gas oil also arrived at outer anchorage the port on 21st October.

A total of thirteen ships were engaged at PQA berths during the last 24 hours, out of them three ships, X-Press Altair, Karlskrona and Lusal left the port on today morning while two more ships, Happy Hero and Karpathos Dawn are expected to sail today.

their blood voluntarily.

Hiroshi Kawamura-MD, Yoshitaka Oishi-DMD, Muhammad Ali Lodi-Head Operations, Omer Butt-Head Procurement (CSR Managing Committee Officials) visited the Blood Donation Camp & appreciated the facilities setup by Pak Suzuki & Indus

Hospital & the enthusiasm of all the donors for their blood donation.

Another Blood Donation Campaign were held in Regional Office South Punjab on 18th & 21st October, 2024, in which dealers also participated; total 372 donors donated their blood voluntarily.

## Blood donation drive held



### F.P. Report

KARRACHI: Blood donation camp-2024 was organized in collaboration with Indus Hospital. Pak Suzuki, Vendors & Contractors, etc. Employees extensively participated in Blood Donation Campaign; total 372 donors donated

their blood voluntarily.

Hiroshi Kawamura-MD, Yoshitaka Oishi-DMD, Muhammad Ali Lodi-Head Operations, Omer Butt-Head Procurement (CSR Managing Committee Officials) visited the Blood Donation Camp & appreciated the facilities setup by Pak Suzuki & Indus

Hospital & the enthusiasm of all the donors for their blood donation.

Another Blood Donation Campaign were held in Regional Office South Punjab on 18th & 21st October, 2024, in which dealers also participated; total 372 donors donated their blood voluntarily.



KARACHI: Chairman & CEO Synergy Group Ahmed H. Kapadia presents his book "Executive Doodles" to Japanese Consul General in Karachi Hattori Masaru at gala dinner. Pakistan-Japan Business Forum Chairman Murtaza Mandiwalla also present on occasion.

## LC completes power project

### F.P. Report

KARACHI: Lucky Cement Limited is proud to announce the successful completion and commissioning of its 28.8 MW captive wind power project at the Company's Karachi Plant. The project, successfully executed within the stipulated timelines and budget, officially commenced operations Tuesday.

This significant milestone makes Lucky Cement the first company in Pakistan to implement a hybrid renewable energy project of this magnitude, combining both wind and solar power. With the addition of this wind power plant, Lucky Cement's total power generation capacity for self-consumption from renewable sources now stands at an impressive 55%.

Lucky Cement already operates Pakistan's largest solar captive plant, with a capacity of 42.8 MW, with 5.1 MW reflex energy storage solution at its Pezu Plant.

Noman Hassan, ED of Lucky Cement, stated, "Sustainability and the transition to clean energy have been integral components of Lucky Cement's long-term strategy. The installation of the wind power plant reaffirms the company's commitment to energy conservation and the promotion of green energy resources. Besides environmental benefits, this investment is expected to generate substantial cost savings and reduce country's carbon footprint."

Lucky Cement continues to set industry standards, leading the way in sustainable practices and adopting new green technologies for its operations.

## SECP & PSX host IPO Roundtable 2024

### F.P. Report

LAHORE: The Securities & Exchange Commission of Pakistan (SECP) and Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX), in a collaborative effort, held the IPO Roundtable 2024 in Lahore, themed, 'Empowering the Future of Capital Markets'. This roundtable was convened following the success of the IPO Summit held in Karachi in January 2024. The focus of the roundtable was to generate awareness among growth-driven private companies on how they can leverage the capital markets (IPO) to achieve their vision of growth, expansion, diversification, and corporatisation.

Key capital market stakeholders, including business leaders, market participants & Consultants to the Issue, investment banking professionals, regulators and potential issuers (totaling 30 companies) participated in the roundtable. Prominent participants included Mr. Akif Saeed, Chairman SECP; Mr. Abdul Rehman Warraich, Commissioner SECP, and team members from the Securities Market Division of the SECP. Mr. Ahmed Chinoy H.I. S.I., Board member PSX, led the team from PSX. The CTIs at the conference were led by the top management of AKD Securities Limited, Arif Habib Limited, Next Capital Limited, Integrated Equities Limited and Toplevel Securities Limited. The (new and old) listed compa-

nies from Lahore region present at the conference included leadership from Fast Cables Limited, Hi Tech Lubricants Limited, Honda Atlas Cars, Pak Electron Limited (PEL), and Packages Limited, among others.

The aim of the conference included discussing, advising and clearing the pathway to encourage companies to raise equity and debt through the PSX platform. Particularly, the conference addressed the concerns and queries of companies aspiring to list on the Stock Exchange with the objective of increasing their understanding of the IPO process and facilitating them.

The listed companies' representatives shared their motivation, results, and benefits reaped of listing with the potential issuers. They discussed how their corporate governance and relationship with their stakeholders improved post-listing. Speeches, briefings and discussions held by the leadership of the SECP, PSX, CTIs and the listed companies aimed at encouraging potential issuers & unlisted companies to list and providing them the necessary guidance from a regulatory and procedural standpoint.

Akif Saeed, Chairman SECP, in his welcome address, highlighted that the capital market provides flexible, efficient, and cost-effective solutions to businesses pursuing debt and equity capital raising options depending on their

needs. He discussed the regulatory measures and responded to queries regarding ease of listing from a regulatory perspective.

Ahmed Chinoy, Board member PSX, added, "It is indeed a step in the right direction that after the successful convening of the IPO Summit in Karachi earlier this year, we are now holding this important IPO Roundtable in Lahore. IPOs are much more than just a means for companies to raise funds. The transition from private to public market status represents a significant milestone in any company's journey, offering access to a broader pool of capital and the prospect of increasing corporate governance & transparency. Today's session gives us a unique opportunity to explore how we can further unlock this potential by addressing the challenges that companies face when considering going public".

Ms. Raeda Latif, Chief Marketing & Business Development Officer at PSX, gave a presentation with a briefing to the attendees of the conference, on the benefits of listing for the companies themselves and for the economy as a whole.

In the concluding remarks, Mr. Abdul Rehman Warraich, Commissioner SECP, emphasized the importance of early adoption of corporate governance structures as the companies begin their journey of listing and progress going forward.

## IBA hosts launch ceremony for 'Women Leadership Forum'

### F.P. Report

KARACHI: Institute of Business Administration (IBA), Karachi hosted a launch ceremony for Women Leadership Forum (WLF), in collaboration with IBA-ORIC & IBA Leadership Club, at the IBA City Campus. The event attracted participants from various industries, including NGOs, banking, finance, health, and academia.

Commencing the event, Dr. Irum Saba, Associate Professor, School of Business Studies (IBA-SBS) and Founder, WLF, delivered the opening remarks, followed by a warm welcome from Dr. S Akbar Zaidi, Executive Director, IBA Karachi.

Ms. Sultana Siddiqui, President of Hum Network, graced the occasion as Special Guest, and Ms. Shazia Marri, Member of the National Assembly, as Chief Guest, who shared a recorded video message with the audience and offered her support for the cause.

The event featured insightful panel discussions on the 'Need for Women Leadership Advocacy' and 'Women Leadership: The Way Forward,' which sparked engaging conversations on the challenges and solutions in the path to leadership for women. The panels featured specialists from diverse fields including academia, entertainment, banking and financial sectors. The Women Leadership Forum aims to empower women by providing a supportive platform for sharing experiences, mentorship, and networking with allies committed to fostering women's leadership. The event underscored the importance of collaboration between men and women in driving change and highlighted that family support plays a crucial role in women's achievements.

Dr. Abdullah Sheikh, Dean IBA-SBS, delivered the vote of thanks, and the event concluded with a Networking Tea.



## FCCI resolving traders' problems

FAISALABAD (APP): The FCCI is an elected forum of the business community which is trying its best to resolve genuine problems of businessmen.

This was said by Shahid Mumtaz Bajwa, Vice President of the Faisalabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry (FCCI), while addressing the first meeting of the FCCI Standing Committee on Super Market

Association (SMA).

"We have workable relations with the government departments", he said and adding that the issues raised from this platform were given due consideration by the concerned government departments. All super stores should get the membership of the FCCI on priority basis to resolve their genuine issues, he added.

He said that FBR officials

would be invited to visit the FCCI and resolve the issues.

He announced that this standing committee would invite concerned departments to promote mutual understanding, adding that officials of the Punjab Food Authority would be invited with a request to provide new rules.

He said the governor SBP was expected to visit Faisalabad during the next

week.

Attaulah Sarwar, Hajji Muhammad Aslam, Rana Safdar Ali, Muhammad Ashfaq, Qaisar Abbas, Saeed Ahmad, Tariq Mushtaq, M Akram Nasir, Haider Ali, M Hassan, Moazzam Ali, Mian Sajjad, Rasheed Sharif, Saif-ur-Rehman, Saeed Ahmad, Hajji Islam and Muhammad Faisal also participated in the meeting.





## In brief

## UVAS holds Taekwondo Championship

LAHORE (APP): The University of Veterinary and Animal Sciences Lahore in collaboration with Higher Education Commission Islamabad (HEC) arranged All Pakistan Inter-varsity Taekwondo Women Championship here in UVAS City Campus Sports Complex on Tuesday. UVAS Vice Chancellor Meritorious Prof Dr Muhammad Younus (DLAI, T.I) along with Dean Faculty of Veterinary Science Prof Dr Aneela Zameer Durrani inaugurated Taekwondo (Women) Championship while UVAS Chairman Sports Board Prof Dr Muhammad Ijaz presided over the concluding ceremony and distributed trophies among winners of contest. Vice Chancellor Lahore Garrison University Maj General (retired) Khalil Dar was the guest of honour. Director Sports Rana Amjad Iqbal and a large number of faculty members, students and players from 17 universities of Pakistan were present. According to the competition results, the Lahore Garrison University won first position, Punjab University (PU) Lahore second position while University of Lahore stood on third position. Meanwhile, UVAS team performed marvelously and its student Zil-e-Norain secured bronze medal in second Interdepartmental National Karate Championship & won 02 Bronze Medals in Intersarsity Taekwondo Championship.

