

Curfew imposed F.P. Report

WANA: Authorities have announced a curfew in South Waziristan, set to take effect tomorrow due to security concerns. DC has issued an official notification enforcing movement restrictions in the region. Three major routes will remain closed from 6 AM to 6 PM. Azizabad Chowk to Sarwakai and Jandola, Spin Mosque to Asman Manza, Ladha, and Makeen, Bibi Ragzai to Kotkai and Jandola.

Eidul Fitr holidays F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: The federal government has officially announced the public holidays on the occasion of Eidul Fitr, granting a three-day break. According to a notification issued by the Cabinet Division on Wednesday, the holidays will commence from Monday, March 31, to Wednesday, April 2. Offices and businesses will remain close from March 31 to April 2 and resuming from April 3.



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Denial of women's inheritance *un-Islamic*

Federal Shariat Court ruled against traditions and customs that deprive women of their rightful inheritance

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: The Federal Shariat Court has ruled against traditions and customs that deprive women of their rightful inheritance, declaring them un-Islamic.

In its landmark decision, the court directed authorities to take criminal action against individual who deny women their inheritance right. The ruling was issued by a four-member bench, led by Justice Iqbal Hameedur Rehman, on a petition filed by Fouzia Jalal Shah.

During the proceedings, the court was informed about the practice of 'Chadar' and 'Parchi' in Bannu, which allegedly prevent women from claiming their inheritance.

However, the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government clarified that such customs were neither officially recognised nor held any legal standing. The judgement highlighted that depriving women of inheritance was reminiscent of pre-Islamic times when such injustices were common.

During the hearing, it was revealed that the Chaddar and Parchi traditions

are practised in Bannu. However, the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government denied the existence or significance of such customs.

The court ruled: "However, the petition is partially accepted whereby the petitioner is seeking a relief to declare a local custom, which according to her is prevalent in District Bannu, KP with the name of Chaddar or Parchi, and the basis of which women of that area are being deprived of their rights of inheritance in their ancestral property, hence we declare any such custom or usage which either exists with the name of "Chaddar" or "Parchi" or with any other name in the area of Bannu District of KP or in any part of any province of the country, as un-Islamic and illegal having no legal force whatsoever by virtue of which the right of inheritance of women is denied wholly or partly from their ancestral property which they have inherited or any other practice which deprives women from their right of inheritance, which is granted by the Holy Quran and Sunnah, is un-

Islamic and against the principles of the Holy Quran and Sunnah, hence void and illegal, and may be subject to punishment also.

"We further declare that all or any such custom or usage, which affects the rights of inheritance of women in any manner whatsoever, irrespective of the name by which it is called or known in any area of the country, is un-Islamic and illegal and calls for actions against the perpetrator of such crime under Section 498-A of PPC, as such actions by the relevant authorities of the State falls within the scope of Amr bil Maroof Wa Nahi Anil Munkar, which is an important duty of the State under the Act X of 1991 (Enforcement of Shari'ah Act, 1991)."

According to Transparency International, even in cases where women have legal rights on paper – like in Pakistan – the reality is often quite different. Systemic corruption and discrimination frequently hinder women from exercising their rights and claiming their fair share in society, the rights group adds.



JEDDAH: Deputy Governor of Makkah, Prince Saud bin Mashal bin Abdul Aziz Al-Saud welcomes Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif upon his arrival in Saudi Arabia.

Torkham border resumes for patients F.P. Report

TORKHAM: Remaining suspended for twenty five days, the Pak-Afghan sharing border Torkham was reopened on Wednesday evening for patients and transport (cargo) while after two days, the border will reopen for general crossing, Pak and Afghan officials said.

It is to be stated here that the Torkham border was shut for all kinds of movements after an arm fight took place between Pak and Afghan forces over the construction of a check post by Afghanistan in a restricted area.

Earlier, a flag meeting of Pakistan and Afghanistan officials was held at zero point, Torkham who agreed to thoroughly discuss the prevailing situation on the crossing, an official informed.

Governor Nenegarhar Maulvi Azizullah, Commissioner Torkham Maulvi Abdu Jabbar Hikmat, Afghan council general Muhammad Zakriya represented Afghan government while from Pakistan side Wind Commander Zainul Abedin, Major Fawad, Major Dayan, Major Azdar and others participated in the meeting.

Both countries' officials agreed to open the border for transport on 4:00 pm on Wednesday while for pedestrian crossing, the border will resume after two days (on Friday). A Pakistani official said that arm clash damaged pedestrian scanners and other equipment therefore it will take time to refunction it therefore the passengers' entry and exit is expected to resume on Friday.

Prior to it, Custom, Federal Intelligence Agency (FIA) and other concerned departments officials had been recalled on their duties to recommence clearance examination activities at the border, an FIA official said.

Scores of Afghan patients who are supposed to get treatment of their fatal disease in Pakistani hospitals entered into Pakistan after both countries approved to recommence the border. Similarly hundreds of vehicles loaded with merchandise, stranded at both sides of the border, crossed in and out the border, transporters said.

Former Governor of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Haji Ghulam Ali, has welcomed the reopening of the Torkham border, stating that the restoration of trade and public connections between Pakistan and Afghanistan is in the best interest of both countries and the business community.

PM launches drive to plant 41.7m saplings

Saqib Mushtaq

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Wednesday launched the 2025 Spring Tree Plantation Drive here to plant around 41.7 million saplings across the country, urging the entire nation's participation to avert climate change impacts and address many diseases.

The prime minister, who launched the campaign by planting a Chir Pine sapling on the lawn of the Prime Minister's House as part of the Up-Scaling of Green Pakistan Program, said that the plantation would be made across four provinces, as well as Gilgit-Baltistan (GB), and Azad Jammu & Kashmir (AJK).

Under the campaign, 12,870 million saplings will be planted in Punjab, 10 million in Sindh, 2,633 million in KP, 2,062 million in Balochistan, 10,147 million in AJK and four million in Gilgit Baltistan. The main species to be planted include Kikar, Jand, Amaltas, Shisham, Sukh Chain, Phulai, Chir, Kail, Deodar, Peepal, Neem, Beri, Jaman, Imli and Chilgoza.

The plantation will be carried out through around 2047 events to be held across the country to plant 41.7 million saplings comparing 40,526 million during the monsoon tree plantation of 2024. The prime minister said that considering the benefits of the plantation drive in all aspects, the entire nation, especially the youth and farmers, should play their part.

"It will significantly

Shehbaz arrives in Jeddah

JEDDAH (APP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Wednesday arrived here for a four-day official visit to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia from March 19-22, accompanied by a high-level delegation.

Deputy Governor of Makkah Prince Saud bin Mishaal bin Abdulaziz Al Saud, warmly welcomed the prime minister. The prime minister was accompanied by a high-level delegation that includes Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Senator Ishaq Dar, Chief Minister Punjab Maryam Nawaz, along with several key federal ministers and senior officials.

During the visit, the prime minister is scheduled to meet Saudi Crown Prince and Prime Minister Mohammed bin Salman wherein the two leaders will discuss ways to boost trade, enhance partnership in key sectors and facilitate greater economic collaboration.

Matters of mutual interest and concern, including global and regional developments, particularly the Gaza situation, evolving Middle East dynamics, as well as issues related to the Muslim Ummah, will figure high on the agenda. The prime minister's visit underscores the deep-rooted historical relations between Pakistan and Saudi Arabia and will pave the way for increased mutual understanding, enhanced cooperation in trade, investment and greater diplomatic coordination on bilateral, regional and global matters.

contribute to the betterment of the environment and can help effectively address various diseases," he remarked. He said that the impacts of climate change, in recent years, have also necessitated huge efforts for tree plantations.

Referring to the worst climate change-induced floods of 2022 which had caused widespread destruction across the country, he said Pakistan was among the 10 countries in the danger zone considering the impacts of climate change. Prime Minister Shehbaz said that Pakistan was facing the climate change impacts despite its minimal contributions to greenhouse gases, and urged the people to seek Allah's

blessings during the ongoing holy Ramadan and make efforts for the country's progress.

According to the official data, the PC-1 of the Revised Upscaling of Green Pakistan Program (2024-28) is in progress which features the plantation of 945 million new plants and maintain 2,221 million existing plants besides improving species and ensuring sustainable forest management, data collection, and scientific forest management. During the 2019-25 Green Pakistan Program, the plantation was made over an area of 720,916 hectares which also created over 1.42 million man-months of green jobs.

SC establishes dedicated Anti-Corruption Hotline F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: The Supreme Court of Pakistan has established a dedicated Anti-Corruption Hotline 03264442444, to reinforce its commitment to accountability and removing hurdles in expeditious justice for the public.

The incumbent Chief Justice of Pakistan Mir Justice Yahya Afridi is determined to foster an environment free of corruption and guided by the principles of accountability and fairness. The Chief Justice shared a message for the general public encouraging them to come forward and contact the hotline of the Supreme Court if anyone offers them help in fixing dates etc or undue favours for money.

This Anti-Corruption Hotline has been developed with a focus on key characteristics that ensure its effectiveness. It provides a secure and confidential platform for the complainants to report incidents of graft, favouritism, or any form of corrupt practices, without fear of retaliation.

Whistleblower's identity is protected, and the choice of remaining anonymous is fully respected. The Hotline is accessible through multiple channels, including phone, online portal, email, and text messages, and supports communication in Urdu and English. It operates 24/7, allowing citizens to report incidents at any time, ensuring inclusivity and ease of access.

All complaints submitted are overseen independently by an impartial official reporting directly to the Chief Justice, maintaining transparency and objectivity throughout the process. Each report is thoroughly tracked and investigated, with resolutions provided within a timeframe—30 days for simpler cases and up to 60 days for complex cases. Additionally, the complainants is kept informed about the status of their complaints.

President reiterates resolve to defeat terrorism

F.P. Report

QUETTA: President Asif Ali Zardari on Wednesday reaffirmed the government's resolve to defeat terrorist elements at all cost and ensure sustainable peace and development in Balochistan.

Chairing a meeting on the law and order situation in Balochistan, the president underscored the threat posed by the terrorists who wanted to divide the nation. The meeting was attended by Chairman Pakistan Peoples Party Bilawal Bhutto Zardari, Acting Governor Balochistan Captain (ret'd) Abdul Khaliq Achakzai, Chief Secretary Balochistan Shakeel Qadir Khan, IG Police Moazzam Jah Ansari and other high officials.

Chief Minister Balochistan Mir Sarfraz Bugti briefed the meeting on the law and order situation in the province. "The situation is clear, the state will continue to exist and we will have to win war against terrorism," the president remarked.

He emphasized that the government will provide latest weapons to the anti-terrorism wing. Balochistan is close to our hearts and we want development and sustainable peace in the province, the president

added. He said the government wanted to see every child of Balochistan enrolled in the school. It is the need of the hour to make the children aware of the modern technology, President Zardari added.

PPP Chairman Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari was also a part of the meeting attended by Balochistan Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti and provincial ministers.

President Zardari and Bilawal later also met with members of parliamentary parties in Balochistan, according to a separate statement issued by the Presidency. Opposition leaders in the Balochistan Assembly and parliamentarians from various political parties presented their concerns and proposals regarding public welfare and the province's challenges.

According to the Presidency, President Zardari highlighted during the meeting that he had a special connection with the people of Balochistan. He emphasised that national solidarity must be upheld to take the country forward. The president assured that all rights would be granted to the people. "We do not believe in taking away rights but in winning the hearts of the people by granting them

their due," he was quoted as saying.

He added that all efforts for the welfare and prosperity of Balochistan would yield positive results, with "decisions being made that would be remembered in history", the Presidency said. The president also said that he would set up a special camp in Balochistan after Eidul Fitr to listen to public grievances and suggestions.

A day ago, the Parliamentary Committee on National Security had emphasised the urgent need to implement counterterrorism frameworks — the National Action Plan and Vision Azm-i-Istehkam — to curb terrorism, as Army Chief Gen Asim Munir pointed to governance gaps as a key reason behind the spike in terrorism and called for making Pakistan a "hard state".

The communique also emphasised the need for unity and political resolve to face the threat of terrorism with the full strength of the state, calling for a national consensus in the fight against terrorism. Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif had similarly called for national unity and dialogue against the menace of terrorism in the country in a visit to Quetta last week after the attack.

Hike in sugar price intolerable, says Dar

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Mohammad Ishaq Dar on Wednesday said that sale of sugar at price of Rs178-180 per kg was intolerable and announced that the retail price of sugar would remain at Rs164 per kg while its ex-mills price would be capped under Rs159 per kg.

Announcing the major decisions after chairing a meeting to review sugar prices in a live broadcast on national TV channels, he said a sub-committee was being

formed to submit recommendations within one month to address the persistent issue. The DPM/FM said that the committee formed on the directive of the prime minister to look into the sugar issue, had held several meetings in the past, after its prices were hiked in the holy month of Ramadan.

The DPM/FM Dar said that sale of sugar at Rs178-180 per kg was not tolerable at any cost; neither to the prime minister nor to the government. A sub-committee headed by Minister for National Food Security and

Research Rana Tanveer Hussain would submit its feedback within one month prior to April 19 April in this regard, he informed.

He said the sugar mills association had explained their reasons and they held detailed interaction over the issue. Earlier, the meeting was attended by Minister for National Food Security Rana Tanveer Hussain, Minister for Law and Justice Azam Nazeer Tarar, PM's Adviser Haroon Akhtar, representatives of the sugar mills association and the relevant senior officials.

IHC judge initiates contempt proceedings for cancelling cause list

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Justice Ijaz Ishaq Khan of the Islamabad High Court was furious on Wednesday on the cancellation of the cause list and observed that it would have been better if they blew up my court with explosives.

Justice Khan gave this remark when the cause list of contempt of court case against the Superintendent of Adiala Jail was cancelled. Mashal Yousafzai had moved the contempt plea against the jailer for defying court to allow a meeting with the founder of PTI (Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf).

Following cancellation of the cause list, deputy registrar (judicial) of the Islamabad High Court, Sultan Mehmood, appeared in court when summoned. Justice Khan asked the state counsel on whose instructions was the cause list canceled? The deputy registrar said that there were instruc-

tions from the Chief Justice's Office. The order stated that a larger bench had been formed, so the cause list for this case should be cancelled, he added.

The justice asked him under what law was the miscellaneous application for case transfer filed? Does the state support the transfer of a case to a larger bench without the presiding judge's consent? Justice Khan remarked, "Instead of doing this, you would have blown up my court with explosives. We can't even settle basic questions, and every ten years we find ourselves back at square one, questioning fundamental principles."

He remarked that it was not a matter of his personal concerns or his powers; it's about the dignity of the high court. Will the public still have faith in the justice system like this? He said no economy could grow without the rule of law. Petitioner Mashal Yousafzai submitted that "if this is happening to us outside, what must they be doing to

Imran Khan and Bushra Bibi in jail?" The justice responded that he was worried about his institution.

"The guided missile that was headed towards you is now heading towards us," remarked Justice Khan. Later, the justice ordered the deputy registrar to submit a written response and also sought a reply from the advocate general of Islamabad, asking him whether the chief justice has the authority to transfer a case to another judge without the consent of the presiding judge.

The justice questioned him whether a chief justice would have the authority to transfer a case like this in future? If a party has three cases and it petitions the chief justice, can the case be transferred? Are you opening the doors for corruption and nepotism? Justice Khan remarked that this is tantamount to misleading a court. The Islamabad High Court rules do not state that the chief justice can transfer a case without the judge's consent.

KP cabinet okays draft Sentencing (Amend) Act Bill

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: The 28th meeting of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Cabinet was held here on Tuesday night which was presided over by the Chief Minister Ali Amin Khan Gandapur and attended by the cabinet members, Chief secretary, Additional Chief Secretary Home, Senior Member Board of Revenue, Administrative Secretaries and Advocate General Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

The Cabinet approved the draft "Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Sentencing (Amendment) Act 2025" Bill which provides for bringing consistency in the decisions / judgments regarding Sentencing and better implementation. The amendments clarity, and additions specifically relates to sections 17,18 & 20 of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Sentencing Act, 2021. The variation observed in Sentencing for a same crime in provisions where discretion was allowed had necessitated the amendment. The Bill also clarifies the status of the employees of the Council, that has hitherto not been defined.

The Cabinet approved Rs. 567.70 million under Hybrid Security Model and procurement of different equipment for Police to enable it take over the full security management in Districts Buner & Upper Chitral within 15 days. It is worth mentioning that the Apex Committee had decided to introduce Hybrid Security Model (HSM) for 6 Districts i.e.

Buner, Swat, Upper Chitral, Mohmand, Khyber and Lakki Marwat. The Hybrid Security Model where either Army or Police is in lead role thus complete hand-over of security to the Police there. The procurement will include Arms & Ammunition, Plants & Machinery Transport and other assets.

The Cabinet directed to convene open kachehries with the general public of the area to objectively acquire the views of the stakeholders for detachment of the two villages/mouzas Darshi and Mathokhiel from Tehsil Banda Daud Shah District Karak and attachment thereof with Thall tehsil of District Hangu. The Cabinet also approved funds for clearing the liabilities of outsourced hospitals Daggar, Ghiljo, Mamad Gat, Mola Khan Sarai, Toi Khula and Darazinda, RHC Garamchashma and RHC Mastuj. It also approved the establishment of Jawan Markaz in District Karak.