## Hirschner to step out of retirement

PARIS (AFP): Ski legend Marcel Hirschner will make his return from retirement at this weekend's World Cup giant slalom, the Dutch federation announced on Tuesday. Hirschner, 35, retired in 2019 having claimed rock-star status in Austria after notching up 67 World Cup wins, two Olympic golds, seven world titles and a record eight consecutive overall World Cup crystal globes (2012-19). After five years out, however, he will make his comeback in Sunday's season opener for the Netherlands, his mother's largely flat homeland. "Next weekend traditionally marks the start of the Alpine Skiing World Cup season with the giant slalom in Soelden," the Dutch federation said in a statement. "For TeamNLsnow, this weekend will be marked by a historic event, as Marcel Hirschner will make his debut under the Dutch flag. "We wish Marcel the best of luck!" The federation did add that Hirschner would only start, however, "if he is sufficiently fit." Due to an illness in recent weeks, the decision on whether he competes or not will be taken at the last minute." Hirschner's last race was on March 17, 2019 in Soldeu, Andorra, where he finished 14th in the slalom, even though he had already secured an eighth crystal globe, the award given to the World Cup winner and which the Austrian skier never relinquished between 2012 and 2019. Hirschner trained during the summer in New Zealand but returned home earlier than expected and does not expect to be fighting it out with Marco Odermatt, the runaway winner of last season's overall title, for this year's crystal globe. "Aiming for a place in the top 15 wouldn't currently be realistic," he told Austrian television this month. A native of Annaberg in the Salzburg region, Hirschner won two Olympic titles in 2018 in Pyeongchang, in giant slalom and combined. His return may be the first step in trying to make the 2026 Games in Italy.

## Cricket, hockey, squash among sports axed for Commonwealth Games

LONDON (Agencies): Glasgow has been confirmed as the host city for the troubled 2026 Commonwealth Games, which will be a slimmed-down version of the multi-sport event.

The future of the 2026 Games was thrown into doubt when the Australian state of Victoria, the original hosts, withdrew last year, citing rising costs.

But the Scottish government effectively gave the green light to Glasgow last month and the Commonwealth Games Federation (CGF) announced on Tuesday that the 2014 hosts will stage the next Games, from July 23 to August 2, 2026.

The Games will feature just 10 sports compared with the 19 on show at the 2022 edition in the English city of Birmingham.

Para sports will once again be fully integrated as "a key priority and point of difference for the Games", with six para sports included in the programme.

The schedule will feature athletics and para athletics, swimming and para swimming, artistic gymnastics, track cycling and para track cycling, netball, weightlifting and para powerlift-



ing, boxing, judo, bowls and para bowls, as well as 3x3 basketball and 3x3 wheelchair basketball.

Among the sports missing out compared to the 2022 Games are triathlon, diving, hockey, T20 cricket, squash, badminton and rugby sevens.

Around 3,000 athletes are expected to compete from up to 74 Commonwealth nations and territories. The CGF said Glasgow 2026 would deliver more than \$130 million of inward investment into the city.

"On behalf of the entire Commonwealth sport movement, we are delighted to officially con-

firm that the 2026 Commonwealth Games will take place in the host city of Glasgow," said CGF chief executive Katie Sadleir.

Britain and Australia have staged five of the past six editions between them but Sadleir believes a slimmed-down model will increase the potential pool of future hosts.

"The 2026 Games will be a bridge to the Commonwealth Games of tomorrow," said Sadleir. "An exciting first step in our journey to reset and redefine the Games as a truly collaborative, flexible and sustainable model for

the future that minimises costs, reduces the environmental footprint, and enhances social impact — in doing so increasing the scope of countries capable of hosting."

Commonwealth Games Scotland chairman Ian Reid said it had not been easy to decide which sports to include.

"I think everybody recognises that these events need to be more affordable, lighter and we would have loved to have all of our sports and all of our athletes competing but unfortunately it's just not deliverable or affordable for this timeframe," he told the BBC.

But he said the programme could vary for future Games and may increase in size depending on venues. The CGF said there would be no need for public funding to deliver the Glasgow Games, with Australia providing part of the costs after Victoria's withdrawal.

Victoria pulled out after citing a projected cost of more than \$4 billion. The Commonwealth Games, held every four years, evolved out of the British Empire Games and is still made up mainly of countries and territories once subject to British imperial rule.

## Four more matches decided in Lahore Smart City Polo

LAHORE (Monitoring Desk): Four more matches were decided on the second day of the Lahore Smart City Polo in Pink Tournament at Lahore Polo Club on Tuesday.

The matches attracted a large crowd of spectators and families. The event was graced by the presence of Lahore Polo Club President Malik Azam Hayat Noon, Executive Committee members, Secretary Lt Col (Retd) Aamir, and several former players.

In the first match of the day, FG/Din Polo defeated Lahore Smart City by 10-7. For FG/Din Polo, Raja Mikail Sami scored five goals, Mian Abbas Mukhtar and Rafi Sheikh each scored two, while Sahar Yaghoobi added one goal. For Lahore Smart City, Agha Musa Ali Khan smashed in five goals, while Farooq Amin Soofi and Bilal Hai contributed one goal each.

In the second match, SQ Seagold outpaced One Degree, winning 9-4. English player Charlotte Sweeney fired in four goals for the winning side, while Azam Hayat Noon and Taimur Ali Malik and Ahmed Bilal Riaz each scored one goal. For Black Horse Paints, Shah Shamy Alam hammered three goals, and Chaudhary Hassan Mansoor added two.

The fourth and last match of the day saw Platinum Homes emerge victorious over Diamond Paints with a 7-5 win. Bilal Noon converted three goals for Platinum Homes, while Lt Col (R) Omar Minhas and Emelia scored two each. For Diamond Paints, Raja Jalal Aarsalan scored four goals, and Mir Shoaib Ahmed added one. On Wednesday (October 23, 2024), four more important matches will be played at the Lahore Polo Club.

## Guardiola applauds Man City mentality ahead of Sparta Prague test

MANCHESTER (AFP): Pep Guardiola has praised the spirit and desire of his Manchester City players after their last-gasp win against Wolves as he prepares for Wednesday's Champions League clash with Sparta Prague.

City, unbeaten this season, go into the game buoyed by John Stones' 95th-minute winner at Molineux on Sunday, which kept them on the shoulders of Premier League leaders Liverpool.

The 2023 European champions have four points from their first two games in the group stage of the revamped Champions League after a 0-0 draw with Inter Milan and a 4-0 win against Slovan Bratislava.

City, who have won four consecutive Premier League titles, are playing in European football's elite club competition for the 14th straight season.

Guardiola, speaking Tuesday at his pre-match press conference, said the manner of the win at Wolves and the way his men celebrated showed their enduring hunger.

"How we celebrate when a team now is in the position in the bottom (Wolves), how we celebrate in October, not in May or April like it's happened, I feel the team still have the passion," he said.

"How we celebrate in the locker room, I still feel 'OK, they still want it, still we are there' and that means a lot to me, a lot. "They know, the team, how difficult it is to be consistent for six, seven years. You can be consistent for a month, for a season, but six, seven years and still now we are there.

All the teams go down, still we are in that position." Guardiola said he was "more than happy" with how his team were coping in the absence of key midfielder Rodri, who has been ruled out of the rest of the season with a knee injury. The City boss said it was important to make home advantage count against their Czech opponents, with tough away trips to come to Sporting Lisbon, Juventus and Paris Saint-Germain.

The new-look league format for this season's competition means only the top eight teams out of 36 automatically qualify for the knockout stages after the initial eight-match schedule.

"It is not easy," said Guardiola. "The games we have at home we have to close it, otherwise it'll be difficult to finish in the first eight and that's the target we want to achieve."



## Warner offers to end Test retirement to face India

SYDNEY (Agencies): Former Australia opener David Warner says he is available to come out of Test retirement to play in the upcoming series against India. Steve Smith has opened alongside Usman Khawaja in the four Tests Australia have played since Warner, 37, retired in January.

However, Smith will move back to number four for the series against India, starting in November, because all-rounder Cameron Green is out with a back injury, meaning Australia have to find another partner for Khawaja.

"I'm always available, just got to pick up the phone," Warner told Code Sports. "I'm always dead serious."

Warner said he has messaged both Australia coach Andrew McDonald and chief selector George Bailey about returning. However, he said McDonald replied saying "you retired". Cameron Bancroft, Marcus Harris, Sam Konstas and Matthew Renshaw are the most likely candidates to partner Khawaja, with no indication Australia are considering a recall for Warner.

Australia host India in five Tests from November to January, with the tourists looking to retain the Border-Gavaskar Trophy. Warner scored 8,786 runs at an average of 44.59 in 112 Tests, with 26 centuries, his final match coming in victory over Pakistan at his home Sydney Cricket Ground. The left-hander also retired from one-day internationals in the lead-up to his final Test, and from T20 internationals following Australia's exit from the T20 World Cup in June.

Warner is continuing to play T20 franchise cricket and has signed a two-year deal to represent Sydney Thunder in the Big Bash League. He has not played in the Sheffield Shield, Australia's domestic red-ball competition, since 2021, but said he would be "more than happy" to play in the next round of fixtures if he was "really needed" for the India series. He added: "I did retire for the right reasons to finish the game, and I wanted to finish. But my hand is up if they desperately need someone. I'm not going to shy away from that."

Smith struggled in his four Tests as opener, scoring 171 runs at an average of 28.50, with Green's absence after spinal surgery allowing the former captain to move back to his preferred spot at number four.

Bancroft, Harris and Renshaw have all struggled in their limited Test careers, though Bancroft, who has not played for Australia since the 2019 Ashes, has been in fine form in the Sheffield Shield over the past two years.

New South Wales opener Konstas, 19, has only played five first-class matches, but hit centuries in both innings in the opening round of this year's Shield.

## Bangladesh battle at 101-3 as South Africa threaten innings defeat

MIRPUR (AFP): Bangladesh were battling to save the first Test against South Africa on Tuesday after reaching 101-3 at stumps and still needing another 101 to avoid an innings defeat.

Mahmudul Hasan Joy (38) and Mushfiqur Rahim (31) were unbeaten at the end of play in Mirpur. Their 42-run stand for the fourth wicket also made Mushfiqur the first Bangladeshi to cross 6,000 career Test runs.