The Cabinet accorded approval to the appointment of non-official members of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Medical Transplantation Regulatory Authority. The three years tenure of the seven (07) non-official members of the Authority had already expired on 3-09-2023. As per Section 5(4) of the Act, the Authority shall consist of 11 members including 08 non-official and 03 official members i.e. Minister Health, Secretary Health and Administrator of the Regulatory Authority. As

per Section 5, sub-sections (5 & 6) of the Act, Government may appoint one member against each specialty/field as non-official members for a period of three years. The Authority regulates, monitors and controls all the transplantation of human organs and various committees under the Act. It recognizes medical institutions and hospitals for practice of operative surgery in transplantation of human organs.

The Cabinet approved Rs.56.028 million and exemption of tendering process for Ramzan Dastarkhawan for FY 2024-25. The exemption from tendering/bidding process was granted under Section-14(1) (i) of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Public Procurement Regulatory Authority (KP-PPRA) Act 2012. Rules 2014 in the best public interest as normal procedure for procurement of food takes time. Under the scheme during the month of Ramzan free Sahri and Ifтары are provided to all those individuals who are stationed with patients in DHQ and THQ hospitals etc.

The Cabinet approved amendments to the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Commission on the Status of Women (KPCSW) Act, 2016 which aims at strengthening the working of the Commission. The Commission oversees implementation of laws, policies and programs related to women and proposes new measures where there exist gaps.



Sindh CM discusses bilateral ties, trade, culture with Chinese, Iraqi consuls general

KARACHI (APP): Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah held separate meetings at the Chief Minister House with the Consul General of China, Yang Yundong, and the Consul General of Iraq, Dr Mehr Mujahid Jejan. The discussions centred on investment, development projects, and diplomatic cooperation, further strengthening Sindh's ties with both nations.

During his meeting with the Chinese Consul General, the chief minister emphasized the importance of ongoing and upcoming projects under the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). He noted that President Asif Ali Zardari's recent meeting with the Chinese President had opened new avenues for development.

The chief minister said that Karachi will soon see the launch of multiple water projects in collaboration with China, along with an expansion of solar energy initiatives. He expressed his commitment to enhance

economic ties and shared his plans to visit China to finalise major projects. Chinese Consul General Yang Yundong reaffirmed China's dedication to investing in Sindh, highlighting the interest of Chinese investors in various sectors. Both sides also discussed advancements in modern agricultural technology and research.

Murad Ali Shah said that PPP Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari prioritises strong relations with China, referencing his past visits as foreign minister as crucial in fostering bilateral cooperation. In a separate meeting, Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah welcomed Iraqi Consul General Dr Mehr Mujahid Jejan and congratulated him on his appointment.

He also said the reopening of the Iraqi Consulate in Karachi after two decades was a significant step towards strengthening diplomatic and cultural ties between the two countries. Dr Mehr Mujahid Jejan

announced the resumption of visa and consular services, which will benefit pilgrims and the people of Sindh. The CM assured full support from the Sindh government for the consulate's operations.

Talking about Reflecting on the historical bond between Pakistan and Iraq, the Iraqi Consul General said that Iraq was among the first nations to establish a consulate in Pakistan. The CM reiterated Sindh's commitment to fostering a robust relationship with Iraq, emphasising the significance of bilateral cooperation.

Dr Mehr Mujahid Jejan expressed gratitude for the warm welcome, saying that Karachi felt like home. He also announced the availability of direct flights between Karachi and Najaf, easing travel for religious pilgrims. Both the Sindh chief minister and the Iraqi Consul General exchanged Ramadan greetings, marking the occasion with goodwill and mutual respect.



Senate committee receives briefing on national green taxonomy policy

E.P. Report

KARACHI: Senate Standing committee on Climate Change & Environmental Coordination received a briefing on National Green Taxonomy policy at State Bank of Pakistan Karachi on 19th March 2025.

The meeting was attended by Senator Sherry Rehman, Senator Bushra Anjum Butt, Senator Zarqa Suharwardy, Senator Taj Haider, Senator Qurat-ul-Ain Mari, Governor State Bank Jameel Ahmed, Deputy Governor Saleemullah, Joint Secretary Ministry of Finance Mohammad Nadeem Memon, Secretary Ministry of Climate Change Ayesha Humera Ch, representatives of OCCI, Pakistan Business

Council and media persons.

Deputy Governor State Bank told the committee that the draft policy, which is in consultation phase and will be ready to be shared in this month, is formulated with the consultation of all stakeholders including representatives of Provincial and Federal Governments. The policy aims to identify the sectors which contribute to the economy and their contribution in carbon emission. These sectors include Agriculture Forestry & Fisheries, Manufacturing, Transport, Energy, Construction, Water and Waste, Information & Telecommunication, Guide for tourism sector.

After identification, depending on the carbon foot prints, the policy cate-

gorizes the sectors as Green, Amber and Red. Once identified, the policy focuses on mitigation and adaptation process with consultation and awareness with the stakeholders in the sectors.

Senator Sherry Rehman lauded SBP's approach in addressing the pressing issue and said that Pakistan is 2nd most vulnerable country from Climate Change. She further stressed that the draft should be routed through Council of Common Interest as role of provinces in implementation is essential.

She also told the Ministry of Climate Change to pace up in leading efforts against climate change and creating awareness in public. "Pakistan is dealing with water scarcity, farmers are struggling for water in their

crops and after US exist from Paris Agreement we must act swiftly to cope up Climate Change as no one is coming we are on our own", she added. Moreover, she suggested that Ministry of Climate Change and EPA's should take lead in action against carbon emitters.

Senator Taj Haider, Senator Zarqa Suharwardy, Senator Qurat-ul-Ain Mari also recommended that the draft policy should also be routed through legislation via standing committees on Climate Change and Finance, and that capacity building of MOCC needs to be done.

Later, The Senators paid visit to the State Bank Museum and appreciated SBP's efforts in preserving history.

Three fraudsters arrested for exploiting patients at LGH, PINS

LAHORE (APP): The administration of Lahore General Hospital (LGH) and the Punjab Institute of Neurosciences (PINS) has arrested three fraudsters involved in deceiving patients by charging them excessive fees for medical tests.

According to an LGH spokesperson on Wednesday, the suspects — identified as Sarfraz, Ahmed, and Ehsan—were operating from a private store outside the hospital, primarily targeting individuals from remote areas. They lured patients by promising immediate medical tests while charging them more than the government-prescribed fees.

The fraudulent activities came to light after multiple complaints were received from patients at both hospitals, including a case where a female patient specifically identified individuals involved in the scam. Acting swiftly, the hospital administration devised a strategy to interrogate the suspects, uncovering their illegal activities.

Following this, Medical Superintendents (MS) of LGH Dr. Farjad Hussain and Dr. Umar Ishaq of PINS promptly informed the hospital's police post. This led to the immediate arrest of all three culprits. Additionally, on the request of Dr. Adnan Khalid, DMS Admin at PINS, a formal case has been registered, and an investigation is underway.

In a joint statement, Principal LGH Professor Al-Fareed Zafar and ED PINS Professor Asif Bashir warned that strict legal action would be taken against any staff member found involved in fraudulent activities.

NAB hands over physical possession of properties to PSO

KARACHI (APP): National Accountability Bureau (NAB) Karachi handed over the physical possession of properties worth Rs107.905 million to Pakistan State Oil (PSO), the properties were confiscated by NAB Karachi from the convicted accused Iqbal Ahmed Turabi, the then Manager banking, Pakistan State Oil and his wife / Benamidars who were involved in the offense of corruption and corrupt practices regarding accumulation of assets beyond know sources of income.

NAB Karachi had conducted inquiry and subsequently, filed Reference No. 39/2001 against the said accused and his spouse /

benamidars in the Accountability Court, Sindh at Karachi, whereas, the Accountability Court convicted and sentenced the accused persons to undergo rigorous imprisonment for 10 & 5 years respectively and also imposed a fine of Rs95 million on the accused persons along with confiscation of properties.

The convicted accused persons filed appeal before the Hon'ble Sindh High Court, Karachi and subsequently before Supreme Court of Pakistan, which were dismissed by the court.

Consequently, NAB Karachi took over the physical possession of 4x properties of convicted persons and the same were handed over by Javed

Akbar Riaz, DG NAB Karachi to Brigadier (R) Rizwan Ahmed, General Manager (Security Services & Administration, Pakistan State Oil Karachi on 19 March 2025 in a handing over ceremony at Regional Headquarters of NAB at Karachi.

Javed Akbar Riaz, DG NAB (Karachi), reaffirmed the Bureau's commitment for recovering looted money and returning it to the affected departments and individuals. He further said that under the leadership of Chairman NAB, Lieutenant General (R) Nazir Ahmed, NAB Karachi remains committed to combating corruption and corrupt practices with dedication and professionalism.

KP govt takes practical steps to improve economic conditions

E.P. Report

PESHAWAR: The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government has initiated practical steps to improve the economic conditions of the province and formulate a New Industrial Policy 2025, 2030 for industrial development.

For the first time, it has been decided to solve the problems faced by the local cluster and develop it. In this regard, a meeting related to the cluster was held at the Small Industries Development Board. The

meeting was chaired by Chairman Salim Khan, President Honey Association.

The meeting was attended by Feroz Shah, President Furniture Association, Asghar Khan, President Marble Association, Atmankhel, Provincial Chief of SMEDA Rashid Aman, Deputy Managing Director (DMD) Jof SIDB, Noman Fayyaz, Assistant Director Qasim Iftikhar and Research Officer SIDB, Asghar Hussain.

The meeting was attended. A detailed discussion

was held on the problems faced by the marble and honey industries, their solutions and suggestions for the development of the local cluster. It should be noted that the Small Industries Development Board is working regularly to develop the clusters of precious stones, carpet making, Peshawari slipper making, marble, furniture, and honey. Collecting data related to the clusters and their representation in exhibitions at the national and international levels is the top priority.

Home Minister chairs meeting on law & order

KARACHI (APP): Sindh Home Minister, Zia-Ul-Hassan Lanjar Wednesday

chaired a high-level meeting at the provincial level to discuss the law and

order situation and security measures.

During the meeting, IGP Sindh provided a detailed briefing on the law and order situation and security arrangements during the holy month of Ramadan. The Sindh Home Minister issued instructions to ensure that the overall security arrangements, especially on the occasion of Yom-e-Shahadat Ali, are coordinated and extraordinary, ensuring that all processions and gatherings are safe and peaceful.

He emphasized that during the last ten days of Ramadan, particularly during the holy nights, the security strategy and plan should not only be foolproof but also enhance security measures, including police patrolling and picketing, around central mosques, Imam Bargahs, and prayer/memorial sites.

The IGP Sindh Ghulam Nabi Memon informed the meeting that a security plan covering all three phases of the holy month is being implemented in line with its essence and priorities. The District officers have also been directed to adopt a coordinated strategy and plan.

The meeting was attended by the Additional Chief Secretary Home, Secretary Law, DIGs, CTD, Special Branch, Security, and other senior officers.

Photo walk highlights history of Palestine

LAHORE (APP): A photo walk was held at Government College University (GCU) Lahore on Wednesday to shed light on the history of Palestine and the ongoing humanitarian crisis in Gaza. Organised in collaboration with the Palestine Society and Friends of Palestine, the event aimed to raise awareness among students and express solidarity with the Palestinian people.

The exhibition was inaugurated by Prof. Dr. Babar Aziz, Dean of the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, alongside Prof. Dr. Fauzia Ghani, Chairperson of the Political Science Department. Also present were Ahmed Raza Khan, Incharge of the International Relations Department, and Shahzad Ahmed, Controller of Examinations.

Speaking at the event, Palestine Society Advisor Muhammad Manzoor Elahi underscored the importance of educating students about Palestine's historical context. He emphasized that such initiatives play a crucial role in fostering awareness and critical thinking. He added that the exhibition was carefully curated to present an objective and factual account of Palestinian history and the ongoing conflict.

DC reviews LDP progress

LAHORE (APP): Deputy Commissioner (DC) Syed Musa Raza on Wednesday chaired a meeting at his office, reviewed the progress on Lahore Development Plan.

The session was attended by Chief Officer Metropolitan Corporation Lahore (MCL) Shahid Abbas Kathia, Additional Deputy Commissioner (Finance & Planning) Mudassar Nawaz, Assistant Commissioner (AC) Nishtar, Assistant Commissioner Raiwind and representatives from WASA and NESPAK.

During the meeting, officials were briefed on the ongoing development projects in Tehsil Nishtar and Tehsil Raiwind. DC Lahore emphasized the importance of completing all schemes under the Lahore Development Program within the designated timelines.

The DC stressed that under this initiative, no street should remain unpaved and that there would be no compromise on the quality and standards of the development projects. MCL CO Shahid Abbas Kathia and Additional Deputy Commissioner Finance & Planning assured their full cooperation in ensuring the program's success. He announced that a monthly review meeting would be held to monitor progress, with Phase 1 set to be completed by the deadline of June 30, 2025.

Youth being equipped for modern world needs: CM

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif has said that the youth of Punjab is being provided with possible opportunities so as to adapt to the requirements of the modern world.

In her message on Digital Learning Day, she said that 'CM Laptop Scheme' will prove to be a revolutionary step for the students of Punjab.

The CM emphasized that technological advancements and modern education are essential for progress in today's digital era. She stated, "Punjab's youth are being trained through international market-based IT programs, ensuring they stay competitive in the global workforce."

She elaborated that courses in Artificial Intelligence (AI), Software Development, and Freelancing are being offered to equip young people with in-demand digital skills.

Additionally, freelancers

are receiving IT certifications aligned with international job market requirements, while smart classrooms and digital labs are

being established in government schools to make traditional education more engaging and effective through modern technology.

HBL

Public Notice

This is to inform the public and our valued customers that effective 26th April 2025, operations and business activities of the branch that is mentioned below will be transferred to their respective acquiring branch:

S.#	CLOSING BRANCH DETAIL	ACQUIRING BRANCH DETAIL
1	AKBARPURA, NOWSHERA Branch Code: 0853 Address: Village & P.O. Akbarpura District. Nowshera.	PABBI, DISTRICT NOWSHERA Branch Code: 0235 Address: Village & P.O. Pabbi District Nowshera. Contact Number: 0923-529209



PAKISTAN AIR FORCE AIR HEADQUARTERS SECTOR E-9, ISLAMABAD

EXPRESSION OF INTEREST

Pakistan Air Force seeks Expression of Interest (EOI) for appointment of Travel Agencies / Firms for inclusion in 'on-panel' firms for arranging 'Abroad Travel' of PAF personnel. Interested Travel agencies / Firms must have at least **10 Years** IATA membership and experience of handling large organizations for supporting the Air Ticketing and other travel requirements around the Globe. The selected Travel Agents / Firms will be required to provide Air Ticketing Services and other Services required for PAF Personnel (while travelling abroad), on the most competitive rates and according to Terms and Conditions (**obtainable from DD Log (Move) Directorate of Log Admin Services, AHQs, Sector E-9, Islamabad; Tel No 051-9506739, 051-9506747 & 03239401769**), defined by Pakistan Air Force.

Interested Travel Agencies / Firms are hereby requested to submit EOIs, along with an agreement to Terms and Conditions (referred above) at the following address in a sealed envelope. The proposal should include organizational profile with experience, expertise, technical staff, clients served (mentioning major government departments and other organizations, if any, being handled and financial standing, till 30 June, 2024. The address for sending across mentioned envelope (marked as "EOI for Providing Air Travel Services to PAF") is:-

DD Log (Move)
Directorate of Log Admin Services,
Air Headquarters, Sector E-9, Islamabad

Delivery of Tender. The offer is to be submitted in duplicate, as under: -

a. Technical Offer: Should contain all relevant specifications in duplicate, in an envelope and be clearly marked "Technical Offer" without prices, tender number and date of opening. Both the "envelopes" of Commercial and Technical Offers should be enclosed in one cover, properly sealed and bear the address of this office, with Tender number and the firm's name clearly written. Technical offers will be opened half an hour after the date and time for receipt of tender.

b. Commercial Offer:

(i) The offers will be in **single** and will indicate prices quoted in figures, as well as, in words along with essential literature. It should be clearly marked in fact on the; envelope "Commercial Offer", Tender number and date of opening. The Commercial offers of only those firms will be opened, whose technical offers are accepted by technical authorities. Date of opening of Commercial offers would be intimated after receipt of technical scrutiny report from technical authorities. Commercial offers of technically - rejected firms will be returned to the firms un-opened.

The said envelopes must reach at the address given above, by **07 April, 2025, before 1100 Hrs.**

PAF reserves the right to reject any or all Expressions of Interest / proposals and cancel the process, without assigning any reason thereof.