Bangladesh lost two early wickets to quick Kagiso Rabada in reply to South Africa's first innings of 308, which secured a 202-run lead for the visitors thanks to wicketkeeper Kyle Verreynne's century.

Shadman Islam was first to go, caught at short leg for

one in the third over.

Three balls later, Mominul Haque edged and Wiaan Mulder took a sharp catch at third slip for naught, leaving the hosts dangling on 19-2 before tea. Captain Najmul Hossain Shanto fell lbw to Keshav Maharaj after a gruelling 23 off 49 balls.

Bangladesh would have lost another wicket off the last of the day when Mahmudul went for a wild slog and missed the ball, avoiding a stumping in the nick of time. Verreynne was last man out in South Africa's first innings after scoring eight fours and two sixes in his 114.

He put on 119 for the seventh wicket with Mulder, who made 54, in reply to Bangladesh's first

innings of 106.

It was South Africa's highest seventh-wicket stand against Bangladesh, after the pair resumed at 140-6 at the start of play.

Dane Piedt, dismissed lbw for 32 by Mehidy Hasan Miraz, partnered Verreynne in a stand of 66 runs for the ninth wicket.

Bangladesh quick bowler Hasan Mahmud took two wickets in two balls in the 65th over, the only spot of brightness in a morning session where South Africa added 103.

A sharp delivery on off stump induced Mulder to edge to Shadman Islam at slip, then Hasan sent Maharaj's off stump flying with a reverse-swinging delivery that ducked back late to beat the bat.



LAHORE: Players struggling to get hold on the ball during polo match played between FG/Din Polo Vs Lahore Smart City Polo team during Polo in pink cup 2024 at Lahore Polo club. —APP Photo

## Pakistan, England optimistic to put up a good show in 3rd Test

ISLAMABAD (APP): With the third and final Test between England and Pakistan just around the corner, both teams are gearing up for an intense battle in the third Test beginning Thursday at the Pindi Stadium, Rawalpindi.

England batter Harry Brook expressed his optimism about the pitch, saying, "I think it'll be like any other Pakistani pitch, good to bat on for the first few days, and then we can expect turn later in the game," he said in a press conference at Pindi Stadium, Rawalpindi on Tuesday. Brook, who scored 317 runs in the first Test, remains hungry for more. "I'd love to play a big part in this game."

Brook acknowledged the threat posed by Pakistan's spin duo, Sajid Khan and Noman Ali, saying, "Both can play a massive part in their team this week (3rd Test)." He drew confidence from England's previous win in Rawalpindi, stating, "We'll bring that momentum into this game and put

on a good performance."

Pakistan's Test team vice-captain Saud Shakeel emphasized the team's renewed morale after their comeback win in the second Test. "We'll try to repeat the same game plan in this game," Shakeel praised Noman Ali's experience and expected contributions similar to those in the second Test.

To a question, he said Mir Hamza is nursing a right gluteal niggle and has also missed practice for the past two days. Shakeel observed the weather difference between Multan and Rawalpindi, noting, "It's hot and humid in Multan, whereas Rawalpindi favors fast bowlers." However, he anticipates spin on the Pindi pitch. He also emphasized the importance of adapting to spinners in different series and matches.

The stage is set for an enthralling encounter, with both teams eager to claim the series. Both teams also conducted a rigorous practice session at the Pindi Stadium to gear up for the third Test. The series is

poised at 1-1, following two thrilling Tests in Multan. England dominated the first Test, securing a convincing innings and 47-run victory. Meanwhile, Pakistan bounced back strongly in the second Test, winning by 152 runs.

## England pick Ahmed as third spinner for deciding Pakistan Test

RAWALPINDI (AFP): England on Tuesday picked Rehan Ahmed as a third slow bowler for the series-deciding final Test against Pakistan on a dry Rawalpindi pitch which is expected to take spin.

The 20-year-old leg-spinner will form a three-pronged spin attack when the match begins Thursday alongside left-arm Jack Leach and off-break bowler Shoaib Bashir.

The three-match series is level at 1-1 after England won the first Test by an innings and 47 runs in Multan.

Pakistan used the same pitch for the second match which they won by 152 runs, with their spinners

taking all 20 wickets.

Seam bowler Gus Atkinson was recalled with fast bowlers Brydon Carse and Matthew Potts dropping out of the side.

"There are two changes from the second Test in Multan with seamer Gus Atkinson returns and leg-spinner Rehan Ahmed is included," said an England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) statement.

Ahmed, who took five wickets on his Test debut in Karachi in England's thumping 3-0 sweep of Pakistan in 2022, is included for the first time since a Test against India in Rajkot earlier this year.

England's decision to bring in a third spinner is prompted by another grass-less pitch prepared at Rawalpindi with Pakistan deploying industrial-sized fans and patio heaters to dry the square.

England team for the third Test: Ben Stokes (captain), Zak Crawley, Ben Duckett, Ollie Pope, Joe Root, Harry Brook, Jamie Smith, Gus Atkinson, Rehan Ahmed, Jack Leach, Shoaib Bashir.

## Quaid-e-Azam Trophy to commence from 26 October

LAHORE (Monitoring Desk): Quaid-e-Azam Trophy, Pakistan's premier first-class tournament, will begin from 26 October. Eighteen teams from the 16 regions will participate in the four-day tournament that will conclude on 19 December.

The 18 teams include Abbottabad Region, AJK Region, Bahawalpur Region, Dera Murad Jamali Region, Faisalabad Region, FATA Region, Hyderabad Region, Islamabad Region, Karachi Region Blues, Karachi Region Whites, Lahore Region Whites, Lahore Region Blues, Larkana Region, Multan

Region, Peshawar Region, Quetta Region, Rawalpindi Region and Sialkot Region.

Karachi Region Whites will defend the Quaid-e-Azam Trophy title this year after the Sarfaraz Ahmed-led side defeated Faisalabad Region in the final by 456 runs at the Gaddafi Stadium from 22 to 26 October 2023.

Abdullah Khurram Niazi, Director - Domestic Cricket Operations:

"Quaid-e-Azam Trophy is the pinnacle of domestic cricket in Pakistan as it is not just a tournament but also an event that showcases the immense talent across

the country and prepares them for the challenges of international cricket.

"As always, we will continue to provide the best possible platform for players to excel and show their capabilities on the biggest stage in domestic cricket as they will be rubbing their shoulders with the best players of the country.

"Earlier we demonstrated a successful Champions One-Day Cup, and are fully committed to strengthening our domestic structure. The successful execution of Quaid-e-Azam Trophy remains at the heart of this commitment."





## In brief

### NHMP foils smuggling bid

ISLAMABAD (APP): National Highway and Motorway Police (NHMP) on Tuesday foiled a bid to smuggle a huge quantity of drugs and recovered 10 kilograms of heroin from a vehicle near Tarnol, M-1 Toll Plaza. According to NHMP North Zone spokesman, Muhammad Saqib, the NHMP on a tip-off chased a suspicious vehicle while the accused upon seeing motorway police abandoned the vehicle and fled. On searching the vehicle the NHMP found 10kg of heroin and handed it over to the Anti-Narcotics Force for further legal action. The accused was trying to smuggle drugs from Peshawar into Punjab, he added.

### Police arrests 3 drug dealers

RAWALPINDI (APP): The Rawalpindi Police, during its ongoing crackdown against drug dealers, arrested three accused with more than 5 kilograms of hashish from different areas of the city. According to a police spokesman, the Civil Lines Police recovered 2.1 kg hashish from accused Nauman, while the Sadar Wah Police arrested accused Munir with 1.6 kg of the contraband item. Similarly, the Sadar Baruni Police nabbed accused Zeeshan after recovering 1.4 kg hashish from his possession. Meanwhile, eight other suspects were arrested for possessing liquor, and illegal arms and ammunition during police actions against the criminal elements, the spokesman said. Waris Khan Police recovered 10 liters of liquor from accused Bilawal and 6 liters of liquor from accused Hasan, while Rata Amaral Police arrested accused Irfan with 6 liters of liquor, and Kalar Syedan Police nabbed accused Danish with 11 bottles and accused Hanuq Mehboob with one bottle of liquor. Bani, Gujar Khan and Kahuta Police recovered a 30-bore pistol with ammunition each from accused Zain, Rizwan, and Mamun respectively.

### Police holds dengue awareness walk

RAWALPINDI (APP): The Rawalpindi Police in collaboration with the Health Department on Tuesday held a walk to create awareness among the public about the Dengue disease. The walk was attended by Member of the Punjab Assembly Zaib-un-Nisa, high police officers including Senior Superintendent of Police-Investigation, doctors and civil society members. According to a police spokesman, the Rawalpindi Police had formed a special team under the supervision of Divisional Superintendent of Police Headquarters for creating public awareness about dengue prevention ways. The team had been taking measures for dengue prevention and awareness in coordination with the Health Department, the spokesman said. The participants of the walk sensitized the people that the deadly disease could be prevented through precautions such as keeping homes and workplaces clean; not allowing water to stand anywhere, including roofs, gutters, pots, air coolers, etc, besides use of mosquito repellents and sprays.

### Two lifters gang arrested

RAWALPINDI (APP): The Dharmyal Police on Tuesday arrested two members of a gang of bike lifters and recovered five stolen motorcycles from their possession. According to a police spokesman, the arrested accused were identified as Khanzada and Waqar.

# NA speaker, British MP call for strengthening Pak-UK partnerships

ISLAMABAD (APP): National Assembly Speaker Sardar Ayaz Sadiq and British MP Mohammad Yasin on Tuesday vowed for strengthening Pakistan-UK partnerships, especially parliamentary cooperation.

During a courtesy visit at Parliament House, British Member of Parliament from the House of Commons, Mohammad Yasin and Speaker emphasised the importance of furthering the strong partnership between Pakistan

and the United Kingdom across multiple areas of mutual interest, including enhanced parliamentary cooperation.

Speaker Sardar Ayaz Sadiq highlighted the long-standing and exceptional bilateral ties between Pakistan and the UK, which are built on a foundation of mutual respect and cooperation.

He expressed optimism that continued interaction between the legislatures of both nations would foster further growth in various

sectors, driving momentum in bilateral relations.

Reflecting on the ongoing parliamentary cooperation, the Speaker emphasized the significance of the Pakistan-UK Parliamentary Friendship Group, describing it as an active and vibrant platform that plays a key role in strengthening ties between the two countries. He also stressed that high-level parliamentary exchanges would serve to further solidify these relations.



## CTP devises traffic plan for Pak-Eng cricket match

RAWALPINDI (APP): The City Traffic Police (CTP) Rawalpindi has devised a special plan for maintaining smooth traffic flow on the city roads during the Pakistan-England Test cricket match scheduled to begin at the Rawalpindi Cricket Stadium on Thursday.

Some 370 traffic police personnel, including eight DSPs/Circle in-charges, 40 inspectors/sector in-charges and 318 wardens would be on roads to maintain traffic flow during the five-day match, Chief Traffic Officer (CTO) Beenish Fatima said in a statement on Tuesday.

The CTO said additional personnel would be deployed to keep the traffic flowing on alternate routes during the movement of cricket teams. The Murree Road, she said, would be completely closed from Faizabad to Double Road at the time of arrival and departure of the cricket teams from the stadium. During the time, the traffic coming from Islamabad to Rawalpindi would be diverted from Faizabad to Expressway, while the traffic from Rawalpindi would be able to enter Islamabad via Saidpur Road using 6th Road.

Similarly, the traffic from Ghousia Chowk would be diverted to the Kurry Road via Farooq Azam Road. She said during the match, the Stadium Road, from 9th Avenue Chowk to Double Road Turn, would remain fully closed for traffic. The traffic coming from Islamabad via 9th Avenue would be able to enter Rawalpindi through Expressway via Faizabad, and IJP Road from Pindora Chungi, Katarian, Carriage Factory and Pirwadhai Mor Chowk, while those going to 9th Avenue from Murree Road via Double Road would enter Islamabad from Faizabad.

The CTO said five spaces had been specified for parking of vehicles, from where the shuttle service arranged by the district administration would carry spectators to the stadium. She said the CTP would display banners at different places for the awareness of people about alternate routes during the cricket match.

## Chairman PMYP reiterates the importance of Youth in nation-building

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chairman of the Prime Minister's Youth Programme (PMYP), Rana Mashhood Ahmed Khan on Tuesday reiterated the importance of youth in nation-building and assured the National Press Club (NPC) representatives that the government, through the Youth Programme, remains committed to supporting the young people of Pakistan in every possible way.

In a meeting aimed at discussing the role of youth in national development, Rana Mashhood Ahmed Khan was widely regarded as one of the best choices for championing youth causes, noting his deep commitment to providing

opportunities for young Pakistanis and creating a pathway for their success.

The NPC also highlighted his strategic initiatives aimed at fostering skill development, educational opportunities, and overall growth for the nation's youth.

The meeting concluded with both sides agreeing on the need for continued collaboration and dialogue to ensure that the voices and aspirations of youth are fully represented in national policies and development plans. Secretary NPC Ms Nayyer Ali, Members Executive Council, NPC Ahmed Mansoor, Aamir Butt and others were present.

## ICT arrest eight accused for violating dengue SOPs

ISLAMABAD (APP): In an effort to combat the spread of dengue in the Federal Capital, the district administration is actively conducting operations and arrested eight accused over violations of dengue SOPs.

The spokesman of Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) administration said that the Assistant Commissioner Pothohar led an operation resulting in the arrest of eight individuals for failing to follow dengue standard operating procedures (SOPs).

On the occasion, District Commissioner (DC) Islamabad, Irfan Nawaz Memon emphasized the need for strict action against anyone violating dengue prevention guidelines. The DC reiterated that effective prevention measures are essential in controlling the outbreak. He also called for raising public awareness and adherence to preventive measures are crucial steps.

Meanwhile, the district administration urged the residents to join the fight against dengue by cooperating with their efforts. The message is clear: communi-

ty involvement is vital for eradicating this health threat.

Furthermore, the authorities continue to monitor the situation closely, implementing necessary measures to reduce the risk of dengue transmission. They are encouraging everyone to stay vigilant and report any potential breeding sites for mosquitoes.

The spokesman said that the arrests serve as a warning to others who may disregard dengue prevention protocols. The administration is determined to take all necessary steps to protect the community from this disease.

Residents are encouraged to maintain cleanliness in their surroundings and eliminate stagnant water, which is a breeding ground for mosquitoes. The administration believes that collective efforts will yield positive results in the fight against dengue, he added.

The anti-dengue operations would continue as part of the district administration's commitment to public health. Through education and enforcement, officials aim to create a safer environment for all.

## IESCO issues power shutdown programme

ISLAMABAD (APP): Islamabad Electric Supply Company (IESCO) on Tuesday issued a power suspension programme for Wednesday for various areas of its region due to necessary maintenance and routine development work.

According to IESCO Spokesperson, the power supply of different feeders and grid stations would remain suspended for the period from 08:00 AM to 12:00 PM, Islamabad Circle, Lohi Bhir Feeder, Rawalpindi City Circle, Shams Colony, Muslimabad Feeders, Rawalpindi Cantt Circle, Rahmatabad, II Feeder Power supply temporarily suspended due to installation of AMI meters. Due to system maintenance / development works, From 08:00 AM to 01:00 PM, Islamabad Circle, Athal, Shahpur, Treet, T&T, B.Khu-I&II, NIH, Galf City, Mangial Feeders, Rawalpindi City Circle, Ameer Hamza, Madina Colony, Officer Colony, Lakho Road, Dhok Hasu, Pirwadhahi Quaidabad, Muslimabad, Gulzar Shaheed, Ahsanabad, Industrial, Rajahabad.

## BISP, ADB join hands to empower beneficiaries

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chairperson of the Benazir Income Support Program (BISP), Senator Rubina Khalid in a meeting with the Country Director of the Asian Development Bank (ADB), Emma Fan held Tuesday discussed initiatives for empowering beneficiaries of the programme through imparting skill-based training.

The meeting focused on promoting a future partnership between BISP and ADB, identifying key sectors for skill training of deserving families, facilitating international certifications to help beneficiaries secure employment abroad.

strengthening coordination with provincial poverty graduation programs and awareness campaigns for deserving women.

On this occasion, Senator Rubina Khalid highlighted that BISP is currently providing financial support to 9.3 million deserving families, a number expected to rise to 10 million by the end of the year. To further economically empower these families, BISP is initiating a skill training program. She emphasized the importance of acquiring international certifications to help beneficiaries secure employment abroad.

Senator Rubina Khalid also stressed the need to link existing provincial-level poverty graduation and skill development programs with BISP.

Country Director, Emma Fan assured ADB's full support in enhancing BISP's efforts to uplift deserving families and strengthen the ongoing partnership.

Both parties agreed to hold further consultations to identify suitable sectors for skill training and develop a comprehensive strategy for implementing key initiatives, including raising awareness among deserving women.

## IG holds online Open Court to address public grievances

ISLAMABAD (APP): Inspector General of Police (IGP) Islamabad, Syed Ali Nasir Rizvi, held an online khuli kachehri in his office from 12:00 p.m. to 01:00 p.m. on Tuesday.

A public relation officer told APP: citizens were provided with a telephone number during the E-Khuli Kachehri. He said IG Syed Ali Nasir Rizvi personally listened to the issues raised by citizens, and the AIG Investigations/ Complaints was also present on the occasion. During the kachehri, IGP listened to telephone calls from citizens and assigned relevant senior police officers to promptly resolve their issues, he said.

Citizens raised concerns regarding personal matters, delays in FIR registration, incomplete investigations, car and motorcycle thefts, and other issues, he added.

IG Rizvi emphasized that delays in case investigations would not be tolerated, and all police officers were instructed to conduct thorough investigations.

Moreover, IG mentioned that professional beggars would be eradicated, and legal action would be taken against them.

He said measures would also be implemented to combat dacoits and robberies, and effective patrolling would be increased. The protection of citizens' lives and property is paramount, the IG Rizvi said, and Islamabad Police will take firm action against criminals.

Rizvi stressed that maximum arrests of proclaimed offenders, criminals, and court absconders would be made. IG Rizvi expressed his determination to ensure the peace and tranquility of the federal capital would not be compromised by anyone. He said efforts would be made to eliminate the land mafia, drug dealers, and extortionists from the city.

IG also emphasized that drug abuse would not be allowed to proliferate, and under no circumstances would criminals be permitted to jeopardize the future of the younger generation.

IG Syed Ali Nasir Rizvi said that complaints from citizens against police officers are taken very seriously. However, he emphasized that Islamabad Police is a force of martyrs and heroes who have sacrificed their lives for the protection of citizens' lives, property, and dignity.

Syed Ali Nasir Rizvi reiterated that no corrupt element would be tolerated within this organization of martyrs and heroes. Corruption, abuse of authority, and misconduct toward citizens would be dealt with through stringent disciplinary action, IG added.

As a result, citizens praised the IG Rizvi via social media for this initiative of holding an online Khuli Kachehri. He mentioned that such initiatives play a crucial role in fostering friendly relations between the public and the police. Syed Ali Nasir Rizvi assured that Islamabad Police would leave no stone unturned in protecting the lives and property of its citizens.

## Rural women playing vital role in economic growth: Romina

ISLAMABAD (APP): Coordinator to Prime Minister on Climate Change, Romina Khurshid Alam on Tuesday said that in any society where sustainable development is paramount, the pivotal role of rural women in agriculture and community development cannot be overlooked.

Addressing as chief guest at the 17th Annual Rural Women Leadership Training Conference at the Lok Virsa open-air auditorium organized by civil society organisations here, she said that rural women are not only the backbone of agricultural production but also vital contributors to economic growth, food security, and social cohesion.

Accounting for a significant portion of the agricultural workforce in the country, rural women provide a major labour force for key agricultural activities including planting, harvesting and managing livestock, ensuring that families and communities have access to adequate food and health, she added.

"Their traditional knowledge and innovative practices enhance productivity and contribute to sustainable farming methods. By empowering women with resources, training, and access to markets, we can increase agricultural output and improve food security for millions", the PM's coordinator remarked.