INVITATION FOR BIDS TENDER NOTICE

Sealed bids are invited from eligible bidders/Firms for Purchase of GPS/GNSS survey equipment for the Settlement of Land Records in District Dir Upper, Dir Lower and Tehsil Kalam of District Swat Project Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

TERMS/CONDITIONS:

- The sealed bids (both technical and financial) should reach this office on 14.04.2025 up to 11:30 AM. Technical bids will be opened on the same date (14.04.2025) at 12.00 PM in the presence of representatives of the bidders who choose to be present. Bids will be evaluated under **Single Stage, two Envelope Procedure (Rule 6 (2) (b) of KPRA rules 2014.**
- Pre bid meeting will be held on **08/04/2025 at 11:00 AM.**
- The bidder shall submit 2% of bid Security / earnest money of the total quoted bid along with their bids.
- The Specifications and the detailed bidding documents can be obtained from the Office of the Project Director Settlement of Land Records in District Dir Upper, Dir Lower and Tehsil Kalam of District Swat Project Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Project Director Office 1st Floor IRC Building Murad Abad Near Taroon Shadi Hall Jamrud Road Peshawar, on presenting / submitting deposit voucher of Rs. 1000/-as tendering fee (non-refundable) under head C03870, DDO PR-5690, others C Non Tax Revenue of the State Bank of Pakistan / National Bank of Pakistan, on any working day during office hours.

Chairman Procurement Committee
Settlement of Land Records in District Dir Upper,
Dir Lower and 'Tehsil Kalam of District Swat Project
Board of Revenue
1st Floor IRC Building Murad Abad Near Taroon Shadi Hall Jamrud Road Peshawar
Phone # 091-9221227, email: pd.dirsettlement@gmail.com

Peshawar’s parking woes: Residents call for urgent solutions

PESHAWAR (APP): The shortage of car parking in shopping malls and business arcades in Peshawar city has irked Eid and iftar shoppers besides causing traffic jams.

These days, people were facing a lot of problems in Peshawar to park their vehicles owing to lack of car parking facilities in shopping markets especially in city, cantonment and university road and worst traffic jams in Karimpura, Hasthnagri, Saddar Road, Jahngirabad and board areas especially during iftar were almost a routine matter.

Car parking has become a great problem not only for motorists but also for the shopkeepers in main bazaars of the city Shafi market, Sonhri Masjid Road, Opposite Bara Bazaar, Qisa Khwani bazaar, Arbab Road, Jehangir Abad and Karkano markets and people have to wait for hours to move to their respective destination.

Riaz Khan, who visited Karimpura bazar with family, told APP on Wednesday that we have been trapped in a rush for nearly two hours due to traffic jams and broke fast on the road last evening.

In the absence of a proper parking facility, he said, it is very hard for customers to park the vehicles which are often lifted by the traffic police and shoppers have to pay an extra amount as fine to get their vehicle back.

The motorists are being seen keep on moving in search of a parking place for their vehicles while traffic wardens try every way for ensure a smooth flow of traffic, but apparently seen helpless owing to lack of proper parking spaces in markets in Peshawar.

The visitors requested the authorities to make proper parking spaces in all the main markets of Peshawar as lack of parking lots creates traffic jams on roads and precious time of shoppers are being wasted.

Ehtisham Qaisar, a motorist coming to Nowshera told APP that he was searching for parking place for the last one hour in Karimpura bazaar, but because of lack of parking lots it is very difficult to find any suitable place and resultantly his precious time was being wasted.

The shopkeepers, who are parking their own vehicles in front of their shops and occupy the place for full day were also added to the difficulties of shoppers these days, he added. "As it was not the responsibility of PTI government to ensure parking places in all the big shopping malls and separate parking lots in all the markets of Peshawar," Qaiser said.

He said people of Peshawar wanted car parking facilities, roads and communication facilities rather than Rapid Bus Service. Sajid Ali, another motorist of Nowshera said he had parked his vehicle some 100 meters away from the main market because of traffic rush and lack of parking space in Karimpura market.

PTI Govt should ask the owners of the main shopping malls, otherwise did not permit them to construct their plazas and markets. "Who is responsible for the traffic mess today we are facing on occasion of the upcoming Eid," he said.

Ali said traffic wardens are wondering here and there and imposing fines on motorists for wrong parking, but there is no one to guide us where we park our vehicles. He said markets where parking facilities were available were charging very heavily these days and people are being forced to park their vehicles on roadsides.

There is very limited parking space for vehicles in Saddar Bazaar that is why people are parking their vehicles in no parking zones, which is one of the reasons for traffic jams, he explained. The lack of parking also affects traders' and vendors' business and many wealthy customers are avoiding visiting the main markets of the city due to this problem.

The traffic situation is also different from market to market. The markets, which are entertaining lower middle class, low income groups and middle class are facing more severe traffic problems than those entertaining upper or elite class these days.

Traffic jams on Saddar Road especially from FC Chowk to Gharbai police station besides Arbab Road where finding appropriate parking for vehicles was almost impossible during peak hours as a long queues of cars were being seen parked on roads side, creating traffic mess and reaching homes in time becomes merely a dream for victors.

One of the main reasons behind traffic problems in markets is the makeshift stalls that have literally made their way to the footpath leaving no option for pedestrians to walk on the roads. The visitors of the markets believe traffic choke in markets waste considerable time and the time that one has to spend in traffic jam could be spent on shopping instead but it is still a dream for Peshawarites.

Every year people have to go through the same mental torture due to lack of car parking as no solid measure has been taken to address this grave problem in Peshawar that was once consider City of Flowers.

Meena Khan keeps his office open for public during Ramazan



F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Minister for Higher Education, Archives, and Libraries, Meena Khan Afridi, remains active in addressing public and departmental issues even during the holy month of Ramazan. He spent another busy day in his office, meeting various delegations and listening to public concerns.

In this regard, Member of the Provincial Assembly (MPA) Azam Khan met the minister and briefed him on the issues faced by the people of his constituency. Minister Meena Khan Afridi assured him that the government is taking all possible measures for public welfare and that reforms in the education sector are ongoing.

Additionally, a delegation led by the Principal of Edwardes College Peshawar also met with the provincial minister to discuss the challenges faced by the college.

The Minister of Higher Education assured them that concrete steps are being taken to resolve the issues of educational institutions and that the government is committed to promoting high-quality education.

Later, Tehsil Nazim Hafiz Afridi, along with a delegation, also met Minister Meena Khan Afridi to discuss educational challenges and other public matters at the tehsil level.

The minister assured them of full cooperation, emphasizing that development is not possible without the promotion of education and that the government is striving to improve educational facilities across all regions.

The Minister for Higher Education, Archives, and Libraries reaffirmed his commitment to addressing public concerns daily and making every possible effort to resolve them.



PESHAWAR: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister Ali Amin Gandapur talking to a delegation of Khyber Chamber of Commerce and Industries.

Arshad discusses funding issues with Muzammil Aslam

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: The Minister for Local Government, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, held a crucial meeting with the Advisor to the Chief Minister for Finance to discuss various funding challenges faced by the local government.

During the meeting, both officials reviewed the financial constraints affecting development projects at the grassroots level and explored possible solutions to ensure timely funding.

The discussion focused on budget allocations, revenue generation and the distribution of funds to local bodies.

The Minister for Local Government Arshad Ayub Khan emphasized the need for sustainable financial support to strengthen municipal services, infrastructure projects and public welfare initiatives.

He highlighted the importance of an efficient financial mechanism to ensure transparency and effective utilization of resources.

The Advisor to the Chief Minister for Finance Muzammil Aslam assured full cooperation and reiterated the provincial government's commitment to strengthening the local government system.

He acknowledged the financial challenges and discussed potential strategies for improving fiscal management, including exploring additional funding sources and enhancing revenue collection.

Both sides agreed to form a working group to monitor and resolve funding issues proactively.

They also underscored the significance of coordination between departments to streamline financial matters and ensure smooth project implementation.

Labour department introduces E-Mazdoor Card

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Labour Department has decided to introduce the E-Mazdoor Card for workers employed in various industries across the province.

This groundbreaking initiative aims to revolutionize labour welfare and streamline service records.

The decision was made during a meeting chaired by Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Minister for Labour, Fazal Shakoor Khan, at his office in the Civil Secretariat, Peshawar.

The meeting was attended by Secretary Labour Mian Adil Iqbal, Vice Commissioner of the Employees' Social Security Institution (ESSI), and other concerned officials.

During the meeting, the provincial minister was given a detailed briefing on the E-Mazdoor Card.

It was told in the briefing that the card will provide a comprehensive record of a worker's employment history, including entry into service, tenure at various factories, and other essential details.

On the occasion, the provincial minister issued directives to the officers concerned to expedite the implementation process and ensure the card's issuance at the earliest.

He emphasized that the digitization process within the Labour Department is progressing rapidly, and reforms through digital transformation are essential for improving the system.

He further said that digitalization will enhance transparency, save time, and ensure that all labour service records remain secure.

He added that the incumbent KP government takes tangible steps to introduce innovative solutions that benefit workers across Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

Anti-corruption court rejects two officers bail in wheat scandal

Humayun Khan

PESHAWAR: Special Judge Anti-Corruption Court Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Salahuddin, has rejected the bail application of two food department officers, Atif Khan and Junaid Bacha in the wheat scandal, on Wednesday.

The Anti-Corruption's prosecutor informed the court that the accused officers, Atif Khan and Junaid Bacha, were posted at the Azakhel government warehouse. The prosecutor stated that the accused officers, in collusion with others, embezzled over 30,000 bags of wheat from the government warehouse, valued at millions of rupees.

The prosecutor further stated that after receiving complaints, the Anti-Corruption Establishment launched an inquiry, which revealed that the wheat bags were missing from the warehouses. The accused officers, along with other officials, were found guilty of embezzlement.

A First Information Report (FIR) was registered, and six accused were nominated. The prosecutor informed the court that after the registration of the FIR, both accused officers were taken into custody and are currently under investigation.

The prosecutor argued that the accused caused a loss of 19 crores to the national exchequer and are not entitled to any concession. Therefore, their bail application should be rejected.

On the other hand, the defense counsel for the accused officers adopted the stance that the accused are government officers who have no role in the case. The counsel pleaded with the court to grant bail to the accused, arguing that they are innocent and have been wrongly implicated.

However, after hearing the arguments from both sides, the court rejected the bail application of the two officers, ordering their imprisonment.

Meeting on Housing Department digitalization held

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Special Assistant to Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa for Housing, Dr. Amjad Ali, chaired a meeting on housing department digitalization in Peshawar on Wednesday.

Secretary Housing Authority Mahmood Aslam, DG Housing Imran Wazir, and other officials attended.

Secretary Housing highlighted digitalization's significance, stating that tasks taking months can now be completed in hours. DG Imran Wazir briefed attendees on digitalizing all ongoing housing projects' data, ensuring timely completion of development work, reducing workforce needs, and saving time.

The Special Assistant showed keen interest, emphasizing that no department can progress without digitalization. It ensures time efficiency and smooth completion of tasks. He added that land records would be securely stored, and project progress could be instantly monitored. Digitalization will be highly beneficial for both ongoing and future housing projects.

Brakwal chairs meeting on road improvement, rehab in Karak

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: A meeting was held in Peshawar on Wednesday under the chairmanship of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's Provincial Minister for Agriculture Sajjad Brakwal on the ongoing road construction initiatives in Karak district under World Bank assistance.

The project includes a total of four numbers of roads located at karak. Roads included are Rehabilitation of Madaki to Siraj baba road (9.97km), Rehabilitation of Pyala morh to shahidan Banda (6.94km), Rehabilitation of Indus Jan, Deputy Director of Communications and Works (C&W) Irshad, and other relevant officials. Project authorities briefed the provincial Minister for agriculture Sajjad Brakwal on the ongoing road construction initiatives in Karak district under World Bank assistance.

The project includes a total of four numbers of roads located at karak. Roads included are Rehabilitation of Madaki to Siraj baba road (9.97km), Rehabilitation of Pyala morh to shahidan Banda (6.94km), Rehabilitation of Indus highway to mirdal Banda via Musakan road (5.46km), Rehabilitation of main Gurgai road to issaki khunari (4.5km). The total estimated cost of the project is approximately Rs. 1,900 million, with completion expected within 15 months.

Addressing the meeting, Provincial Minister Sajjad Barkwal directed officials to ensure transparency in both the quality and quantity of road construction work. He emphasized adapting project designs to align with developmental needs and the uplift of local communities. He stated that the current provincial government is committed to provide all necessary facilities to the public and prioritizing infrastructure development in remote areas to enhance connectivity and boost commercial activities.

The Provincial minister Brakwal vowed to personally monitor the projects, warning that negligence or delays would not be tolerated. He also thanked World Bank officials and relevant department officers for their cooperation in executing public welfare projects.

HBK Ramazan Sports Gala at PPC Several matches played on Day 1

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Several matches were decided last night in the ongoing HBK Ramadan Sports Gala an annual event organized in collaboration between the Peshawar Press Club and HBK. The competitions featured thrilling encounters, drawing large crowds, including journalists and their families who stayed late into the night adding to the vibrant atmosphere of the Press Club.

Under the supervision of President of Peshawar Press Club M. Riaz, General Secretary Tayyab Usman Awan and Chairman Sports Committee, Irfan Musa Zai the results of matches were In the snooker event Yasir Hussain, Arif Yousafzai, Zarshad and Musharraf Ali secured victories. In table tennis, Bilal Afridi, Zeeshan Liaqat and Aftab Ahmed won their respective matches.

In the badminton doubles event the pairs of Adeel Zada & Hassan Khurshid, Arsalan Takkar & Kabir Ali, Arshad Yousafzai & Shehzad Rasheed, Zafar Iqbal & Abid Khan, Wajid Shehzad & Asad Sabri emerged victorious qualifying for the second round.

In the carrom board competition Ihtesham Basheer, Shehzada Fahad, Zahid Awan, Munir Hazarvi and Shakeel Ghalib secured wins.

The Ludo event saw the highest number of registrations. The following teams advanced to the second round after their victories last night Abdullah & Bilal BBC, Hammad & Yasir Hussain, Munir Hazarvi & Faizan Hussain, Shehryar & Hassan Ali, Aamir Ali Shah & Arshad Arbab, Aaqif Adnan & Sameer Raziq, Muneeb & Umair Mohmandzai, Wahid Khan & Rooh-ul-Amin, Bilawal Arbab & Tanveer Iqbal.

It is worth mentioning that over 200 members of the Press Club are participating in the five different competitions of the Ramadan Sports Gala.



Bahali Welfare Organization protests operation in Kurram

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: The Bahali Welfare Organization on Wednesday condemned the ongoing unilateral operation in Lower Kurram, demanding its immediate cessation and justice for the people of Bagan, whose town was allegedly set on fire by miscreants.

During a press conference at Peshawar Press Club, organization leaders, including President Khayali Orakzai, Chairman Nawroz Khan Orakzai, and Mufti Shah Nawaz, voiced their concerns, saying that such operations would only escalate tensions rather than resolve conflicts.

The speakers alleged that one-sided actions by security forces were forcing innocent residents out of their homes in Bagan, Ochat, Mandori, and Charkhel. They claimed that the government had launched a fresh operation targeting only one group while ignoring attacks on Bagan by rival factions.

They criticized the authorities for failing to take action against those who previously set fire to Bagan Bazar and forcibly removed weapons from the area's residents.

The organization also accused the government of ignoring the recommendations of the Kohat Grand Jirga, which had proposed a fair investigation into any security incidents along the main roads. Instead of following due process, they claimed, security forces were forcefully evicting people without any prior inquiry or negotiation.

Speakers highlighted past incidents where homes in Central Kurram's Kundali Baba area were destroyed under the pretext of a search operation.

They alleged that similar operations had previously displaced residents of 62 villages in Kurram, none of which have been rehabilitated. Now, they fear the same fate awaits Bagan, Ochat, Mandori, and Charkhel.

The organization further criticized the security policies in Parachinar, where local armed groups allegedly control the city, while law enforcement remains passive.

They pointed out that previous attacks on security checkpoints in Parachinar had gone unpunished, raising concerns over biased enforcement of the law.

Expressing their frustration, the speakers said that tribal families were being humiliated and displaced during Ramadan.



In brief

Complaints redressed
F.P. Report

MULTAN: Dr Zahid Malik, the Multan Region head of the office of Federal Ombudsman, addressed dozens of complaints of people ranging from insurance claim payments worth over Rs 1 million to weaker cellular signals besides complaints against Railways and FIA here. A spokesman said in a statement on Wednesday that regional head heard complaints of a number of people against State Life Insurance Corporation (SLIC) including one Ehsan Elahi who alleged he had paid Rs 200,000 to an SLIC agent but he usurped that money instead of depositing it in the SLIC account. After investigations by SLIC on the Ombudsman's orders, the complaint was found to be true and the complainant was paid Rs 200,000. Another complainant Muhammad Ameer received Rs 11000 as arrears while seventeen others were issued cheque worth Rs 850,000 as insurance claim. Dr. Zahid also heard eleven complaints against FIA, sixteen against PTA and cellular companies regarding weaker cellular signals and one against Railways. All these complaints were resolved today, the spokesman said. Dr. Zahid said people could file complaints on a plain paper or in form of SMS to 1055, Whatsapp, email or instagram to get their problems resolved.