She further said that beyond farming, rural women are crucial for economic diversification. Many engage in small-scale enterprises, from food processing to handicrafts, creating

jobs and boosting local economies. Their entrepreneurial spirit can drive innovation and resilience in rural areas, laying the groundwork for sustainable economic growth.

Rural women are now seen more at the forefront of community development activities. Because, they take on leadership roles in local organizations, advocate for their rights, and mobilize resources for various initiatives. Their involvement fosters social cohesion and empowers communities to address challenges collaboratively, the PM's coordinator highlighted.

Highlighting women's immense role in climate resilience building and environmental sustainability in the country, Romina Alam said as stewards of the land, rural women are crucial for promoting environmental sustainability and boosting as well as sustaining climate resilience activities in different socio-economic areas, particularly agriculture, water management and low-carbon energy development.

She also highlighted that various study findings on women's role in sustainable community and rural development and natural resource management in Asia-Pacific region have concluded that their practices often reflect a deep understanding of local ecosystems, contributing to biodiversity conservation and climate resilience. "Supporting their community and rural development and natural resource management efforts, however, can further lead to more sustainable agricultural practices,

sustainable water management and rural poverty alleviation at all levels that benefit both people and the planet together," Romina Alam suggested.

Calling for action for women empowerment goals, she said, "As we strive for a more equitable and environmentally sustainable and climate-resilient future for us and our next generations, it is imperative to recognize and support the invaluable contributions of rural women."

"To achieve the women-empowerment goals, framing and implementing policies and action plans that promote gender equality, enhance access to resources, and provide educational opportunities are inevitable for unlocking the potential of rural women," she remarked.

Romina Khurshid also urged stakeholders, policymakers and communities to recognize rural women as key socio-economic stakeholders and key catalysts for development and enhance investment in the empowerment of the rural women.

She emphasised that empowering women is a critical strategy for enhancing climate resilience, particularly in vulnerable communities. Women often bear the brunt of climate impacts, yet they also possess valuable knowledge and skills that can contribute to effective climate action.

By doing so, we can foster inclusive development that uplifts families, strengthens communities, and ensures a sustainable future for generations to come, she concluded.

## Capital's air quality plummets as ambiance turns murky amid smog risk

ISLAMABAD (APP): The air quality of the federal capital has started deteriorating with advent of fall season that left the ambiance murky with increasing pollution, dust and vehicular emissions raising alarm bells for smog risk.

The federal capital since 2018 started witnessing smog onset after the start of winters that left the city's air quality unhealthy and hazardous during peak days recording beyond permissible ratio of air pollutants.

This year would embrace the sixth season of deadly smog in the federal capital, whereas the only environmental watchdog Pakistan Environmental Protection Agency (Pak-EPA)'s National Laboratory mandated to record the ratios of different gases and pollutants level in the atmosphere has not been sharing any air quality data since August.

According to the IQAir, US-based air quality monitoring company that also provides tech-based air quality monitoring and purifying solutions, the Air Quality Index (AQI) or ambient pollutants' ratio in the air quality showed Islamabad's air as

unhealthy with US AQI of 176 (96 microgrammes per cubic meter) which was more than twice the National Environmental Quality Standards (NEQS) of 35 microgrammes per cubic meter and 19.2 times more than the WHO annual air quality guideline value.

It had identified particulate matter of 2.5 microns (PM2.5) as the main pollutant, which is a health hazardous air contaminant, 11 times smaller than a human hair strand. According to the IQAir, persons with health complications like heart diseases, hypertension, also elderly and young kids should avoid prolonged outdoor visits, physical exertions and wear a mask to prevent direct impacts of air pollution. When contacted, the EPA officials remained unavailable for their official version on the matter.

Abdullah Malik, a banker working in Aabpara told APP that his daily travel to office is a sensational ordeal as at one hand he enjoys the lush green beauty of the federal capital and simultaneously on the other side inhales bad air that is clearly palpable as he felt

heavy breathing and coughing while travelling. He said the vehicular traffic during the routine and peak hours was increasing in the federal capital with no decline in number and also the emissions that are equally rising as the sky remains murky from morning till evening.

A senior pulmonologist at the Pakistan Institute of Medical Sciences (PIMS), Doctor Zia ul Haq said respiratory diseases during winters surge due to dry and cold air. He added that the dry and cold air also damages the respiratory tract, causing infection and damaging the breathing organs. Pulmonologists usually advise the elderly above 50 or patients with chronic heart, kidney, and lung diseases to get the flu vaccine during the extreme winter season to avoid respiratory diseases.

Pulmonologists advised avoiding unnecessary outdoor visits during the evening and morning timings of cold weather. In case of an emergency outdoor visit, people should properly cover their faces and eyes by wearing face masks and coverings.



85m in revenue generated

KABUL (BNA): In the past six months, the Pul-e-Khumri Municipality has successfully generated 85 million afghanis in revenue. Mayor of Pul-e-Khumri, stated that the revenue was derived from various municipal services, including property rentals, sanitation fees, and other urban services offered by the municipality. Mayor Mawlawi Mazloom reassured the public of the municipality's continued efforts to enhance urban infrastructure and services for the city's residents.

The Frontier Post

AFGHANISTAN

Rabi-us-Sanni 19 1446 — Wednesday, October 23, 2024

Iran executes two Afghans

KABUL (Amu TV): The Iranian government has executed five individuals, including two Afghan nationals. At least four inmates, including one Afghan national, had been transferred to solitary confinement in Qezel Hesar Prison ahead of their executions. The two Afghan citizens, identified as Shahin Dehqani and Abdul Qadir, were executed last Thursday in Qom Central Prison, following convictions for "premeditated murder," the rights group said.

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

Ministry announces significant increase in wheat yield

KABUL (TOLONews): Misbahuddin Mustaeen, spokesperson for the Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation, and Livestock, told TOLONews that over the past three years, wheat production has increased from 3.5 million tons to 5 million tons annually. He also mentioned that to support farmers and control wheat prices in the markets, the process of purchasing and storing surplus wheat from farmers is underway in eleven provinces of the country. The spokesperson added: "Afghanistan's production was between 3 million to 3.5 million metric tons. Alhamdulillah, over the past three years, the

Islamic Emirate has been able to increase wheat production with the help of farmers, and this year our production reached 5 million metric tons." Referring to the increase in wheat, Mustaeen said that following the decree of the leader of the Islamic Emirate regarding the purchase and storage of surplus wheat from farmers, the ministry plans to buy 38,000 tons of wheat from farmers in 13 provinces by the end of this year. He said: "Approximately 38,000 tons will be purchased from 13 provinces, and currently the purchasing process is ongoing in 11 provinces, with the rest to be purchased soon."

Shamsur Rahman Ahmadzai, an economic analyst, told TOLONews: "This is a timely move by the government to purchase and store the available wheat in the market, as it will be a great service for the people during the winter. Many people cannot meet their basic needs due to economic difficulties." Earlier, the Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation, and Livestock reported that since the leader of the Islamic Emirate's decree, they have distributed nearly 100,000 tons of improved seeds and 200,000 tons of chemical fertilizer to farmers with the cooperation of domestic and foreign organizations.

Laghman welcomes over 83,000 tourists

MEHTARLAM (BNA): In the first six months of the current year, a total of 83,100 domestic and foreign tourists visited the historical sites and recreational areas of Laghman province, marking a significant increase in tourism compared to the previous year. Mawlawi Abdul Noor Rasouli, Head of Information and Culture for Laghman, told Bakhtar News Agency that during the same period last year, 73,654 tourists, both domestic and international, visited Laghman. He highlighted that this year's figures represent an approximate 6% increase in tourist numbers. Mawlawi Rasoli further explained that Laghman boasts numerous historical and recreational attractions, including Mehtarlam Baba, the historic Seraj Castle, the Liberty Minaret, Shahi Alingar, Farashghan, and Dowlat Shah, among others. These locations continue to draw the attention of a large number of tourists. He also emphasized the ongoing efforts by the local administration to collaborate with relevant authorities in enhancing tourism services and facilities. This includes the construction of standard hotels and recreational areas aimed at providing better services to visitors. Additionally, Rasoli reassured tourists that Laghman province enjoys complete security, allowing them to explore all parts of the region with peace of mind.

IEA probes claims of Iranian forces' shooting

KABUL (TOLONews): Zabihullah Mujahid, the spokesperson for the Islamic Emirate, said that investigations into the claims of Iranian forces shooting Afghan migrants are ongoing. Zabihullah Mujahid said that a delegation sent by the Islamic Emirate has visited three countries and is in talks with government officials, residents, and border authorities. Mujahid also cited the distant location of the incident from the country as the reason for the prolonged investigation. The spokesperson for the Islamic Emirate said: "The investigative team sent here is visiting the borders of the three countries and meeting with border officials and authorities. They are closely examining the reasons behind the claim." Meanwhile, some political analysts are urging the interim government to share the findings of this investigation with the public. They also call on organizations that support migrants to protect Afghan citizens in other countries. Mohammad Bilal Omar, an international relations expert, said: "People living in another country have specific rights. It is the duty of international organizations to visit the area and provide documented evidence." Sayed Akbar Sial Wardak, a political affairs expert, also said: "The government must share documented evidence with the public to ease emotions and dispel propaganda."



Earlier, reports surfaced regarding Iranian forces shooting at several Afghan migrants in the Kalagan area of Saravan, Sistan, and Baluchistan, Iran, following which Iran's ambassador and special representative to Afghanistan denied the incident.