DC vows swift action on issues
F.P. Report

ABBOTTABAD: In a significant move to address public concerns, Deputy Commissioner Abbottabad Sanaullah Khan, held a meeting with local citizens at his office on Wednesday. The session, conducted under the Chief Minister of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's "Open Door Policy" and "Good Governance" initiatives, aimed to ensure prompt resolution of public grievances and strengthen trust between the administration and the community. During the meeting, the Deputy Commissioner listened carefully to the issues raised by citizens and directed relevant departments to take immediate action. He emphasized that no delay would be tolerated in resolving public complaints. "The district administration is fully committed to public welfare and will ensure that all grievances are addressed promptly," he stated. Sanaullah Khan also encouraged citizens to approach the district administration without hesitation for any problems they face, assuring them of swift and effective solutions. He reiterated the administration's dedication to upholding the principles of good governance and providing relief to the people of Abbottabad. This initiative reflects the government's ongoing efforts to foster transparency, accountability, and public engagement in governance. The district administration remains steadfast in its mission to serve the community and improve the quality of life for all residents.

Commissioner takes action
F.P. Report

SUKKUR: Sukkur Commissioner Fayyaz Hussain Abbasi on Wednesday has taken strict notice of delays in land acquisition cases in Sukkur and Khairpur districts. In a meeting with relevant officials, Abbasi expressed dissatisfaction with the slow pace of work and directed them to complete the paperwork within a week and submit recommendations for Section 4 of the M-6 land acquisition project within 15 days.

Harassment allegations

Women varsity suspends officer

F.P. Report

MARDAN: Women's University Mardan has suspended a security officer at its Bakhshali Campus following allegations of harassment by a female student.

According to details, the student accused the officer of harassment, prompting the university administration to take immediate action. The officer was suspended, and an inquiry committee was formed to investigate the matter.

The official suspension order, issued to security officer Shah Faisal, stated that he was being placed under suspension with immediate effect to ensure a fair and impartial inquiry. The university confirmed that he would remain suspended until the investigation is completed and assured that strict action would be taken based on the findings.

In response to the incident, students staged a protest, boycotting classes

and demanding justice and increased protection. They called for a transparent investigation and strict punishment for those responsible.

To address the situation, the university has established a Harassment Committee under the Higher Education Commission's guidelines. The committee includes Assistant Registrar Pir Shekeel and PS to the Vice Chancellor Sajida Karim as focal persons. Deputy Registrar Adnan Ahmad, Additional Director Admissions Dr. Nadia Sharif, and the head of the concerned department will oversee the inquiry. The appellate body, responsible for reviewing appeals and making final decisions within 30 days, consists of Deputy Director P&D Adnan Masood, Assistant Professor Dr. Haleema Akbar, and Lecturer Ms. Farah Aqil. The Harassment Committee is responsible for investigating the allega-

tions, providing support to the affected student, and recommending necessary actions against the accused. Meanwhile, students continue to demand a fair and thorough inquiry, emphasizing the need for a safe and secure students.

RPO visits Rustam: Regional Police Officer Mardan Najeeb ur Rehman visited Rustam Police Station, Police post Shaheedan, and Jabey Kandao. During the visit, the RPO took stock of the security arrangements and infrastructure.

On this occasion, RPO Mardan while inspecting the security arrangements issued clear instructions that no negligence or lethargy in security matters will be tolerated. He directed the police personnel to make public service and safety their top priority. He said that special attention is being given to the provision of better infrastructure and modern facilities at police establishments.

Hospital Director ATH orders renovation

F.P. Report

ABBOTTABAD: Ayub Teaching Hospital (ATH) Director Dr Dawood Iqbal Wednesday conducted a comprehensive visit to various departments of the hospital to assess the administrative and medical facilities. During his inspection, he issued strict directives for the rapid completion of renovation work at the paramedics' hostel, emphasizing the need to provide improved facilities to the residing staff as soon as possible.

Dr Dawood Iqbal also reviewed the relocation process of the Cardiology Ward and issued necessary instructions to ensure a smooth transition. Additionally, he carried out a detailed inspection of the garbage area and incinerator, directing staff to further

improve cleanliness and hygiene standards across the hospital.

Accompanied by heads of various departments, the hospital director also visited the IBPP parking area, where he ordered the installation of barriers to regulate the parking system more efficiently.

During his visit to the hospital laboratory, Dr Dawood Iqbal examined ongoing tests and expressed satisfaction with the available facilities. However, he instructed the immediate repair of any malfunctioning machines to prevent any inconvenience to patients.

At the Urology Ward, he met with patients and inquired about the quality of services provided by the hospital. Listening to their concerns, he directed the staff to promptly address their needs and ensure they

receive the best possible care.

During a visit to the Female HO Hostel, Dr Dawood Iqbal instructed the Maintenance and Facility Management departments to provide additional amenities for female house officers, ensuring their comfort and convenience.

Speaking about his visit, Dr Dawood Iqbal emphasized that the purpose of the inspection was to personally review the progress of development projects and evaluate the facilities being provided to patients and hospital staff. He reaffirmed the commitment of the board of Governors and hospital administration to enhancing healthcare services and implementing concrete measures to further improve hospital operations.



HYDERABAD: A lady selecting to purchase artificial jewelry from a vendor in preparation of the upcoming Eidul Fitr at Latifabad market.

Commissioner join Agosh Iftar dinner

F.P. Report

KOHAT: Commissioner Kohat along-with the Deputy Commissioner attended the Iftar Party with the students at Aghush Al-Khidmat Campus. They on this auspicious occasion, not only had a pleasant conversation with the students but also discussed their educational activities, future ambitions and extracurricular activities.

Commissioner Kohat and Deputy Commissioner appreciated the hard work, dedication and academic efforts of the students and assured them of all possible support and facilities. They

urged on this occasion that education is the main step for the development of any nation and educated Pakistan is the guarantee of a bright future. This Holy gathering was not only a memorable moment for the students but also strengthened their morale and determination.

The students, on this occasion, also informed the guests about their educational struggle and ambitions, who appreciated their spirit and reiterated their determination to provide them with the best educational opportunities.

Commissioner Kohat maintained, the series of

Holy Iftar Gatherings will continue under the "Awami Agenda" of the Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, with the students and the public during the Ramadan-ul-Mubarak, so as not only to promote social harmony, but also to make the students feel that the government is taking serious steps for their development and education.

Such programs play an important role in strengthening the educational and social infrastructure of the country which will be the foundation of a developed and prosperous Pakistan, he concluded.

Cheques distributed

F.P. Report

MARDAN: The Acting Chairman of the Pakistan Tobacco Board, Mr. Fakhruddin Khan, visited the Tobacco Research Station in Mardan. On this occasion, the Chairman of the Pakistan Tobacco Board distributed checks worth PKR 75,000 and PKR 60,000 each to 171 tobacco farmers affected under SOL

(burnt barns). These farmers belonged to the districts of Mardan, Swabi, and Charsadda.

The event was attended by representatives of farmer organizations, including Liaquat Yousafzai, Rizwanullah Khan Akbar, and former provincial minister Fazal Rabbani, along with other esteemed farmers. Pakistan Tobacco Board's Farm Manager

Muhammad Adeel, Chemist Kamran Khan, ADO Hamad Khan, and other officials were also present.

On this occasion, the Acting Chairman of the Pakistan Tobacco Board stated that tobacco farmers will be provided with more facilities in the fields of research and marketing to enhance their production and income.



JAMSHORO: A view of dry riverbeds due to water shortage in the Indus River.

PFA seizes 1,150 liters of substandard beverages

F.P. Report

MULTAN: The Punjab Food Authority (PFA) thwarted the supply of counterfeit soft drinks. In a major operation led by Director Operations Zubair Ahmed Ejaz, a food safety team raided a soda water plant in Industrial Estate 17-Kassi and seized 1,150 liters of substandard beverages.

Additionally, an FIR was registered against the factory owners, leading to the arrest of one person. The authorities confiscated 1,000 empty bottles labeled with well-known brand names, four filling machines, and three gas cylinders. Investigations revealed that the factory was engaged in refilling these bottles with low-quality and hazardous beverages, deceiving consumers by selling them as popular branded drinks.

Social entrepreneurship imperative for poverty alleviation: Founder and Chairman of Akhuwat Foundation Dr. Amjad Saqib has said if people honestly pay their Zakat, poverty would become a thing of the past. Addressing a seminar on 'Social Entrepreneurship', organised by the Department of Sociology at Bahauddin Zakariya University (BZU) Multan on Wednesday, he said that 50 per cent of the country's population lives below the poverty line, urging the other half to take responsibility for their well-being.

Dr. Saqib stressed that sincerity in one's intentions leads to inevitable success. He recalled that Akhuwat Foundation started its journey with a modest sum of Rs. 25,000 and had since grown into a massive initiative providing interest-free loans worth billions to uplift people from poverty. He added that over 6.2 million individuals in Pakistan have benefited from these microfinance loans.

Calling sociology a crucial discipline, Dr. Saqib stated students pursuing this field are ambassadors of social change. He expressed hope that, together with these students, Akhuwat Foundation could play a significant role in eradicating poverty and improving living standards.

Vice-Chancellor of BZU Multan Dr. Muhammad Zubair Iqbal also addressed the gathering, stressing the university's commitment to providing quality education at minimal fees despite limited resources. He underscored the importance of Social Entrepreneurship, stating that the university would promote it to bring meaningful changes within available resources.

5 shopkeepers arrested for profiteering

F.P. Report

SARGODHA: The district administration arrested five shopkeepers accused of profiteering in various parts of city, here on Wednesday.

According to official sources, the price control magistrates inspected various points, including Cheema Colony, Kalyar Town and found that shopkeepers namely—Muhammad Umar, Ibrar Maqbool, Nasir, Iftikhar and Sher Muhammad were involved in profiteering.

Admn conducts raids against profiteers

F.P. Report

TOBA TEK SINGH: The district administration of Toba Tek Singh has intensified its crackdown against profiteers over the past 24 hours. Under Deputy Commissioner Muhammad Naeem Sandhu, price control magistrates conducted 12,482 inspections, imposing Rs. 177,000 in fines, sealing 251 shops, and arresting 81 individuals for overpricing.

In Tehsil Toba Tek Singh, 3,936 inspections led to Rs. 21,500 in fines, 78 shops sealed, and 71 arrests. Tehsil Gojra saw 3,630 inspections, Rs. 45,500 in fines, 58 shops sealed, and 10 arrests, while Tehsil Kamalia recorded 2,567 inspections, Rs. 65,000 in fines, and 52 shops sealed. In Tehsil Pirmahal, 2,349 inspections resulted in Rs. 45,000 in fines and 63 shops sealed.

Deputy Commissioner Muhammad Naeem Sandhu warned that profiteering and hoarding during Ramadan will not be tolerated, urging traders to ensure fair pricing or face strict legal action. He also encouraged citizens to report complaints so that immediate action can be taken.

Meanwhile, on the directives of Chief Minister Punjab, Maryam Nawaz Sharif, the crackdown against environmentally hazardous plastic bags has been intensified at the district level. Under the instructions of Director General Environment Punjab, Imran Hamid Sheikh and Deputy Commissioner Toba Tek Singh, Muhammad Naeem Sandhu, a special operation in Tehsil Kamalia led to the seizure of 225 kilograms of illegal plastic bags.

The operation was conducted by Deputy Director Environment Toba Tek Singh Shamim Ahmad Khan and Environment Inspector Irfan Khetran during which a large stock of plastic bags with a thickness of less than 75 microns was confiscated.

Teams from the Environment Department are actively cracking down on suppliers and retailers across the district. Deputy Director Shamim Ahmad Khan emphasized that these plastic bags contribute to environmental pollution, drainage issues, and serious health hazards. The Punjab government, under the leadership of CM Maryam Nawaz Sharif, remains committed to its crackdown on environmentally harmful materials, ensuring strict legal action against violators.

Meanwhile, the district administration and Civil Defence teams have launched a crackdown against illegal petrol pumps and oil agencies. During the operation, 2 illegal petrol pumps and 6 oil agencies were sealed, while 1 FIR was registered and 3 challans were issued. Additionally,

authorities imposed a fine of Rs. 21,000.

Civil Defence Officer Mehmood Hussain Anjum stated that these actions are being taken to ensure the availability of safe and high-quality petroleum products for the public. He emphasized that strict legal action will continue against those involved in illegal operations.

Deputy Commissioner Muhammad Naeem Sandhu has directed the district administration to take immediate action against illegal petrol pumps and oil agencies to protect the public from any potential risks.

Meanwhile, the district administration, under the leadership of Deputy Commissioner Muhammad Naeem Sandhu, remains actively engaged in ensuring quality healthcare facilities and essential commodities for the public.

Additional Deputy Commissioner General (ADCG) Zeeshan Labbha Mashih, accompanied by Assistant Commissioner Iqra Nasir, paid a surprise visit to the Tehsil Headquarters (THQ) Hospital in Kamalia. They thoroughly reviewed cleanliness, medical facilities and administrative affairs, while Medical Superintendent (MS) Dr. Adeel Arif was also present. The ADCG inspected the emergency ward, OPD and various departments, interacting with patients to inquire about the quality of medical services. He directed the hospital administration to ensure the provision of optimal healthcare facilities, warning that negligence would not be tolerated.

Later, the ADCG visited the Ramazan Sasta Bazaar in Kamalia, where he assessed the prices and quality of essential commodities. Engaging with consumers, he inquired about the availability and affordability of goods, emphasizing that under the supervision of Deputy Commissioner Muhammad Naeem Sandhu, affordable and quality items were being ensured. He reiterated that Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz was focused on controlling inflation and providing relief to low-income segments. Assistant Commissioner Iqra Nasir also reviewed cleanliness arrangements at the bazaar and issued directives for further improvements.

Following these inspections, the ADCG visited ongoing development projects, reviewing the pace and quality of work. He instructed the concerned officials to ensure the timely completion of projects so that the public could benefit from them at the earliest. Deputy Commissioner Muhammad Naeem Sandhu reaffirmed the administration's commitment to implementing the Chief Minister's vision of public welfare and development in the district.

Peace Committee reviews security arrangements

F.P. Report

BAHAWALPUR: A meeting of the District Peace Committee was held at the Commissioner's Office in Bahawalpur. The meeting was jointly chaired by Deputy Commissioner Dr. Farhan Farooq and District Police Officer Asad Sarfraz.

Additional Deputy Commissioner Headquarters, religious scholars from various schools of thought, officials of Anjuman-e-Tajir (traders association), members of the Peace Committee, and officers from relevant departments attended the meeting. Assistant Commissioners and Peace Committee members from other tehsils

also participated via video link. The meeting reviewed the security and other arrangements for processions and gatherings on Youm-e-Ali.

The deputy commissioner stated that Bahawalpur is a peaceful region and its people are peace-loving. He urged the members of the District Peace Committee to play their role in maintaining a peaceful atmosphere in the society. He directed to ensure excellent arrangements for the cleanliness of the procession routes on martyrdom day of Hazrat Ali (RA). He instructed that the sewerage system be repaired and street lights be kept functional on the procession routes.

DPO Asad Sarfraz stated that foolproof security arrangements should be ensured on the procession routes and at the venues of gatherings on the Youm-e-Ali (RA). He mentioned that the police force is performing duties for the security arrangements of mosques and Imambargahs during Ramazan. The DPO added that foolproof security arrangements will also be made on the occasion of Eidul Fitr. Scholars from various schools of thought and representatives of Anjuman-e-Tajir expressed their views at the meeting. Afterward, prayers were offered for the security, progress, prosperity, and stability of peace in the country.

Youth killed in road mishap

F.P. Report

SHAHDADKOT: A 32-year-old pedestrian Ehsan Ali Laghari, who was walking on foot was crushed to death by a high-speed tractor under the A-Section Police Station.

The deceased relatives said that the drivers of some tractors were running a race among themselves who, without caring about humanity, ran over our young man and took his life, police keep 5 tractors

in custody at police station for further investigation.

DC chairs meeting on polio campaign: A high-level meeting was held in DC office Qamber, under the chairmanship of Deputy Commissioner Qamber Shahdaddot Sajjad Haider Qadri and Provincial Coordinator Emergency Operation Cell Irshad Ali Sodhar in connection with checking the performance of polio eradication campaign in district

Qamber Shahdaddot.

On this occasion, Dr. Abdul Ghaffar Bhatti gave a briefing and said that the number of children under five years of age is 376,050 in district Qamber Shahdaddot. He further informed that recently the polio virus has appeared in Naseerabad district of UC Dera, even though they were vaccinated against polio, the emergence of polio virus is unfortunate.



Houthis won't 'dial down' under US pressure or Iranian appeals

DUBAI (Reuters): Yemen's Houthis will not "dial down" their action against Israeli shipping in the Red Sea in response to US military pressure or appeals from the group's allies such as Iran, the Yemeni militant group's foreign minister said.

Jamal Amer spoke to Reuters after the US launched a wave of strikes in areas of Yemen controlled by the Iran-aligned Houthis, who said last week they were resuming attacks on Red Sea shipping to support Palestinians in Gaza. Two senior Iranian officials told Reuters that Iran had delivered a verbal message to the Houthi envoy in Tehran to cool tensions and that Iran's foreign minister asked Oman, which has mediated with the Houthis, to convey a similar message to the group when he visited Muscat. Both officials asked not to be named.