Uzbek language day celebrated in Jawzjan



JAWZJAN (TOLONews): Karomatullah Azizi, another cultural activist, said: "Textbooks and regional curriculum materials should be made available to readers and staff." Hesamuddin Tuyghun, a university professor, said: "We have some academic staff, but there is a serious need for more personnel at the master's and doctorate levels, and the Islamic Emirate should focus on this." Several poets, writers, cultural figures, and local officials gathered at this exhibition to commemorate

this day. Meanwhile, the head of Jawzjan's Information and Culture Department urged all citizens to focus on unity and acceptance. "May God Bless the Youth to Use Their Nation, Language, and Homeland Positively," said Saifuddin Mutasem, head of the Department of Information and Culture of Jawzjan province. October 20, marking National Uzbek Language Day, was recognized by the previous government and is included in Afghanistan's official calendar.

the Refah Township in Chahar Asyab, as well as hundreds of acres of land in Shakardara district and Kabul's 17th district. Hewad Zazai, a political analyst, said: "Privately owned lands that have been seized by powerful individuals should also be addressed, and we call on the Islamic Emirate to make efforts to return these lands as well." Previously, the Ministry of Justice announced that over 250,000 acres of government land had been identified in 23 provinces over the past month.

Meeting aims to expand trade ties

KABUL (BNA): Acting Minister of Industry and Commerce emphasized that the organization of trade events is a clear indication of the strengthening bilateral relations between Afghanistan and Kazakhstan. According to the Ministry's press office, the statement was made during a bilateral meeting between the Islamic Emirate's delegation, led by Alhaj Nooruddin Azizi, Acting Minister of Industry and Commerce, and the delegation of Kazakhstan, led by Serik Zhumangarin, Deputy Prime Minister of Kazakhstan, in Almaty. In the meeting, Minister Azizi expressed his gratitude for the hospitality and special arrangements made for the Afghanistan Products Exhibition and the trade communication conference between the two countries. He also appreciated Kazakhstan for removing IEA from the list of prohibited groups and accepting the IEA Chargé d'Affaires in Astana, thereby enhancing diplomatic relations. The discussion further focused on expanding economic and trade relations between Afghanistan and Kazakhstan, with an emphasis on increasing trade volumes, attracting joint investments, improving export logistics, transportation, banking relations, promoting medical tourism, facilitating visa issuance, and establishing technical and sub-committees to further strengthen cooperation.

Zabihullah Mujahid: We do not permit smuggling at borders

KABUL (TOLONews): Zabihullah Mujahid, spokesperson for the Islamic Emirate, in response to a claim made by the Iranian border commander, said that the Islamic Emirate does not permit any form of smuggling at the borders and has held discussions with Iran regarding the existing challenges in this area. Mujahid called on neighboring countries to make greater efforts to prevent all forms of smuggling, particularly human trafficking. Mujahid said: "Afghanistan is committed to this matter and does not allow any kind of smuggling. We also ask neighboring countries to take actions to prevent the smuggling of drugs and illegal goods, and also to take measures regarding human trafficking." This comes after Sardar Ahmad Ali Goudarzi, the commander of the Iranian Border Forces, recently claimed that 80% of drug trafficking into Iran occurs through the borders of Afghanistan and Pakistan. Sardar Ahmad Ali Goudarzi said that preventing illegal immigration and the smuggling of goods, especially drugs is one of the main objectives of constructing a wall

along the country's borders with Afghanistan and Pakistan. The Iranian Border Commander said: "Based on law enforcement and military damage assessments, particularly in the areas of drug smuggling and immigration, the current priority is the border between Iran, Pakistan, and Afghanistan, through which about 80% of the country's drugs enter." Zalmay Afghan Yar, a military affairs expert, told TOLONews: "The issue of drug trafficking and human smuggling is a common problem faced by all countries. The

interim government is trying, but neighboring countries, if they want to combat this, should exchange intelligence information with the interim government." Sadiq Shinwari, another military affairs expert, said: "For better border security between countries, consensus and coordination among the countries is an urgent need." Earlier, the commander of the Iranian Army's Ground Forces in the northeast of the country had said that the plan to block Iran's border with Afghanistan would be completed in the next three years.

MoIC honors Afghan students for successful training completion

KABUL (BNA): The Ministry of Information and Culture, through its Financial, Administrative, and Tourism Directorate, on Tuesday awarded certificates to a group of students from the Afghan Institute of Technology. These students successfully completed a month-long training program organized by the Ministry. During the program, participants received training in official correspondence, including letter writing, inquiries, proposals, as well as topics related to information technology and database management. Speaking at the certificate distribution ceremony, Mawlawi Qudratullah Jamal, the Deputy Minister for Financial, Administrative, and Tourism Affairs, highlighted that societies thrive on talent, and Afghans possess world-



class capabilities that must be nurtured. He encouraged the graduates to utilize their knowledge and skills for the development and prosperity of the country and to strive for higher academic and professional achievements. Mawlawi Jamal reaffirmed the Ministry's commitment to supporting such educational programs and ensuring that the necessary facilities are provided to continue these initiatives. On behalf of the graduates, Sayed Musa Hashimi expressed gratitude to the Human Resources Direct-

orate of the Ministry of Information and Culture for organizing the training program. He also called for the continuation of such educational opportunities. At the conclusion of the event, officials distributed certificates to the program's participants.

15,000 acres of govt land investigated, confirmed

KABUL (TOLONews): The Ministry of Justice reports the review of over 17,000 acres of land in Kabul and several other provinces. Barkatullah Rasouli, the ministry's spokesperson, stated that during a meeting of the Commission for the Prevention of Land Grabbing and the Recovery of Seized Lands, cases involving thousands of acres of land in the provinces of Balkh, Jawzjan, Kunduz, Maidan Wardak, Zabul, and Paktika were reviewed. Out of the 17,000 acres of land, nearly 15,000 acres were identified as

government property. The Ministry of Justice spokesperson added: "In this meeting, the Commission for the Prevention of Land Grabbing identified nearly 15,000 acres of the total 17,000 acres of land in Balkh, Jawzjan, Kunduz, Maidan Wardak, Zabul, and Paktika as government land. Some cases have also been referred to the special court handling land grab cases." According to Rasouli, this meeting also discussed and reviewed the settlement of lands in the districts of Chahar Asyab, Musahi, and

the Refah Township in Chahar Asyab, as well as hundreds of acres of land in Shakardara district and Kabul's 17th district. Hewad Zazai, a political analyst, said: "Privately owned lands that have been seized by powerful individuals should also be addressed, and we call on the Islamic Emirate to make efforts to return these lands as well." Previously, the Ministry of Justice announced that over 250,000 acres of government land had been identified in 23 provinces over the past month.

ANDMA signs agreement with HHAO to boost assistance



Acting Director of ANDMA, and Abdul Ghafar Niazi, President of HHAO organization. According to the press release from the Afghanistan National Disaster Management Authority (ANDMA), Mullah Nooruddin Turabi emphasized the critical role of humanitarian organizations in gathering international aid to support the people of Afghanistan. He expressed appreciation for the efforts of HHAO in assisting Afghan citizens, particularly during times of hardship. He also called on all national and international organizations to strengthen collaboration in the fight against natural and man-made disasters across the country. The agreement aims to provide vital assistance to those in need, particularly disaster-affected populations, ensuring timely and efficient aid distribution nationwide.

Kabul surgeons remove tumor

KABUL (Ariana News): Surgeons at Kabul's Shahid Sardar Mohammad Daoud Khan hospital have successfully carried out complex heart surgery on a patient to remove a cardiac myxoma tumor. Hospital officials said a team of cardiologists and thoracic surgeons removed the tumor from the right atrium of the patient's heart. The hospital said the patient's condition is stable and that the person is recovering. A cardiac myxoma is the most common primary heart tumor in adults. It usually forms in the left atrium but can occur in the right atrium. Myxomas aren't cancerous, but they can still be life-threatening if they interfere with a person's heart function.

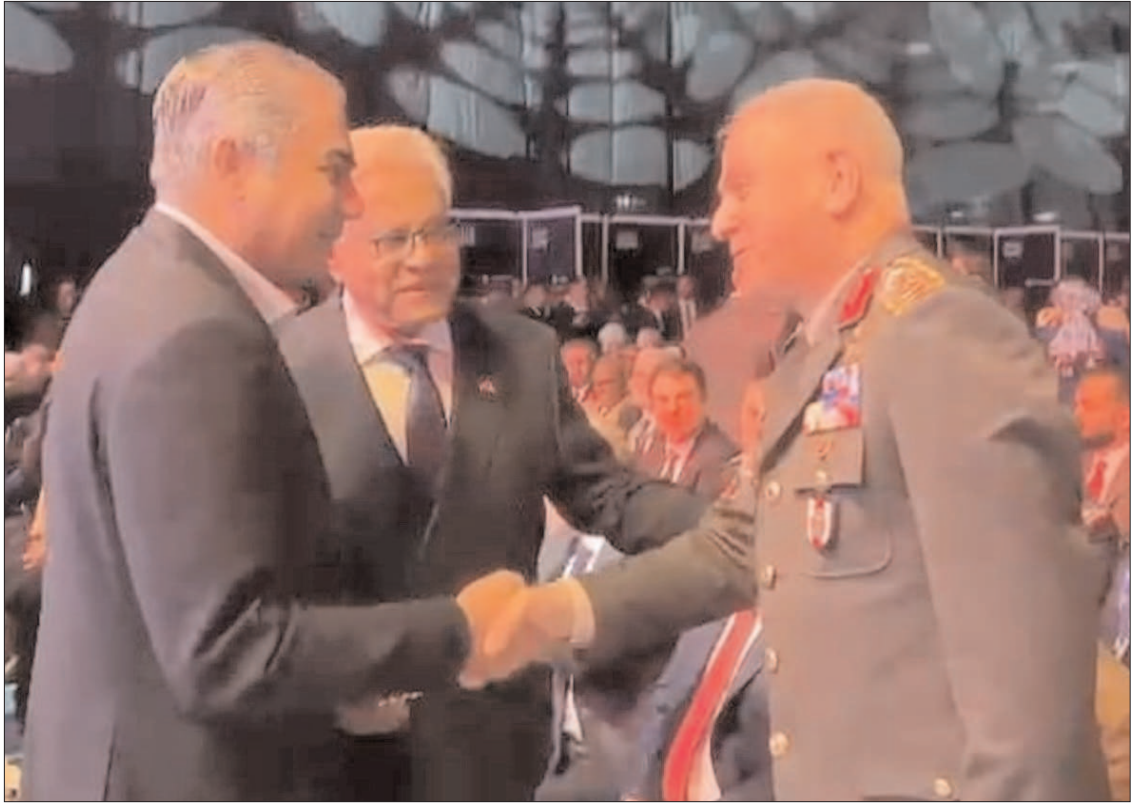
Report raises alarm over acute malnutrition

KABUL (TOLONews): The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, in a joint report, announced that 3.2 million children under five years and 840,000 pregnant and lactating women are now suffering from acute malnutrition in Afghanistan. The report said that 1.7 million children are suffering from severe acute malnutrition and associated medical complications. According to the report, the highest cases of malnutrition have been recorded in Kandahar and Paktika provinces. The report warns that from May to September of this year, the number of people suffering from mal-

nutrition has increased significantly, reaching a concerning level. The report states: "The situation and fatalities are expected to deteriorate further with the onset of the winter season hence the need to reduce acute hunger before its peak in December and February to avoid significant loss of lives." Prolonged drought, natural shocks, displacement of populations, the sudden rise in the cost of living, food insecurity and massive unemployment are cited as factors that have caused children and women to suffer from malnutrition. According to the two organizations, the lack of

immediate intervention in this crisis will lead to a worrying increase in deaths, especially among children under the age of five. The report also indicates that heavy snowfall in Paktika and Kandahar provinces will soon make many areas inaccessible, posing serious challenges to the delivery of essential supplies. Additionally, pregnant women are at risk of giving birth to babies with low birth weight and congenital abnormalities. Afghanistan has been grappling with severe economic, social, and natural crises for years, affecting the lives of millions of people.