Iran has not made any public comment about recent outreach to the Houthis over their renewed action. Tehran says the group takes decisions independently. US President Donald Trump said he would hold Iran responsible for any attacks carried out by the Houthis. "There will be no talk of any dialling down of operations before ending the aid blockade in Gaza. Iran is not interfering in our decision but what is happening is that it mediates sometimes but it cannot dictate things," Amer said, in his first comments on the issue to a foreign news agency.

Speaking from Yemen's capital Sanaa, which has been hit by US strikes, he said he had not been informed of any message Iran delivered to the Houthi envoy in Tehran. There were messages from other

powers to dial down, he said, but added: "Now we see that Yemen is at war with the US and that means that we have a right to defend ourselves with all possible means, so escalation is likely." Iran, whose network of proxies and allies across the Middle East has taken a hammering since the war in Gaza erupted in 2023, has shown increasing concern it could be drawn deeper into conflict with the United States. Iran and Israel exchanged direct strikes for the first time last year as the Gaza war escalated.

US President Donald Trump, who withdrew the US from a 2015 deal between Iran and six major powers that curbed its sensitive nuclear work in exchange for sanctions relief, has stepped up a "maximum pressure" campaign of sanctions on Iran since returning to office for a second term in January. "The US is threatening Iran and hitting Yemen. Now all scenarios are possible. We will do what they will do to us. If they are hitting us from (US aircraft carrier USS Harry S.) Truman, we will retaliate by hitting Truman," the Houthi foreign minister said.

While Iran champions the Houthis, the Yemeni group says it is aligned with Tehran and its 'Axis of Resistance' network without being puppets. Experts on Yemen, where the Houthis expanded control during years of civil war, say the group seems mainly motivated by domestic concerns and support base. The Houthis said on March 12 they had resumed attacks on Israeli ships using routes that pass through the Red Sea after the group said Israel had not met a Houthi deadline for ending an aid

blockade on Gaza.

Israel's blockade, which includes food and medical supplies, began on March 2 as a standoff over a ceasefire deal in Gaza escalated. Israel launched heavy strikes on Gaza. The Houthis had launched more than 100 attacks targeting shipping from November 2023, saying they were in solidarity with Palestinians over Israel's war with Hamas, another of Iran's regional allies, in Gaza. It suspended operations when the Gaza ceasefire came into effect in January.

The Houthi foreign minister said the group had aimed only to target Israeli ships, but the US had escalated and the Houthis had a right to defend themselves. The US began a wave of strikes that have hit the capital and expanded across Houthi-controlled areas of Yemen, killing dozens of people. Amer said some European Union countries had advised the Houthis not to escalate, and said the group had sought to reassure them that the target was Israeli shipping.

He also said Saudi Arabia, which backed Yemen's internationally recognised government against the Houthis in the civil war, had not intervened militarily so far, and nor had other Gulf states. That was something that Houthis valued, he added, while warning that Gulf states risked being caught in the crossfire if they intervened militarily. "If any aircraft or base is used against us then we will escalate and we will defend ourselves, but if they (Gulf states) continue to be neutral we will stay away," he said. The Saudi government communications office did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

Syria flays Israeli strikes on Daraa

CAIRO (Reuters): Syria's foreign ministry condemned Israeli strikes on the southwestern city of Daraa, which it said killed and injured civilians. The strikes a day earlier killed at least three people and injured 19 others, the Syrian civil defence group, known as the White Helmets, said.

The Syrian foreign ministry said the strikes were "part of a campaign waged by Israel against the Syrian people and the country's stability". "The ongoing Israeli aggression on Syria is not only a violation of international law, but is also a direct threat to regional and international security," the ministry said. The Israeli army confirmed the strikes, the latest in a string of attacks targeting Syria's military infrastructure since mainly Sunni Muslim Islamist fighters toppled President Bashar al-Assad in December. Israel said it targeted military headquarters and sites containing weapons and equipment.

Israeli strikes point to ceasefire

BEIRUT (Reuters): As Israel resumes heavy strikes in the Gaza Strip, escalating Israeli attacks in south Lebanon have killed five Hezbollah members in the last few days, according to security sources in Lebanon, underlining the fragility of a US-backed ceasefire.

The war between Israel and the Iran-backed Hezbollah in Lebanon marked the deadliest spillover of the Gaza war, rumbling across the frontier for months before escalating into a devastating Israeli offensive that wiped out the group's command and many of its fighters, along with much of its arsenal.

While the ceasefire brought about a big reduction in the violence, each side accuses the other of failing to fully implement it. Israel says Hezbollah still has infrastructure in the south, while Lebanon and Hezbollah say Israel is occupying Lebanese soil by not withdrawing from five hilltop positions. The Israeli military has reported striking five Hezbollah members in three separate incidents in south Lebanon since March 15. In one of the incidents, the Israeli military said it struck two Hezbollah militants "who served as observation operatives and directed terrorist activities". Security sources in Lebanon said five Hezbollah members were killed.

The Israeli military said that a gunshot hit a parked car in the Israeli community of Avivim, and that the shot most likely came from Lebanon. No one claimed responsibility. In Lebanon, Israeli strikes in two towns destroyed prefabricated houses brought to the area for people whose homes were destroyed in the war, security sources said. Noting an increase in Israeli strikes in recent days, the UNIFIL peacekeeping force in south Lebanon "urges all actors to avoid any action that could upset the current delicate calm," spokesperson Andrea Tenenti said.

"We continue to urge Israeli forces to fully withdraw south of the Blue Line, and we continue to support the Lebanese Armed Forces in their deployment in the south of Lebanon," he added. The Blue Line was drawn by the United Nations in 2000, when Israeli forces withdrew from south Lebanon, and separates the country from Israel and the Israeli-occupied Golan Heights.

The ceasefire agreed in November required Hezbollah to have no weapons in the south and Israeli troops to withdraw as the US-backed Lebanese army deployed into the region. Israel said earlier this month it had agreed to US-backed talks with Lebanon aimed at demarcating the border. It also released five Lebanese held by the Israeli military in what it called a "gesture to the Lebanese president". Hezbollah officials have put the onus on the Lebanese state to liberate the remaining land still occupied by Israel. Still, leading Hezbollah official Ali Damoush said the group would not give up its arms while there was an occupation.

Meloni cautions EU on US trade war



ROME (Reuters): Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni cautioned European partners against escalating a trade dispute with the United States through retaliatory tariffs and urged Western allies to continue their longstanding cooperation.

Meloni, who is close to US President Donald Trump, said established ties between Europe and the United States had to be preserved and distanced herself from any suggestion that EU nations needed to establish an independent security umbrella. "It is a simple fact of reality that it is not possible to envision a lasting security guarantee by dividing Europe and the United States," she told parliament ahead of a summit of EU leaders later this week.

Trump has upended relations between Washington and its allies, freezing the flow of American weapons to Ukraine to force Kyiv to make peace with Russia. He has also started imposing hefty tariffs on European steel and aluminium, complaining about the US goods trade deficit with the EU. The European Union has said it will impose counter tariffs on 26 billion euros (\$28 billion) worth of US goods from next month. However, Meloni questioned the wisdom of this move and said Italy wanted a negotiated deal with Washington.

"I am not certain that responding to tariffs with more tariffs is necessarily a good deal," she said, warning of the potential for inflationary pressures and economic slowdown. "For this reason, I believe Italy's efforts should be directed toward seeking common-sense solutions between the

United States and Europe, guided more by logic than by instinct," she said.

Meloni has forged strong ties with Trump and was the sole European leader present at his presidential inauguration in January, which came barely two weeks after she met him for talks at his Mar-a-Lago retreat. However Trump's dressing down of Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy at the White House last month shocked many EU leaders, jeopardising Meloni's hopes of serving as a bridge between Washington and Europe. Fearing they can no longer rely on US military support, Britain and France have spearheaded efforts to prepare a mainly European peacekeeping force for Ukraine in the event of a peace deal between Kyiv and Moscow.

But Meloni voiced misgivings over the plan and ruled out any participation by Italy. "The deployment of Italian troops to Ukraine has never been on the agenda, just as we believe that the deployment of European troops proposed by France and the United Kingdom is a very complex, risky, and ineffective option," she said. She also questioned the way in which the European Commission was looking to massively ramp up defence spending, criticising its decision to brand the project "ReArm". "I believe that 'ReArm Europe' is a misleading name for citizens because we are called upon to strengthen our defence capabilities, but today this does not simply mean buying weapons," Meloni said.

China conducts air and sea drills near Taiwan

TAIPEI (AP): An unusually large number of Chinese military ships, planes and drones entered airspace and waters surrounding Taiwan, the self-governing island's Defense Ministry said. China said the drills were a response to recent statements and actions by the United States and Taiwan. Beijing launches such missions on a daily basis, seeking to wear down Taiwanese defenses and morale, although the vast majority of the island's 23 million people reject its claim of sovereignty over Taiwan.

Taiwanese Defense Minister Wellington Koo told legislators the drills were further evidence China was a "troublemaker" endangering peace in the region. The ministry published on social media images of Chinese drones and ships. It said 43 out of 59 entered Taiwan's air defense identification zone but that no confrontations were reported. Taiwan monitored the situation and deployed aircraft, navy ships and coastal anti-ship missile defenses in response, the ministry said. It's unclear what prompted the large Chinese deployment. Daily figures often vary widely based on statements by the Taiwanese authorities or their US partners.

Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Mao Ning said that the drills were "a resolute response to foreign connivance and support for Taiwan independence, and a serious warning to Taiwan separatist forces." China's military actions are "necessary, legal and justified measures to defend national sovereignty, security and territorial integrity," Mao said. "The United States deleted the literal expression that reflected the one-China principle and that did not support Taiwan independence on the website of the US Department of State, which indicates wrong signals to Taiwan separatist forces," Mao was quoted as saying.

Taiwanese President William Lai Ching-te also raised Beijing's hackles last week when he said that Taiwan law designates mainland China as a "foreign hostile force" and said tougher measures were being taken to prevent Chinese subversion through the media and civic exchanges. Lai also warned of the danger of influential figures and current and retired military members selling secrets to China. The Taiwan Strait is an international body of water and one of the most important channels for global

trade. While China does not interfere with civilian shipping in the Strait - or in the South China Sea to the south that it claims almost in its entirety - it routinely objects to actions by the US and other foreign navies in the area. China lashed out at accusations by top diplomats from the Group of 7 industrialized democracies who said Beijing is endangering maritime safety. The G7 in a joint statement condemned China's "illicit, provocative, coercive and dangerous actions that seek unilaterally to alter the status quo in such a way as to risk undermining the stability of regions, including through land reclamations, and building of outposts, as well as their use for military purpose." China said the statement was "filled with arrogance, prejudice and malicious intentions."

Faced with the rising threat from China, Taiwan has ordered new missiles, aircraft and other armaments from the US, while revitalizing its own defense industry. Taiwan and China split amid civil war 76 years ago, but Chinese leader Xi Jinping has continued to make bringing the island to heel a top priority of his administration even as it faces economic headwinds and a race for high technology with the West.

Trump fires both Democratic commissioners at FTC

NEW YORK (Reuters): President Donald Trump fired two Democratic commissioners at the US Federal Trade Commission, in another major test of the independence of regulatory agencies. A White House official confirmed the firings of Democratic Commissioners Alvaro Bedoya and Rebecca Kelly Slaughter after they were first reported by Reuters, but had no additional comment.

The firings drew sharp criticism from Democratic senators and antimonopoly groups concerned that the move was designed to remove opposition within the agency to big corporations. "Illegally gutting the Commission will empower fraudsters and monopolists, and consumers will pay the price," said Senator Amy Klobuchar, a Democrat from Minnesota, in a statement. The FTC enforces consumer protection and antitrust laws, and has a bipartisan structure where no more than three of the five commissioners can come from the same party.

Both Bedoya and Slaughter plan to sue to

reverse the firings. "This is corruption plain and simple," Bedoya said in a statement on X. Slaughter said in a statement: "The President illegally fired me from my position as a Federal Trade Commissioner, violating the plain language of a statute and clear Supreme Court precedent." FTC Chairman Andrew Ferguson, a Republican appointed to the commission last year by then-President Joe Biden and named chairman by Trump, said he has "no doubts" about Trump's constitutional authority to remove commissioners, "which is necessary to ensure democratic accountability for our government." "The Federal Trade Commission will continue its tireless work to protect consumers, lower prices, and police anticompetitive behavior," Ferguson said on X. Mark Meador, Trump's pick as the third Republican on the commission, has not yet been confirmed by the US Senate. It was unclear if the Trump administration planned to nominate

replacement commissioners for the two who were fired. The FTC can bring or dismiss cases with only two commissioners.

Trump has already sparked lawsuits by firing members of other independent agencies including the National Labor Relations Board. The US Supreme Court in 1935 upheld a law allowing the firing of FTC commissioners only for good cause, such as neglecting their duties. The ruling shields several independent, bipartisan multi-member agencies from direct White House control. Two federal judges in Washington, D.C., have said Trump's firing of NLRB Member Gwynne Wilcox and Merit Systems Protection Board Member Cathy Harris violated federal law.

The Trump administration has embraced an expansive view of presidential power, and an executive order on February 18 gave the White House greater control over independent agencies. The firings may complicate Ferguson's bid to show the

FTC remains committed to protecting consumers and competition in US markets. Commissioner Melissa Holyoak, the other Republican on the commission, and Ferguson were recused in the FTC's case accusing the three largest pharmacy benefit managers of steering diabetes patients towards higher priced insulin so they could reap millions of dollars in rebates from pharmaceutical companies. The recusals raise uncertainty about how the FTC will manage the case going forward.

Klobuchar told Reuters that while she supported Meador's nomination before, she will not now. "I don't understand why when they are firing people we would ever support their commissioners again," she said. Ferguson has reiterated the agency's commitment to policing Big Tech companies. The agency is gearing up for trials in a case against Meta Platforms and two cases against Amazon. It is also enforcing privacy-related settlements with Meta and X.

Highway pileup in Kansas shows how dust storms can turn deadly

TOPEKA, Kan. (AP): A gust of wind sweeps over bare soil, kicking up enough dirt and dust to cut visibility to nearly zero, and for drivers, the dust storm seems to come out of nowhere. Such conditions resulted in a pileup on Interstate 70 last week in western Kansas involving dozens of cars and trucks that left eight people dead. Blinding dust also prompted New Mexico's transportation department to close a 130-mile (210-kilometer) stretch of highway from the Arizona state line to the outskirts of Las Cruces.

Hazy or dust-darkened skies have recalled the "Dust Bowl" of the 1930s, when millions of tons of blowing soil buried farms and coated towns across the Great Plains. Lesser storms occur every year, particularly in the western US, particularly when farmland hasn't been planted yet in the spring. Some scientists worry that many motorists don't take them seriously enough. "We have a very low level of public awareness of a dust storm and what damage it can cause," said Daniel Tong, an associate professor of atmospheric chemistry at George Mason University who is among the authors of a 2023 paper on dust storm deaths.

The High Plains Museum in Goodland displays a photo of a tractor buried in blown soil in the 1930s, a reminder of the consequences of a severe drought across the Great Plains that came after farming had destroyed native grasses. The fatalities near Goodland were the first in the area in a dust storm since 2014, said Jeremy Martin, the Weather Service meteorologist in charge there.

But they came less than a month after an 11-car pileup on I-10 left three people dead, with heavy dust cited as a factor, according to Albuquerque TV's KRQE. Similarly, a dust storm on I-55 between St. Louis and Springfield, Illinois, in 2023 led to a fatal pileup involving dozens of vehicles. In 1991, 17 people died in an accident involving more than 100 vehicles on I-5 in California's San Joaquin Valley, blamed on blowing dust.

Tong and four co-authors concluded in their paper published in 2023 in the Bulletin of the American Meteorological Society that there were 232 deaths from "windblown dust events" from 2007 through 2017, far higher than the number recorded by National Oceanic and Atmospheric Association

data. In January, he and four colleagues concluded that the economic damage caused by wind erosion and dust is four times higher than previously calculated and more than \$154 billion a year.

Martin said a cold front moved through the area of the pileup after it had been warm and dry for six hours. Winds that reached 70 miles per hour (113 kph) kicked up dust that then became trapped in the cold front. "That's when you get that classic wall of dust," he said.

As blowing dust cut visibility on the road to almost zero, drivers slowed down, causing collisions, authorities said. A preliminary investigation found that 71 vehicles were involved, said Kansas Highway Patrol spokesperson April McCollum. Aerial photos showed at least 10 were semis. "It was hard to even keep your eyes open outside because there was so much dust in the air," said Jeremy Martin, the National Weather Service meteorologist in charge in Goodland. "It kind of stung to even breathe out in it."

Similar conditions in eastern Colorado prompted the Colorado State Patrol to warn drivers: "Zero visibility due to high winds and blowing dirt." "You

couldn't see," said Jerry Burkhart, the fire and emergency services chief in Lamar, Colorado. "The best thing to do is get way off the road in a parking lot or something like that." Martin said it's hard to tell how thick dust is from a distance, so motorists often don't know they won't be able to see until they're in it.