ISTANBUL: Federal Minister for Interior, Mohsin Naqvi shaking hands with Chief of the Turkish General Staff, Gen. Metin Gurak at the inauguration of SAHA Expo in Turkey.

## PHC orders KP govt to submit court verdict's implementation

Humayun Khan

PESHAWAR: The Peshawar High Court (PHC) on Tuesday ordered the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government to submit a compliance report about implementation of its verdict in appointment of Vice Chancellors in several public sector universities in the province.

A two members bench consisting of Justice Ijaz Anwar and Justice Mohammad Ijaz Khan directed the respondents to submit compliance report about the implementation of the court's judgment in the appointment case of Vice Chancellors in several universities of KP.

The court ruled that contempt of court proceedings would be initiated against the respondents in case of non implementation of the PHC's judgment. Five senior academicians have filed petition in Peshawar High Court seeking initiation of contempt of court proceedings against the KP Chief Secretary and three other respondents accusing them of not implementing the court's judgment in a case related to appointment of the Vice Chancellors in several public sector universities of KP. The bench sought a report from respondents by November 20 next month and adjourned the case.

The petition was filed by Professor Dr Aurangzeb Khan at the University of Science and Technology, Bannu, and four other academicians, pleading before the court to take action against the respondents including the Chief Secretary KP, Secretaries of Higher Education, Law and Establishment Departments for non compliance of the court orders.

The petitioners had earlier filed a plea before the court for declaring the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government's decision to reinstate the appointment process of Vice Chancellors for 19

### Court seeks response against enlisting Azam Swati in ECL

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: A divisional bench comprising of Chief Justice Peshawar High Court (PHC) Justice Ishtiaq Ibrahim and Justice Waqar Ahmad has sought a response from Ministry of Interior regarding the inclusion of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf leader and former Senator Azam Swati's name in the Exit Control List (ECL), Provisional Identification List, and Passport Control List, on Tuesday.

The counsel Ali Azim Afridi advocate argued the petitioner was barred from traveling to Afghanistan on a diplomatic passport despite diplomatic status, permission to travel was denied. Recently, former Senator learned that his name enlisted in ECL, Provisional Identification List, and Passport Control List which restricts his abroad travels, the lawyer added. The counsel requested the court to direct the federal government to remove Swati's name from these lists. However, Assistant Attorney General Daulat Khan Mohmand stated that Ministry of Foreign Affairs has submitted comments and added that issuance of passport was denied due to Interior Ministry's request. PHC divisional bench directed other respondent departments for submission of reply within 14 days and adjourned further hearing.

public sector universities in KP. The respondents were directed to place the recommendations made by the academic search committee before the Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa for approval in accordance with Section 12 of the Act (KP Universities Act), 2012.

**PHC restrains NAB from harassing former Secretary Auqaf:** A divisional bench comprising Chief Justice Peshawar High Court (PHC) Justice Ishtiaq Ibrahim and Justice Waqar Ahmad has restrained National Accountability Bureau (NAB) from harassing former Secretary Auqaf and current Grade 20 officer Dr. Asad Ali while sought a response in this regard, on Tuesday.

The counsel Umar Farooq and Hasanian Tariq advocates informed that the petitioner is a former Secretary Auqaf and has also served as secretary in other departments. NAB initiated an inquiry into rent-related issues in Auqaf department,

issuing a call-up notice to the petitioner in 2024.

The notice directed the petitioner to appear and produce all records, which is unjustified since he ceased to be Secretary Auqaf in 2023 and is not the custodian of records. The manager is responsible for overseeing affairs and record-keeping, the lawyers argued.

The inquiry falls outside NAB's jurisdiction as it involves an amount less than Rs. 50 crores, contrary to the new NAB laws. NAB is harassing the petitioner through various means, including unnecessary summons and threats of action if he fails to comply. NAB displays bias in other matters, attempting to implicate the petitioner in cases where he is not involved, the counsel stated. PHC's divisional comprising of Chief Justice Ishtiaq Ibrahim and Justice Waqar Ahmad restrained NAB from harassing Dr. Asad Ali while ordered submission of reply.

### Three senior police officers transferred

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: The Inspector General of Police Khyber Pakhtunkhwa has ordered transfer and posting of three senior police officers. A notification issued here said that Additional IG Kashif Alam of Special Branch Khyber Pakhtunkhwa has been transferred and appointed Additional IG Investigation.

Muhammad Ali Baba Khel has been appointed Additional IGP Special Branch and additional IGP Investigation Alam Shinwari posted as Additional IGP.

### Gohar refuses to sit in committee

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Chairman Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Barrister Gohar on Tuesday declared the 26th amendment illegal and decided not to become part of the parliamentary committee tasked with the appointment of new chief justice after the passage of 26th Constitutional Amendment.

"The PTI held intra-party elections more transparently as compared to other parties, even the Supreme Court (SC) accepted our intra-party elections in the verdict of reserved seats," he said while speaking to media outside Election Commission office. Chairman PTI told the media about the hearing of intra-party election case in election commission.

"We filed a petition in the Lahore High Court (LHC) about the jurisdiction of the ECP in this case, this case is not under the jurisdictions of the ECP. I hope the issue will be resolved soon as the LHC has barred the ECP to pass any final order in the PTI intra-party election case," he told. "We answered whatever legal questions ECP raised regarding our intraparty elections, whatever documents the ECP asked we provided, it was told in the SC verdict that the MNAs were of the PTI and reserved seats were meant to be ours," he added. "On the floor of the assembly we did not agree on anything, amendments are illegal," he insisted.

"In the special committee there was no proposal of the formation of constitutional benches at provincial level, this tweak came out of the blue," he lamented. Gohar declared the 26th amendment unconstitutional and illegal, and decided to boycott the parliamentary committee to appoint the next chief justice.

### Hearing of New Toshakhana case adjourned

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: The Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) on Tuesday opposed the bail plea of Bushra Bibi in the Toshakhana two case. Justice Miangul Hassan Aurangzeb of the Islamabad High Court (IHC) heard the bail plea. FIA Prosecutor Zulfikar Abbas Naqvi, FIA lawyer Umair Majed Malik appeared before the court while Barrister Salman Safdar represented former first lady. "It's been 12 days since the last hearing of Bushra's bail plea," Barrister Salman Safdar told the court. "I had severe fever, when I came to the court last time on Oct 9," Justice Aurangzeb replied. "It took long time to recover," he added. Pleading the case further, Safdar said that the price of the gifts was lowered by a private buyer, who he said, had become an approver against Bushra Bibi.

"The custom officers determined the value of the goods afterwards and found no suspect," Safdar added. "Was it decision of then executive (Imran Khan) to take the gift after paying 50pc of the total value?" inquired Justice Aurangzeb. The FIA prosecutor responded that no such precedent was set to take gifts on 50pc value. "What are your directives about the bail plea of Bushra Bibi?" Justice Aurangzeb further inquired. "We will oppose it," informed the FIA prosecutor. Later, the court adjourned the hearing till Oct 23.

## KP government decides to launch Education Card

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Sardar Ali Amin Khan Gandapur as a revolutionary step for the promotion of education in the province, has announced an "Education Emergency", and decided to launch "Education Card," on the pattern of the Health Card in the province. Initially, the Education Card will be launched in nine far flung districts including Upper Kohistan, Lower Kohistan, Kolai-Palas, Tor Ghar, Upper Chitral, Lower Chitral, Tank, Upper South Waziristan, and Lower South Waziristan. Later on, the initiative will also be extended to other districts across the province.

This decision was made during an important meeting of the Elementary & Secondary Education Department, held here at Chief Minister's Secretariat Peshawar on Tuesday with Chief Minister Ali Amin Khan Gandapur in the chair. Provincial Minister for Elementary and Secondary Education, Faisal Tarakai, Chief Minister's Principal Secretary, Abid Majeed, and senior officials of the education department attended the meeting.

Under the Education Card, children to be enrolled in government schools will receive a monthly stipend of Rs. 1000 per child. Additionally, children in the aforementioned districts will be able to enroll in registered private schools on the expenses of the provincial government. Initially, 40,000 children from these nine districts will benefit from this initiative. Similarly, under this scheme, girls from grades 6 to 10, already enrolled in government schools across the province, will be provided with monthly stipend of Rs. 500 each. Around 550,000 girls will benefit from these stipends. The annual cost of these educational stipends is estimated as Rs. 3.1 billion, which will be borne by the provincial government.

Furthermore, the provision of free textbooks, scholarships, and other existing facilities will be unified under the Education Card. Approximately 50 million free text books will be provided to children from grades 1 to 12. Additionally, 506 talented students will also be granted ETEA scholarships.

In order to ensure the sustainability of the Education Card program, the Chief Minister has also approved to establish a "Chief Minister's Education Emergency Endowment Fund" with the seed money of Rs. 3 billion. Addressing the participants of the meeting, the Chief Minister said that promoting quality education in the province is the top most priority of the

provincial government, and for this purpose, education card is being introduced. He stated that Khyber Pakhtunkhwa is the first province in the country to introduce the Education Card.

The Chief Minister maintained that his government is not only striving to provide facilities to students already enrolled in schools but is also focused on encouraging out-of-school children to return to education. "The ultimate goal is to increase the province's literacy rate and ensure the formation of an educated and aware society. The launch of the Education Card will prove to be a milestone toward achieving this goal", he remarked.

**KP CM inaugurates BRT Pabbi Route:** KP Chief Minister Sardar Ali Amin Khan Gandapur, inaugurated the new Pabbi Route of the Peshawar Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) system here on Tuesday at Chamkani BRT Station. A large number of the senior officials, including the Secretary of Transport, the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) TransPeshawar and the Managing Director of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Urban Mobility Authority (KPUMA) were also present on the occasion.

The newly launched Pabbi route connects Pabbi Bazaar to Sardar Garhi BRT Station, spanning a total of 16 kilometers. The route includes 13 stops: Pabbi Terminal, Pabbi Bazaar, Kajhoo Stop, Pabbi Railway Station, Girls Degree College, WAPDA Town, Taru Jabba, Tamab Farm, Kala Mandi, Jhagra, Shahad Market, Chamkani, and Sardar Garhi. According to the TransPeshawar spokesperson, the route will operate from 6:30 AM to 7:00 PM, with buses running every 20 minutes providing travel facility to an estimated 4,000 passengers daily. The one-way travel time for the route is approximately 33 minutes.

The spokesperson further stated that with the inauguration of the Pabbi route, the total number of BRT routes has increased to 18, expanding the network's reach and providing enhanced convenience to passengers. Since its launch on August 13, 2020, BRT Peshawar has transformed public transport in the city. Currently, 244 buses operate across 17 routes, serving around 300,000 passengers daily. To date, BRT Peshawar has carried over 280 million passengers. The Pabbi route is another critical addition to the BRT network, which already serves key areas such as GT Road, Kohat Road, Charsadda Road, Hayatabad, Regi/DHA, and the Southern Ring Road, further strengthening Peshawar's public transport infrastructure.

## Sindh govt to operate double-decker buses

F.P. Report

KARACHI: Sindh Senior Minister Sharjeel Inam Memon has shared good news with the public: the Sindh government plans to operate double-decker buses on Karachi's roads and has begun preparations for their procurement.

An important meeting was held under the chairmanship of Sindh Senior Minister and Provincial Minister for Information, Transport, Excise, Taxation, and Narcotics Control, Sharjeel Inam Memon. Director Soheb Shafiq, People's Bus Service Manager of Operations Abdul Shakoor, and other officials were in attendance.

In the meeting, it was decided that the Sindh gov-



ernment would purchase 50 new buses for the People's Bus Service. Senior Minister Sharjeel Inam Memon directed the Mass Transit Authority and other relevant authorities to expedite the preparations for the bus procurement.

Speaking at the meeting, Sindh Senior Minister Sharjeel Inam Memon stated, "We are committed to modernizing public transport in Karachi. This initiative by the Sindh govern-

ment will significantly enhance the urban transport system, offering citizens affordable and comfortable travel."

He emphasized that swift implementation must be ensured to meet the growing transport needs of the people. During the meeting, Sindh Senior Minister Sharjeel Inam Memon instructed that the bus stations for the People's Bus Service be completed as soon as possible.

### Pakistan, India arrest farmers

NEW DELHI (Reuters): As part of their efforts to curb alarming levels of hazardous air pollution on both sides of the border, Pakistan and India arrested dozens of farmers for illegally burning crop waste. At least 16 farmers have been arrested in India's northern state of Haryana for illegally burning paddy stubble to clear fields, a practice that stokes air pollution in the region around New Delhi at the onset of winter, authorities said on Tuesday.

India's national capital region battles pollution each year as temperatures fall and cold air traps construction dust, vehicle emissions and smoke, much of which officials say travels from the neighbouring breadbasket states of Punjab and Haryana. Police in Haryana's Kaithal region told Reuters that 22 complaints of stubble burning have been registered this year, and 16 people have been arrested.

Birbhan, a deputy superintendent of police, who uses only one name, said those arrested had been released on bail. Investigations have been launched against almost 100 farmers across Haryana, while fines have been imposed on more than 300, local media reported. Delhi recorded "very poor" air on Tuesday morning, according to the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB), with an air quality index (AQI) of 320. An AQI of 0-50 is considered good while anything between 400-500 poses health dangers.

It was the second-most polluted city in the world on Tuesday, a live ranking by IQAir indicated, after only Lahore in neighbouring Pakistan's Punjab province, whose chief minister earlier urged 'climate diplomacy' with India to combat smog.

## Blinken urges Israel to 'capitalize' on Sinwar death

JERUSALEM (AFP): US Secretary of State Antony Blinken urged Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu Tuesday to seize on the killing of Hamas's leader to work toward a Gaza ceasefire.

Blinken also pressed for more aid to be allowed into the Palestinian territory as concerns rise for tens of thousands of civilians trapped by fighting in the hard-to-reach north. Blinken "underscored the need to capitalize on Israel's successful action to bring Yahya Sinwar to justice by securing the release of all hostages and ending the conflict in Gaza in a way that provides lasting security for Israelis and Palestinians alike," State Department spokesman Matthew Miller said after the talks in Jerusalem.

Blinken also "emphasized the need for Israel to take additional steps to increase and sustain the flow of humanitarian assistance into Gaza and ensure that assistance reaches civilians throughout Gaza," Miller said. The trip comes little more than a week after the United States threatened to withhold some US aid without progress in delivering assistance to Palestinians in the Gaza Strip, where the United Nations has described a catastrophic situation.

Blinken is paying his 11th visit to the region since the unprecedented October 7, 2023, attack by Hamas which prompted a relentless Israeli military operation in Gaza. With the US election just two weeks away, President Joe Biden asked Blinken to return to

press for progress, seeing new hope after Israel's killing of Sinwar, the October 7 mastermind who was described by US officials as intransigent in negotiations.

Blinken on previous trips has sought to prevent the conflict from escalating into a regional war. But Israel since last month has been striking against Lebanon to destroy Hezbollah, which like Hamas is backed by Iran's clerical rulers. Miller said Blinken again called for a "diplomatic resolution" in Lebanon and compliance with UN Security Council Resolution 1701 of 2006 which called for the long-term disarmament of Hezbollah but also a withdrawal of Israeli forces from its northern neighbor.

## Hezbollah strikes Israeli targets

BEIRUT: The ongoing conflict between Lebanon's Hezbollah and Israel intensified on Tuesday, with Hezbollah launching a series of rocket and missile strikes on Israeli positions, prompting retaliatory Israeli airstrikes. The exchange marks a significant escalation in hostilities, resulting in thousands of casualties.

Hezbollah claimed responsibility for multiple attacks on Israeli military positions, including areas near Tel Aviv. The group announced that it had launched rockets targeting the "Gilot base of the 8200 military intelligence unit" in Tel Aviv's suburbs. This followed a similar attack on the base the previous night. Additionally, Hezbollah reported firing rockets at a naval base in Haifa, a key coastal city in northern Israel. In a statement, Hezbollah said it aimed at the "Stella

Maris naval base northwest of Haifa," marking one of the group's most significant assaults on Israel's military infrastructure.

Hezbollah also reported ground operations near the Lebanon-Israel border. Fighters claimed to have targeted an Israeli Merkava tank near the village of Taybeh, setting it ablaze. The group said clashes occurred on Monday in the outskirts of the village as Hezbollah forces engaged Israeli troops attempting to infiltrate Lebanese territory. In response to Hezbollah's attacks, the Israeli military reported intercepting several projectiles. According to a statement, five projectiles were launched toward central Israel, most of which were intercepted by the country's defense systems. In the northern regions of Upper Galilee and the Golan Heights, the Israeli army

detected approximately 15 projectiles from Lebanon, with some intercepted and others falling in open areas. No immediate casualties were reported from the Israeli side.

The Israeli military retaliated with overnight strikes on Hezbollah's weapons storage facilities and command centers. One of the key targets was Hezbollah's naval base in Beirut, where Israel claimed the group stored military speedboats and conducted training and experiments. The Israeli army said it struck around 300 targets in the past 24 hours, including a financial firm linked to Hezbollah. The strikes extended to southern Beirut, near Lebanon's largest public hospital, resulting in the deaths of four civilians, including a child, according to Lebanese authorities.—Arab News



ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Iran, Dr. Reza Amiri Moghadam called on Chief of the Naval Staff, Admiral Naveed Ashraf, at Naval Headquarters.

## ECP grants six weeks to Punjab for enacting LG laws

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) on Tuesday granted the Punjab government six weeks to finalize the draft law and legislation for local body elections, allowing adequate time to ensure that all necessary preparations are in place for a successful electoral process in province.

The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) was approached for a six-week extension to prepare the draft and legislation for local body elections in Punjab. This request for a six-week extension to prepare for the Punjab local government elections was made by top officials, including the Chief Secretary of Punjab, Local

Government Secretary, Interior Secretary, and Islamabad Chief Commissioner, during an in-chamber hearing at the ECP.

The Punjab Chief Secretary briefed the Election Commission, revealing that the draft Local Government Act is nearly complete, with 99 per cent of the work done. He assured that six months would be needed to complete the final adjustments to the draft law. Accepting the request of top officials, the ECP granted Punjab extra time to finalize election arrangements. The Interior Secretary updated the Election Commission on a committee's progress, formed after the ECP's September 11, 2024 meet-

ing. This committee, comprising the Interior Secretary, Law Secretary, Chief Commissioner, and Election Commission Secretary, has drafted necessary amendments to the Islamabad Local Government Act 2015 during two subsequent meetings.

The draft will be submitted to the relevant forum for legislation after receiving approval from the Election Commission. Subsequently, any necessary amendments to the rules and forms will be made. The Election Commission directed the Interior Secretary to expedite the legislative process for timely elections in Islamabad. In response, the Interior Secretary assured full cooperation.