Weather Service forecasters also said some of the advice for motorists in a dust storm is counter-intuitive. Michael Anand, a NWS meteorologist in Albuquerque, said motorists should pull off the road as safely as possible, turn off all lights and never use their high beams. "You don't want people behind you to think you're going in the road," Martin said. "That light from your tail light might be the only thing they can see. They're thinking the road suddenly curves." High winds make cars harder to control, and a dust storm coats the road with fine particles that slow breaking, and drivers panic, Tong said.

He said dust storms are frequent and widespread enough across the US that states should test prospective drivers on what to do in a dust storm on license exams. "That could be, actually, a very easy way to educate drivers," he said.

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Asian majors may hesitate to fill aid gap left by US

CHINA is best placed to replace the United States as a key foreign donor in Asia but may be reluctant to fully fill the void, while South Korea and Japan may struggle to give enough, experts said.

From critical maternal health care to funding disaster relief, life-saving projects in Asia hang in the balance after President Donald Trump paused foreign aid and moved to dismantle the US Agency for International Development (USAID).

While China is the world's second-largest economy, its foreign assistance looks very different from that of the United States, as Beijing primarily provides loans that need to be paid back and focuses on infrastructure projects, experts said.

"China is very unlikely to step up to fill gaps in areas such as democracy promotion, media freedom, civil society and LGBT or women's rights," said Melissa Conley Tyler, executive director of Asia-Pacific Development & Defence Dialogue, a think tank in Australia.

"It is vital that other donors don't let these vital areas be a casualty of the US foreign assistance cuts."

The United States disbursed a total of \$56 billion globally in foreign assistance in 2024, \$32.48 billion of which was managed through USAID, US government data showed, according to Reuters.

About \$7 billion of the United States' total global foreign aid in 2024 was given to South, Central, and East Asia, as well as Oceania, the data showed.

While China does not make its foreign aid data readily available, the Lowy Institute said in its 2023 report that China disbursed about \$5.5 billion a year in official development finance (ODF) to Southeast Asia between 2015 and 2021, three-quarters of which went to infrastructure.

The vast majority of China's financing is disbursed in the form of non-concessional loans, the report said.

Alexandre Dayant, deputy director of the Indo-Pacific Development Centre at the Lowy Institute, said the United States' retreat represented "an opportunity (for China) to redefine its role in global development" but he did not expect China to take that opportunity.

"China has historically focused on infrastructure financing – don't expect it to step in for US funding on democracy, health, or education," said Dayant.

The report said "China has been Southeast Asia's single largest source of official development finance" but that its financing has been in decline in recent years.

Experts said South Korea and Japan could also step up to help, but that they would need to substantially increase their aid budgets to make a difference.

Once a foreign aid recipient, South Korea had an official development assistance (ODA) budget of \$4.8 billion in 2024 – a record for the country – and aims to more than double that by 2030, according to the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD).

"South Korea has been stepping up its efforts as an aid provider in recent years and its income level should enable them to do even more," said Ian Mitchell, senior policy fellow at the Center for Global Development (CDG), a think tank.

But South Korea and Japan's combined aid budgets were over \$22 billion in 2023, OECD data showed. That was less than a third of the \$80 billion the United States said it spent on foreign assistance that year.

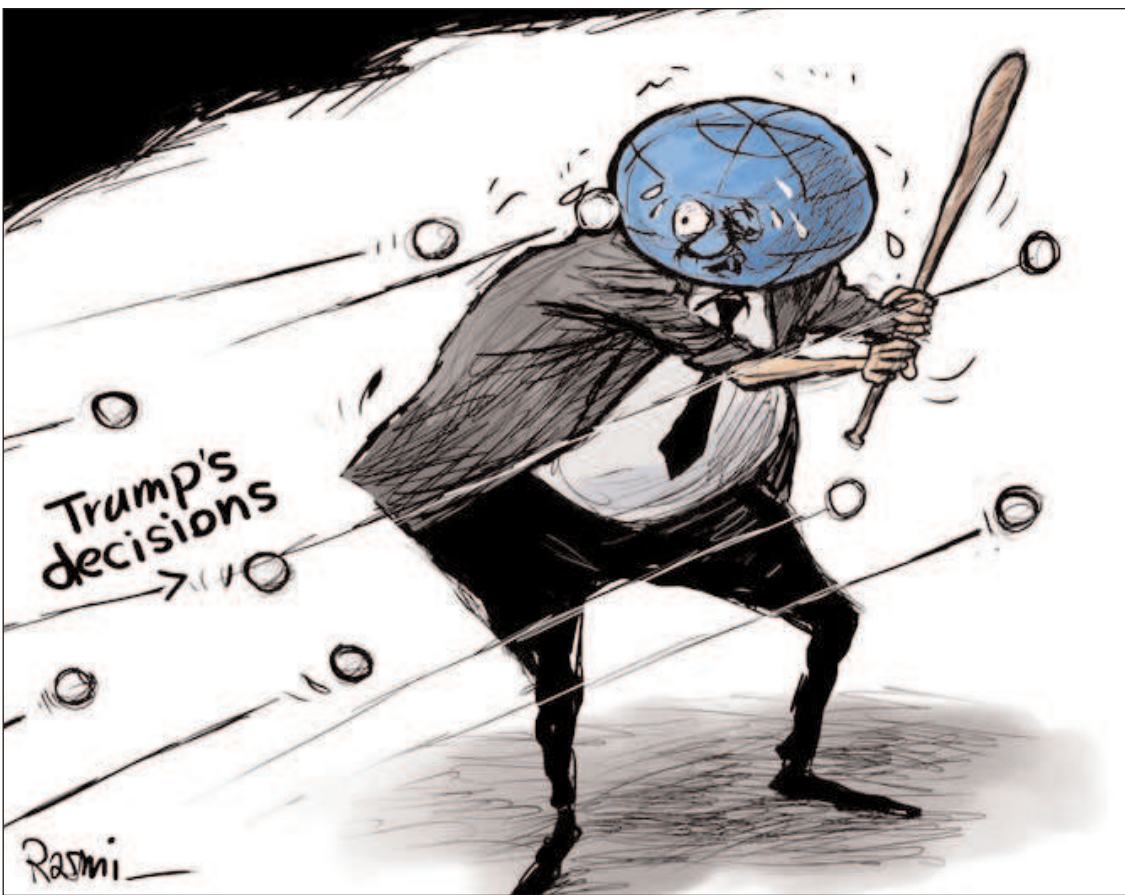
"So replacing US support would require a substantial increase," said Mitchell, adding that Japan's aid efforts were already focused on the region.

While China's priorities differ from those of the United States, some said China would not miss the opportunity to gain more influence in the region, the Reuters report adds.

"In the past, its assistance had mostly come in loans to help other countries build various types of projects, but I think China will dramatically increase grants across Asia – it is an obvious opportunity for China to further diminish the United States' influence in the region," said Joshua Kurlantzick, senior fellow at the Council on Foreign Relations.

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.



To survive in Gaza, you have to lie to yourself

Qasem Waleed

WE, the people of Gaza, have been repeatedly threatened. We have been threatened with being "cleaned out", with mass death, with "all hell breaking loose" on us.

The thing is, we have already been through hell. I, like two million other Palestinians in Gaza, survived the genocidal inferno from October 7, 2023 to January 19, 2025.

If I have to be honest, I did not survive by hanging on to life. No, I survived by dropping the "I" in life and holding on to "lie".

The more I lied to myself, the more I sustained my fragile existence.

I still remember the first lie I told myself. It was long before the genocide.

I remember telling myself after the 2008-09 Israeli aggression against Gaza that I would never witness something like that war ever again. It was a naive little lie. I witnessed war again in 2012, and again in 2014, and again in 2021, and yet again in May 2023.

On the evening of October 7, 2023, I hugged my mother when she burst out crying as Israeli fighter jets indiscriminately pounded the whole of Gaza.

I chose to tell her and myself the truth: that this was going to be the final episode of our miserable

lives. I felt we were going to die one way or another in what was to follow. She felt the same way; that's why she was crying.

But how can one exist in total acceptance of imminent death? Human beings by nature want to live. So I started lying to myself again.

Soon after, when Israel bombed the Baptist Hospital on October 17, killing hundreds of people, I lied. I told myself the world would rise up for Gaza and the sun would not shine on Israeli fighter jets bombing Gaza again. It was a short-lived lie. The Israeli bombardment only intensified, reaching genocidal rates.

When Israel forcibly displaced me in December of that year, I told myself that it would be just a couple of days and I would return. When I returned in May 2024, I told myself that I would not be displaced again.

When I returned home after my seventh forced displacement in September 2024, Israel had sharply restricted aid entry into Gaza, and I told myself the world would not let them starve us. But it did. For weeks, my family and I survived on bread, zaatar and a few cans of tuna we had saved from our time being displaced in al-Mawasi.

But by far worst lie I told myself was when

phase one of the ceasefire took effect. "This is it," I said to myself. "The military version of the genocide has ended, because what else Israel can do that it hasn't already done? We've gone through all forms of torment and horror!"

But deep down I knew I was lying to myself.

I knew, like so many people in Gaza, that it was a matter of when and how for Israel to resume the genocide.

It wasn't long before we got an indication that it was coming. Soon after the start of Ramadan, Israel halted the entry of all aid, triggering another famine. Two weeks later, instead of the call for suhoor, we were awakened by the sound of massive bombardment.

More than 400 people, including at least 100 children, were massacred in a matter of hours.

So, now the question of when has been answered, but that of how – remains. How many more children will Israel kill to realise its so-called "total" victory?

How long will it take them this time to "finish the job"? How much horror and misery will we have to endure? And how will it end this time?

Despite living through 15 months of Israel's genocidal war, I have no answer to these questions, because Israel keeps sur-

prising me with just how much evil it has in store. I mean, is this it? The final stage of the genocide? Resuming the onslaught while blocking all aid, and cutting off water and electricity? I'm afraid that Israel can still go further.

The Israeli government says that this round of attacks will continue until it gets their captives back. If that was the case, then what was the ceasefire for? A rest for the killers from all the killing?

Meanwhile, the world is once again issuing empty condemnations and taking no action. It has failed us so many times that I have stopped counting. The least it can do is not to take our pain and misery for granted, as if we are born into it, as if we are programmed to suffer all the time.

I was raised amid wars and I survived 15 months of genocide, and yet I am surprised that I have not developed an immunity to fear, given the great amount of torment I have been through.

I am still afraid of what is to come.

As I face death once again, I want to be truthful to myself. I want to say that I deserve a much better life than the one Israel has oppressively imposed on me. I deserve a boring, uneventful, secure life, free of bombs, starvation and unimaginable loss.

I don't want to lie any more, I want to live.

Understanding the issue Of Kurram

Dr. Anwar Aurakzai

THE issue of Kurram developed gradually and surged with rocket fire incidents from November 2024 onward, widely broadcasted on national and international media. Two main incidents escalated the tension: the first occurred on November 21, 2024, when a convoy transporting people and groceries to Parachinar was brutally attacked, resulting in the loss of many precious lives. This attack was claimed by the TTP group. This attack was allegedly deemed a retaliation of Sunni Muqbal's convoy targeted in Upper Kurram on October 12, 2024 leaving many lives losses. The second incident took place on November 22, 2024, when the proscribed organization Zainabyun launched a barbaric attack on Bagan Bazar, leaving dozens dead and causing billions in property damage.

These two incidents marked a climax, leading to open conflicts between the Shia and Sunni sects. The face-to-face war continued for many weeks, resulting in dozens of casualties. Numerous sessions of grand jirha held at the commissioner's office in Kohat, but they failed to resolve the conflict. A nominal agreement got signed by some elders with 14 points but unraveled.

These incidents were part of a series of brutal events in the Kurram district, causing mental, physical, and economic suffering for people from both sects. Religious extremists from both sides played a highly negative role, exacerbating the situation without understanding the broader context of the issue.

The state's narrative is that the Kurram issue is primarily of land settlement, but this explanation and only adds fuel to the fire. Such issues could easily be resolved by the government, as they have

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The recent deteriorating situations could neither be land disputes nor sectarian issues rather might be analyzed in regional and political perspectives. The stakeholders of both sects mismanaged the situations and leftover with meager choices to show strength or resist against the oppressors. While the state focuses on crushing the militants of the proscribed organizations, religious extremists from both sects viewed the conflicts as a sectarian war. This misunderstanding worsened the situation, prolonging the issue. Now the case of evacuating the area on the name of search operation or sanitization would affect the whole valley resultantly mass displacement. The sectarian violence in Kurram has a long history, with fragmented phases that have repeatedly put people's lives at risk and Kurram proved a soft bone to be cracked up easily.
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been elsewhere. The state also claims that crushing the TTP, responsible for attacking convoys and government officials, is a priority.

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H i s t o r i c a l Background:

During the Cold War, as part of the "Great Game," a Shia cleric and Chairman of the Nifaze Fiqa Jafariya, Arif Hussain Alhussaini (1946-1988), resisted the transportation of logistical support to war lords against Soviet Russia through the Kurram route. This greatly annoyed the authorities. The disagreements were based on separate schools of thought and

ultimately worst consequences experienced.

After the saur revolution, the Kurram disputes turned from land disputes to sectarian conflicts but now it's not a sectarian issue anymore but termed as strategic political issue. The issue got a populist shape engaging people at the most.

Strategic geographical location:

Kurram extends like a sharp nose into Afghanistan and is encircled by Jalalabad, Aryob, Gardez, and Khost provinces, makes the issue more than just a local one. The ever-changing situation in the region must be viewed through a broader spectrum. Kurram has been used for "great game" for proxies and could be reused for such purposes. Stability in Kurram is viewed in regional stability.

Land Dispute:

Land disputes in Kurram have never been escalated to the extent becoming a survival issue for the people. Such disputes are common even within a single sect. In the past, land disputes have been reconciled and within a few days and people from both sects would return to normal life. During cold war, Kurram issue turned from land issue to sectarian issue and many episodes observed but couldn't continue in long run.

Sectarian Issue:

Sectarian conflict is a burning issue in Kurram. It escalated to mass killings in 2007 when the TTP entered Kurram, forcing the Shia sect into a do-or-die situation. This brought irreparable loss to the valley. In recent conflicts, religious extremism has overshadowed cultural norms, with social media further escalating tensions and fostering more hatred among people. Ethical codes have been ignored, and many religious clerics and elders have been found guilty of inciting violence behind the

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Speculations and Rumors:

There are speculations and rumors that the strategic planning in the region may become more volatile in the near future, potentially dismantling all military groups irrespective of sect, which could result in the evacuation of Kurram's population. To safely evacuate the remaining people, the so-called buffer zone needs to be fully cleared first and then a mass displacement wouldn't be imagined.

After repeated consecutive incidents, the people of both sects have become so deeply entrenched in conflicts that they can hardly find a way out as mental capacity never find a lobe to estimate the ongoing situations. This episode of the issue crushed the people to the extent that they lost honor, trust and the hope of cultural coexistence.

Future of the Issue In Global Context:

The future of Kurram is closely tied to the stability of Afghanistan. If Afghanistan remains unstable, Kurram could face spillover effects, including militant infiltration, refugee flows, and increased sectarian violence. However, cultural-coexistence and diversification would be helpful in the long run maintaining peace in Kurram.

UN chief’s Rohingya refugee camp visit a call to action

THE visit of UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres to the Rohingya refugee camps in Bangladesh last week has brought renewed attention to one of the world’s most protracted humanitarian crises. Guterres, deeply moved by the suffering of the Rohingya, called for their return to Myanmar at the earliest opportunity.

For Bangladesh, which has shouldered the immense burden of hosting nearly a million refugees, this declaration marks a significant diplomatic victory. But how will this be received in Myanmar, particularly by the Arakan Army, which now controls much of Rakhine State?

The Arakan Army, having consolidated power over 11 of Rakhine’s 18 townships, is a force that can no longer be ignored. However, its policies toward the Rohingya remain deeply troubling. It has outlawed the use of the term “Rohingya,” dismissing the community’s distinct identity and reinforcing the discriminatory practices of past regimes. Despite its aspirations for international recognition, the Arakan Army’s refusal to acknowledge the Rohingya’s identity undermines its credibility as a legitimate governing authority.

Guterres’ remarks were a clear signal. The world’s top diplomat unequivocally stated the conditions the Arakan Army and other Myanmar authorities must meet to gain global legitimacy. The voluntary, safe and dignified return of the Rohingya, with full recognition of their rights and identity, must be a nonnegotiable benchmark.

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onates deeply with Bangladesh, where frustrations over the stalled repatriation process have grown. Despite repeated bilateral agreements with Myanmar, no meaningful progress has been made. The failure of the previous repatriation attempts in 2018 and 2019 was a sobering reminder that, without guarantees of

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Dr. Azeem Ibrahim

opportunity to recalibrate its approach. Engaging with the group, alongside the national unity government, could prove more effective than relying solely on the junta-controlled administration.

The Arakan Army itself is at a crossroads. If it truly aspires to estab-

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lish itself as a credible governing authority, it cannot ignore the Rohingya issue. Guterres’ visit has made it clear that recognition and legitimacy on the world stage will only come if the group commits to protecting all communities within Rakhine, including the Rohingya. The international community will be watching closely to see whether the Arakan Army takes steps to dismantle discriminatory policies, restore Rohingya citizenship and ensure their safe return.

At the same time, the international community must step up. Mere statements of support are insufficient. Sanctions,

diplomatic isolation and targeted pressure on the Arakan Army could compel them to adopt more inclusive policies. Additionally, humanitarian assistance must be expanded, both within Rakhine and in the refugee camps of Bangladesh, to prevent further deterioration of the crisis.

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Southeast Asian Nations and neighboring countries like India and China also have a role to play. While their engagement with Myanmar has often been guided by economic and strategic interests, the moral imperative to address the Rohingya crisis cannot be overlooked. Multilateral pressure, coupled with incentives for inclusive governance, could push the Arakan Army toward constructive engagement on the Rohingya issue.

Furthermore, the plight of the Rohingya must remain a priority on the global humanitarian agenda. The camps in Bangladesh, where overcrowding and malnutrition are rampant and edu-

cation opportunities are rare, represent a ticking time bomb. Without hope of a better future, despair and radicalization could take root. Guterres’ visit was a timely reminder that the status quo is unsustainable.

For the Rohingya themselves, the secretary-general’s advocacy offers a glimmer of hope. After years of being silenced and marginalized, hearing the world’s top diplomat reaffirm their right to return with dignity is a powerful acknowledgment of their struggle.

However, words must be translated into action. The Rohingya deserve to see tangible progress toward their safe repatriation and the restoration of their rights.

Bangladesh, too, must continue to advocate for international accountability. The pursuit of justice for the atrocities committed against the Rohingya cannot be sidelined. The International Court of Justice and the International Criminal Court remain vital avenues for holding perpetrators accountable and deterring further abuses.

In the end, Guterres’ visit was not just a diplomatic gesture, it was a call to action. The Arakan Army faces a pivotal choice: continue down the path of exclusion and repression or embrace the principles of justice and inclusion. The world is watching and so are the Rohingya, who deserve nothing less than a future of dignity and peace.

The responsibility lies with the Arakan Army, the national unity government and the broader international community to ensure that Guterres’ words are not forgotten. Only through a genuine commitment to the rights and recognition of the Rohingya can lasting peace be achieved in Rakhine State.

In Ukraine and Gaza, Trump finds out that ending wars is tougher than it looks

PRESIDENT Donald Trump is finding out that campaign trail bravura over peace deals can’t yield quick wins as wars rage.

As Trump made the tiniest of steps forward Tuesday on his peace plan for Ukraine, another ceasefire, for which he claimed personal credit, shattered. Israel launched a new onslaught on Hamas in Gaza, killing hundreds of civilians. The US president’s call with a largely intransigent Russian President Vladimir Putin as Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu returned to full-scale war highlighted two leaders whose own political priorities will likely supersede his own. Such is the unpromising geopolitical atmosphere standing in the way of Trump’s dream of a legacy as a global peacemaker, which he’d predicted would be fulfilled as soon as he returned to the Oval Office.

There are growing signs that Trump’s goals go beyond ending the fighting with equitable peace that can be sustained.

Readouts of his chat with Putin only reinforced the fears of Ukraine’s government and its European allies that Trump sees the war as a sideshow to his wider quest of a rapprochement with Moscow. This leads him to see the conflict through a Russian lens. And it explains why he berated Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky until he signed up for Trump’s 30-day ceasefire plan, but

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The White House was upbeat about the president’s phone call with Putin. But the main takeaway was Russian pushback against a US idea for an immediate ceasefire. The Russians did agree to halt on attacks on Ukrainian energy and infrastructure targets, the White House said. And Ukraine also signed on. But the White House’s use of the word “ceasefire” oversold the 30-day pause in this limited area. There’s no impediment to Russia continuing to pound other frontline and civilian targets in Ukraine. Indeed, the Ukrainians said Tuesday night that Moscow sent a drone barrage against a hospital in the Sumy region. A Russia readout of the talks differed subtly from the US version, for instance referring to “energy infrastructure” — suggesting a narrower view of the deal than the US understanding. Still, the administration insists that this is just the first step and that talks will now take place in the Middle East on reaching a maritime ceasefire in the Black Sea and a full ceasefire and a permanent peace.

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had only praise for Putin when he refused to buy in on Tuesday.

Washington’s acquiescence in Netanyahu’s return to bombarding Gaza, meanwhile, ends efforts by Trump’s envoy Steve Witkoff to secure the release of hostages and a second-phase deal toward ending a war that is an impediment to the administration’s top goal — a historic peace deal between Israel and Arab states. But a new US air offensive against Iran-backed Houthi rebels in Yemen also suggests Trump is now focused on another goal — cranking up pressure on the Islamic Republic to force it into talks on its nuclear program, or to further weaken its regional proxies ahead of a possible Israeli or US strike on its nuclear facilities.

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Still, the administration insists that this is just the first step and that talks will now take place in the Middle East on reaching a maritime ceasefire in the Black Sea and a full ceasefire and a permanent peace. “It was a very good call,” Trump said renewing his bluster that only he could

Stephen Collinson

have pulled off such a feat and predicting fast progress soon, despite Putin’s fresh roadblocks. “If I wasn’t here, he would never do it,” he said of the Russian leader in an interview with the Washington Examiner.

“The next thing would be a full ceasefire and a deal,” Trump said. “I think it will go pretty quickly.”

There’s a case for talking up incremental steps at the start of a peace process to create a sense of momentum and to increase the price for the warring parties if they walk away. So Trump’s optimism may not be misplaced. But his self-congratulation may be a political attempt to disguise the failure of his full ceasefire push, given the reality that Putin is in no rush to make peace considering his recent success on the battlefield. The US president also seems to be trying to preserve the increasingly fragile conceit that he’s an unparalleled deal-maker who is already racking up huge foreign policy wins.

Still, the president did secure one of the first undertakings to slow the intensity of fighting since the Russian invasion three years ago. If he does manage to forge peace, it will be a huge achievement that will save thousands of lives.

But his personal credibility is on the line — and relies on a Russian leader who has consistently broken agreements and ceasefires and has out-manuevered every US president of the last

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quarter-century. No amount of positive spin could disguise Putin’s refusal to sign up for the US plan for a 30-day full ceasefire. And the Russian president instead delivered a new set of conditions that would be impossible for Ukraine to agree to and will fuel European fears that a peace on the Kremlin’s terms would sow the seeds for a future war.

“To put it in very simple terms, Putin rejected the proposal that was put on the table,” William Browder, the head of the Global Magnitsky Justice Campaign, who is one of Putin’s most prominent international critics, said on CNN International.

Former British Prime Minister Boris Johnson, who is Trump’s friend but also one of Zelensky’s top supporters, was even more scathing. “What a surprise — Putin rejects an unconditional ceasefire,” Johnson said in a post on X. “He wants to keep bombing and killing innocent Ukrainians. He wants Ukraine disarmed. He wants Ukraine neutralised. He wants to make Ukraine a vassal state of Russia. He isn’t negotiating. He’s laughing at us.”

A Kremlin readout of the conversation with Trump said Putin called for a “complete cessation of providing Kiev with foreign military aid and intelligence.” This is a shrewd request and an attempt to convince Trump to take steps he’s already taken — briefly — to force Ukraine to agree to the ceasefire after Zelensky’s disastrous visit to the Oval Office. The Russian president is also trying to drive a wedge between Trump and Western European powers, who would be horrified by a halt to aid to Ukraine that could leave it exposed to Russian forces after a peace agreement.

A US-Russia deal that is less than it looks

Putin’s agreement to halt attacks on energy infrastructure reflects his desire to avoid alienating Trump — and looks like a concession. But even this may be less than it seems — and may represent yet another carrot to Russia. Beth Sanner, a former senior US intelligence official, explained on “CNN News Central”: “What have they agreed to? The very thing that Ukraine has been successful right now (during) this war has been striking all of Russia’s energy infrastructure. So, picking that one thing is a win.” Sanner added, “These

are Kremlin terms; these are not American terms. This is definitely Putin driving this agreement.” Both the Kremlin and the White House also offered some clues about deeper goals behind their engagement over Ukraine.

They both mentioned that the two leaders discussed broader global issues, including nuclear proliferation, and conjured a vision of a new relationship featuring economic deals from which they could benefit. This underscores Trump’s goal of ushering Putin back onto the global stage — in a way that would avoid him paying a price for the unprovoked and illegal invasion of a sovereign democracy. The convergence of the two governments was a remarkable reminder of how Trump spurns US allies and has embraced a sworn enemy of the United States.

In the White House readout, officials noted that the leaders “shared the view that Iran should never be in a position to destroy Israel.” This was one potentially significant hint since one goal of a US rapprochement with Russia could be to pull Russia away from its increasingly close ties with Tehran, which is part of a tightening informal network that also includes other US foes North Korea and China.

Like Putin, Netanyahu has political goals

The breakdown of the ceasefire in Gaza shows the limitations that the administration has so far faced in

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converting initial peace breakthroughs into more lasting agreements. This is a trend that could augur ill for the Ukraine peace process.

Many US observers have long believed that Netanyahu never wanted to move beyond the recently elapsed first stage of a ceasefire deal to end a war that erupted after the Hamas massacre of Israeli civilians on October 7, 2023.

Tuesday was the deadliest day in over 15 months in Gaza, according to a CNN tally, after Israeli forces struck multiple targets. More than 400 people were killed, Palestinian authorities said.

Netanyahu said he launched new attacks because Hamas refused to release remaining hostages or accept a US proposal to extend the Gaza ceasefire, despite a pause in Israel’s military activity. Hamas, however, insisted that it had not rejected the US proposal and that it wanted to see the ceasefire prolonged. But the headline Islamic group also had little incentive to release the remaining living hostages, who represent a final, callous bargaining chip in a conflict that Netanyahu promises will only end when the group has been eradicated.

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“This is only the beginning,” the Israeli prime minister said Tuesday.

Netanyahu, who has been on trial for corruption, reaped immediate political gains for his decision to reignite the war. Far-right Israeli politician Itamar Ben-Gvir said he’d rejoin the government along with his Otzma Yehudit, or Jewish Power, party. This shored up the Likud prime minister’s political position ahead of a difficult set of budget negotiations that could threaten the longevity of his government.

The return to warfare also meant that Netanyahu’s corruption trial was postponed temporarily. Many of the prime minister’s critics believe that he’s deliberately prolonged the war in Gaza to forestall a case that could see him sentenced to jail time if he is convicted.

Like Putin, for whom the Ukraine war has become an existential cause, Netanyahu may need to keep war raging to solidify his hold on power. But Trump, their fellow strongman, has his own massive political incentives for silencing the guns.

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Sooner or later, the US president may face tough political choices that he’s so far put off.

Putin may well get what he wants in Ukraine

AFTER the long telephone call between Russian President Vladimir Putin and US President Donald Trump, which followed on the heels of US-Ukrainian talks in Jeddah last week, the war in Ukraine seems to be entering its final stages.

Both Moscow and Kyiv appear to agree with Trump’s pursuit of a peace settlement, though the details of their positions regarding the specifics remain hazy.

Kyiv has agreed to Washington’s proposal for a 30-day unconditional ceasefire followed by peace talks. Freezing the conflict before starting peace talks was not what Ukraine had wanted, but the prospect of losing more territory, infrastructure, human lives, and — very likely — American support, has brought it onboard.

Russia, for its part, has agreed to suspend missile attacks on the Ukrainian energy infrastructure for 30 days, while continuing discussions for a full-fledged ceasefire. Earlier, Moscow expressed concern not only about the logistics of implementing the ceasefire and guarantees to prevent violations, but also about what comes after.

The caution is due to the fact that Russia has an advantage on the battlefield, which it is not very keen to lose before the framework of a settlement is set in stone. In any case, Russian officials sounded very upbeat about the prospects of settlement after the Trump-Putin call.

If the ceasefire negotiations move forward, the question that arises is whether Putin is likely to get all that he wanted in February 2022 when he launched the brutal all-out invasion of Ukraine.

The rough framework of a realistically attainable

peace settlement is clear to all sides by now. Moscow has stated repeatedly that the peace deal is to follow the outline of the Istanbul agreements that were developed by the Russian and Ukrainian delegations in the spring of 2022 but were eventually ditched by Ukraine under British and American pressure.

These agreements envisaged Ukraine’s mili-

••••• **US President Donald Trump and Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy have signalled that territorial talks will include the fate of the Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Station, which is currently occupied by Russia and is quite close to the front line. If Russia becomes a part of that conversation, it will mean that it’s no longer claiming the unoccupied north of Zaporizhia and — by extension — the unoccupied territory of the other three regions. The discussions on the nuclear plant are a good sign because they indicate a shift to realistically attainable concessions the West and Ukraine could extract from Russia as opposed to the entirely unrealistic demands of NATO boots on the ground in the guise of “peacekeepers”, which the United Kingdom and France are pushing for.**

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tary neutrality, a cap on the size of its army and measures to protect Russian speakers living in Ukraine.

After three years of war, Moscow now wants Kyiv to recognise the loss of four Ukrainian regions — Donetsk, Luhansk, Kherson and Zaporizhia — which Russia formally proclaimed its territory although it has not fully occupied any of them yet. It is possible, however, that the Kremlin will walk away from its maximalist demand of Ukraine withdrawing from the unoccupied parts of these regions.

US President Donald Trump and Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy have signalled that territorial talks will include the fate of the Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Station, which is currently occupied by Russia and is quite close to the front line. If Russia becomes a part of that conversation, it will mean that it’s no longer claiming the unoccupied north of Zaporizhia and — by extension — the unoccupied territory of the other

Leonid Ragozin

three regions.

The discussions on the nuclear plant are a good sign because they indicate a shift to realistically attainable concessions the West and Ukraine could extract from Russia as opposed to the entirely unrealistic demands of NATO boots on the ground in the guise of “peacekeepers”, which

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The key to understanding Putin’s logic is accepting that he is not fighting for territory. He sees the all-out invasion, which has now resulted in the occupation of a fifth of Ukrainian territory, as a punishment for Ukraine derailing the 2015-2016 Minsk agreements, which had envisaged the two breakaway regions, Donetsk and Luhansk, remaining under formal Ukrainian control. Russia’s annexation of these two regions, alongside Kherson and Zaporizhia, was punishment for Ukraine walking away from the Istanbul agreements. While the nuclear power plant could be feasibly swapped for some other territory or — more likely — political concessions pertaining to the rights of Russian speakers and the Moscow-Orthodox Church, what is nonnegotiable for Putin is NATO countries retaining any security infrastructure or influence on Ukrainian security bodies.

Rooted in the West’s

decision in the 1990s to confront rather than integrate the newly emerged democratic Russia, this conflict is really about drawing a thick red line beyond which the American-led West is not going to expand — at least until the time when the conversation about Russia’s westward integration becomes possible again.

For now, though, Putin

If he can get all of that, Putin will see his decision to become a war criminal by launching the brutal aggression against Russia’s closest neighbour in social, ethnic, cultural and economic terms as justified.

Besides securing the neutrality of Ukraine and pushing NATO further from Russian borders, Putin also appears bound to fulfil another goal: the restoration of Russia’s superpower status in the eyes of the entire world.

For Western leaders, the failure to rein in Russia will lead to a belated realisation: that a major nuclear power, capable of destroying humanity, cannot be defeated militarily. They may then consider the fact that Moscow could be very effectively influenced by soft power — something the West wielded with much greater success during the Cold War.

Russia will remain culturally and economically dependent on Europe as it has always been. It will keep deeming itself part of the European community no matter what the community itself thinks about Russia. That creates more strategic opportunities for the West to diminish threats emanating from Moscow than engaging in what Western officials are now calling a “proxy war” in Ukraine.

Judging by signals emanating from Trump’s administration, all of these goals are attainable

PSX stays bullish, gains 972 more points

ISLAMABAD (APP): The 100-Index of the Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) continued with bullish trend on Wednesday, gaining 972.94 points, a positive change of 0.83 percent, closing at 117,974.03 points as compared to 117,001.09 points on the last trading day.

A total of 544,200,130 shares were traded during the day as compared to 449,484,737 shares the previous trading day, whereas the price of shares stood at Rs32.310 billion against Rs29.178 billion on the last trading day.

As many as 315 companies transacted their shares in the stock market, 208 of them recorded gains and 102 sustained losses, whereas the share price of 5 companies remained unchanged.

The three top trading companies were Pak International Bulk with

52,151,863 shares at Rs11.05 per share, Pak Elektron with 36,133,139 shares at Rs48.14 per share and WorldCall Telecom with 30,884,952 shares at Rs1.40 per share.

Excide Pakistan Limited witnessed a maximum increase of Rs74.83 per share closing at Rs823.10 whereas runner-up was Macter International Limited with Rs36.71 rise in its share price to close at Rs403.77.

Unilever Pakistan Foods Limited witnessed a maximum decrease of Rs82.50 per share price, closing at Rs23,400.00, whereas the runner-up was Nestle Pakistan Limited with Rs64.84 decline in its per share price to Rs7,402.33.

Rupee gains 06 paisa against dollar

The Rupee on Wednesday appreciated by 06 paisa against the US Dollar in the interbank trad-

ing and closed at Rs280.20 against the previous day's closing of Rs280.26.

However, according to the Forex Association of Pakistan (FAP), the buying and selling rates of the dollar in the open market stood at Rs280.60 and Rs282.10, respectively.

The price of the Euro decreased by Rs 1.41 to close at Rs305.21 against the last day's closing of Rs306.62, according to the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP).

The Japanese yen went up by 01 pasia and closed at Rs1.87, whereas a decrease of Rs 0.78 paise was witnessed in the exchange rate of the British Pound, which was traded at Rs363.42 as compared to the last day's closing of Rs364.20.

The exchange rate of the Emirates Dirham and Saudi Riyal came down by 03 and 02 paisa and closed t Rs 76.28 and Rs 74.70 respec-

tively.

Gold prices up by Rs.1,650 to Rs 319,000 per tola

The price of 24 karat per tola gold increased by Rs.1,650 and was traded at Rs.319,000 on Wednesday as compared to its sale at Rs317,350 on previous trading day, All Pakistan Sarafa Gems and Jewelers Association reported.

The prices of 10 grams of 24 karat also increased by Rs.1,415 to Rs 273,491 from Rs 272,076 whereas the prices of 10 gram 22 karat gold also went up to Rs.250,700 from Rs249,412 respectively.

The prices of per tola and ten gram silver remained constant at Rs.2,555 and Rs.3,047, respectively.

The price of gold in the international market increased by \$16 to \$3,038 from \$3,022 whereas silver was traded at \$33.79, the Association reported.



HYDERABAD: Women selecting sandals at shoe shop in Latifabad Market.

PDA delegation met Haroon

ISLAMABAD (APP): Special Assistant to the Prime Minister Haroon Akhtar Khan on Wednesday held a meeting with a delegation from the Pakistan Dairy Association (PDA) to discuss the challenges facing the dairy sector and explore possible solutions.

During the meeting, Haroon Akhtar highlighted that Pakistan is among the world's largest milk-producing countries, with an annual production of over 70 million tons, said a news release.

However, he emphasized the need for further development in dairy farming and milk processing industries to improve quality standards and reduce production costs.

One of the key topics of discussion was the impact of the 18% General Sales Tax (GST) on packaged milk. He said this tax has led to an increase in milk prices, affecting both producers and consumers.

The PDA urged the government to reconsider the taxation policy on packaged milk, advocating for a reduction in GST to ensure a steady supply of milk at affordable prices for consumers while supporting the dairy sector.

Haroon stressed that without increased investment in the dairy sector, achieving self-sufficiency in food production would not be possible.

He assured the delegation that the government is committed to addressing the challenges of the dairy industry and will continue engaging with relevant stakeholders to find effective solutions.

EU Ambassador calls on Commerce Minister

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Ambassador of the European Union to Pakistan, Dr. Riina Kionka, called on Federal Minister for Commerce Jam Kamal Khan to discuss strengthening bilateral trade ties and upcoming business engagements between the EU and Pakistan.

During the meeting, Dr. Kionka invited the Commerce Minister to deliver closing remarks at the European Union-Pakistan Business Forum (EU-PKBF), scheduled in on 14-15 May 2025, in Islamabad.

The forum aims to facilitate high-level dialogue, strengthen business partnerships, and unlock trade

and investment opportunities between the EU and Pakistan.

It will feature investment presentations, B2B and B2G matchmaking sessions, and focus would be on key sectors such as agribusiness, IT, machinery, textiles, pharmaceuticals, and green infrastructure.

Another key highlight of the discussion was the launch of the EU-Pakistan Business Network (EUPBN) in during the Forum.

This network, comprising of more than 300 EU companies operating in Pakistan, will serve as a unified voice of European businesses, fostering investment and trade relations.

Minister Jam Kamal Khan welcomed these initiatives and appreciated the EU's role in supporting economic cooperation.

He acknowledged that the growing engagement between Pakistan and the EU will create stronger business ties and new investment opportunities.

The EU is Pakistan's second-largest trading partner and primary export destination, accounting for around 12 billion in bilateral trade in 2024.

The EU-Pakistan Business Forum will further deepen the long-standing economic and diplomatic partnership between Pakistan and the European Union.

US, China & UK top 3 destinations of Pakistani exports in 8 months

ISLAMABAD (APP): The United States remained the top export destination of Pakistani products during the first eight months of the current fiscal year 2024-25, followed by China and the United Kingdom.

Total exports to the US during July-February 2024-25 were recorded at US \$4009.913 million against the exports of US \$3629.206 million during July-February 2023-24, showing an increase of 10.49 percent, according to the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP).

This was followed by China, wherein Pakistan

exported goods worth US \$1695.941 million against the exports of US \$1895.959 million last year, showing a decrease of 10.54 percent.

UK was the third top export destination, where Pakistan exported products worth US \$1444.334 million during the month under review against the exports of US \$1352.556 million, SBP data revealed.

Among other countries, Pakistani exports to UAE stood at US \$1414.727 million against US \$1336.968 million last year while the exports to Germany were recorded at US \$1133.608

million against US \$984.616 million last year, data said.

During July-February 2024-25, the exports to Holland were recorded at \$1001.639 million against \$908.325 million whereas the exports to Italy stood at \$747.024 million against \$733.640 million.

Pakistan's exports to Spain were recorded at \$973.578 million against the exports of US \$965.113 million while the exports to Afghanistan were recorded at \$592.840 million against \$321.754 million last year.

The exports to Bangladesh stood at US

\$525.133 million against US \$415.167 million.

Similarly, the exports to France during the months under review were recorded at US \$372.539 million against US \$337.523 million while the exports to Belgium stood at US \$384.045 million against US \$364.665 million.

Pakistan's exports to Saudi Arabia were recorded at US \$489.443 million during the current year compared to US \$442.544 million last year whereas the exports to Turkiye stood at US \$194.372 million against US \$233.069 million.

FTT acknowledges action against illicit cigarette trade

ISLAMABAD (APP): Fair Trade in Tobacco (FTT) while acknowledging the recent enforcement measures taken by the government against illicit cigarette manufacturers, has suggested stepping up 'sporadic crackdowns' to discourage elements involved in the

illegal trade of tobacco products.

Speaking at a sensitization workshop on tax evasion in the cigarette industry, FTT Chairman Ameen Virk called on the government to take immediate and sustained action against tax-evading manufacturers while rationalizing the tax burden on legal cigarette companies.

He called for "sustained and aggressive enforcement of laws, including strict implementation of the Track and Trace System across all manufacturers and retail points, raids on factories and retailers selling cigarettes below the minimum legal price of Rs 162.25 per pack, reinforced border security to curb smuggling, and a transparent tax policy that prevents tax evasion from being incentivized."

Virk warned that the illegal cigarette industry is more than just a tax evasion issue; "it is a direct attack on Pakistan's economy." Legal businesses operating within taxation and regulatory frameworks are being overburdened with excessive taxation, while illicit manufacturers continue to thrive with impunity.

He highlighted that "illeg-

al cigarette brands now make up 56% of the total market, overtaking legal sales for years now."

Out of 413 cigarette brands in Pakistan, only 19 comply with the Federal Board of Revenue's (FBR) Track and Trace System (TTS), a compliance rate of just 4.6%.

"This blatant disregard for regulations is costing Pakistan billions in lost tax

revenue," Virk stated.

"The government must take decisive action to bring illegal manufacturers under the tax net."

He pointed out that while just two legal companies contributed nearly Rs300 billion in taxes, whereas around 40 illicit cigarette manufacturers, who controlled 56% of the market, paid only Rs. 5 billion.

SECP seeks feedback on policy framework

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan (SECP) has issued a consultation paper eliciting public input on a proposed policy framework for the issuance of ordinary shares with varied rights and privileges by companies.

The initiative aims to enhance corporate governance, protect shareholder interests, and foster a transparent capital market by establishing clear regulatory guidelines for companies issuing shares with differential rights, including variations in voting power, dividend entitlements, and liquidation

preferences,said a press release issued here.

The consultation paper outlines key regulatory and compliance considerations, addressing governance challenges such as control concentration, shareholder activism, and equitable decision-making.

It also emphasizes the importance of market transparency and fair price discovery to ensure that investors holding shares with varied rights have clear valuation mechanisms and viable exit options.

A comparative analysis of international best practices has been conducted

to assess global regulatory approaches and develop a framework suited to Pakistan's financial ecosystem.

SECP has highlighted potential risks associated with differential share structures, including governance imbalances and reduced minority shareholder influence, and is proposing reasonable limits to maintain fairness and uphold investor confidence.

The Commission encourages stakeholders, including investors, corporate entities, and legal experts, to provide feedback to help refine the proposed framework.

Bank of Japan holds rates, warns of trade uncertainty

TOKYO (AFP/APP): The Bank of Japan left its key interest rate unchanged Wednesday and warned about the economic outlook amid global uncertainty fuelled by Donald Trump's trade war.

Officials began lifting borrowing costs last year after nearly two decades of ultra-loose monetary policies aimed at kickstarting torpid growth in the world's number four economy.

But since coming to office in January the Trump administration has embarked on a hardball campaign to rectify what it says are unfair trade imbalances, and imposed levies on multiple trading partners

and imports including steel.

The uncertainty unleashed by that has forced central banks around the world to reassess their recent monetary policies.

On Wednesday the BoJ, after a two-day meeting, said it would stand pat on its key rate, having lifted it to a 17-year high of around 0.5 percent in January.

In a statement it said: "There remain high uncertainties surrounding Japan's economic activity and prices, including the evolving situation regarding trade."

Later, governor Kazuo Ueda told reporters: "Tariffs can directly affect the economy through trade -- especially production

volumes, inflation and prices. "On the other hand, tariffs, or even the prospect of tariffs, can affect the mindset or confidence of households and businesses, which could directly impact spending."

Stefan Angrick of Moody's Analytics said the BoJ statement "paints a fairly upbeat picture of the economy, which suggests the central bank is looking to tighten monetary policy further".

But "with the dust still settling from January's rate hike... the BoJ wants to gauge the impact of recent policy changes before tightening further", he wrote in a note.

Court Notice

In the Court of Javeria Sartaj Khan Additional District Judge II /Azafi Zila Qazi Buner at Daggar Buner. Appeal No. 78/13, Institution 24/6/2024. Date of hearing 26/3/2025. Rozi Khan etc VS Faredullah etc. Notice to No. 2/1. Hakim Khan s/o Khaista Khan late. 3/2. Muhibullah. 3/4. Azizullah. 3/5. Said Bahadur. 3/7.Sahar Ali s/o Abdul Qahar. 4. Said Kamal s/o Jamal. 7/1. Bahadur Sher. 7/2. Zarshed. 7/3. Akbar Ali. 7/4. Zahid Ali sons. 8/2. Zaidullah Khan s/o Afaren Khan. 14/1. Wahidullah. 14/2. Bakhti Raj. 14/3. Siraj. 14/4. Ehsanullah. 14/5. Amanullah sons of Amer Abdullah. 14/4/1. Abdullah. 14/4/2. Siraj Khan 14/4/3. Sajjad Khan. 14/4/4. Shafiq Khan. 14/4/5. Rafiq sons of Abdullah. 14/4/6. Mst. Halema Bibi. 14/4/7. Mst Fatma Bibi. 15/1. Imran Khan s/o Dilawar Khan. 17/2. Tajwali Khan s/o Habibullah. 18/3. Farhad Ali.18/4. Sarhad Ali. 18/5. Qaisar Ali sons of Nasrat Khan. 26/2. Wahed Zada s/o Abdul Hamed. 24. Sher Aman Khan s/o Amen Khan. 27. Sher Ali s/o Hamed Rasol. 30. Sher Akbar Khan s/o Babozay. 31. Hasho Khan s/o Habibullah. 36. Muhammad Zaren s/o Sani Gul. 37. Sahib Ali s/o Totianosh. 42. Amer Akbar Khan s/o Parvez Khan. 48. Ali Ghafor Khan s/o Sedjiah. 49. Naseb Khan s/o Zareh Khan resident of Daggar Kalay Tehsel Daggar District Buner. Whereas in the above mentioned case the mentioned defendants cannot be served in the ordinary way, it is, therefore, proclaimed that if the said defendants will/shall not appear personally or through dually authorized agent or pleader in the court at 8.30 am dated 26/3/2025 the proceeding will be taken ex parte. Given under my hand and seal of this Court,

Public Notice

It is published through this Notice that I Robina Akhtar Wife of Muhammad Waheed Khan Resident of House no 6 Jungle Khel District Kohat isThe owner of Plot no. 30 Sector no. X Size (1) Kanal Phase 1 KDA Kohat Has Appointed has is Mr. Khalid Hameed Son of Muhammad Asif Khan Resident of Mohallah Muhammad Zaman Shinwari Jungle Khel District Kohat Through (Special) Deed no. 116 Bahi no. 04 Volume no. 294 Dated 03/03/2025 which is Registered in The office Kohat of Tehsildar/ Sub Registrar The Attorney Holder now wants to Transfer The Above Said Plot if any Bank/ Institution/Firm/Person has any objection About The Transfer he Should Contact The Housing officer UADA Within 15 Days in Writing with Proofs otherwise Plot will be Transfer and no objection will Be Accepted (Director Urban Area KDA Kohat).

Markets mixed as geopolitics, trade wars deplete sentiment

HONG KONG (AFP/ APP): Equity markets were mixed and gold hit another record high on Wednesday as trade war worries cast a shadow and geopolitical concerns returned to the fore.

The tepid start to the day followed tech-led losses on Wall Street, while an agreement between US President Donald Trump and Vladimir Putin that Russia would stop targeting Ukrainian energy was met with a shrug.

The yen gave up initial gains against the dollar after the Bank of Japan kept interest rates on hold, warning about the outlook amid "high uncertainties" including over trade.

Investors are also gearing up for central bank decisions in the United States, the United Kingdom

and Indonesia, where stocks tanked Tuesday on concerns about Indonesia's economy.

Fresh pledges by China to boost domestic consumption and welcome data out of the United States that eased recession worries helped Asian markets to a strong start to the week.

But Trump's scattergun trade policies, which have seen him impose measures on some key partners but delay others, have stoked uncertainty.

While no new levies have been announced in recent days, the next key date is April 2, when sweeping reciprocal measures are due to kick in, with Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent telling Fox Business "each country will receive a number that we believe repre-

sents their tariffs".

"We are going to go to them and say, look, here's where we think the tariff levels are, non-tariff barriers, currency manipulation, unfair funding, labour suppression," he said on "Mornings With Maria".

Many economists have warned that the tariffs -- which are being met with retaliation by some countries -- will tip the US economy, and possibly others, into recession.

With that in mind, the Federal Reserve's policy meeting, which ends later Wednesday, is being closely followed by traders hoping for an idea about officials' plans to deal with any negative impact.

The Bank of Japan, as expected, stood pat on interest rates, having hiked

them last month amid concerns over the outlook, particularly with regard to trade.

"There remain high uncertainties surrounding Japan's economic activity and prices, including the evolving situation regarding trade," the bank warned in a statement after its announcement.

Stefan Angrick of Moody's Analytics wrote in a note ahead of the decision that "a wave of tariff measures and threats from Washington have kept financial markets on edge".

The yen rose against the dollar initially but later resumed the downward path it had started the day on, while Japan's Nikkei 225 stock index also gave up gains to end lower.

Elsewhere in Asia, Hong

Kong, Seoul, Singapore, Manila, Mumbai and Bangkok edged up. Jakarta gained more than one percent, clawing back some of the painful losses suffered Tuesday, when it shed more than seven percent at one point on economic fears.

But Shanghai, Sydney, Wellington and Taipei dipped.

London, Frankfurt and Paris slipped at the open.

Gold struck another record high above \$3,045 on fears of a fresh upsurge in hostilities in the Middle East after Israel launched its most intense strikes on Gaza since a ceasefire with Hamas took effect.

Those concerns helped dampen sentiment on Wall Street, where all three main indexes resumed a sell-off after a two-day recovery

from recent losses.

Trump's talks with Putin failed to yield a full ceasefire, with the Russian leader instead only agreeing to halt attacks against Ukrainian energy targets for 30 days.

While the White House hailed the talks as "good and productive", Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky pledged to continue fighting in Russia's Kursk region.

Top US envoy Steve Witkoff told Fox News that fresh talks had been planned to take place on Sunday in Jeddah.

However, Chris Weston at Pepperstone Group said: "While Russia-Ukraine ceasefire talks are ongoing, most feel that we're no closer to anything truly tangible and a lasting agreement."



In brief

Haris moves up in ICC T20I rankings

KARACHI (Monitoring Desk): Pakistan pacer Haris Rauf has made notable progress in the latest ICC T20I rankings, while Shaheen Shah Afridi has slipped following a lacklustre performance in the ongoing T20I series against New Zealand. Rauf climbed four places to secure the 26th spot after his strong performance in the second T20I, where he took two wickets. In contrast, Shaheen Afridi dropped six places to 29th after an underwhelming showing in the first two matches of the series. Meanwhile, New Zealand has taken a commanding 2-0 lead in the five-match series, with their opening duo playing a key role. Tim Seifert and Finn Allen have been in exceptional form, guiding the Black Caps to dominant victories. Seifert surged 20 spots to 13th in the latest T20I batting rankings, while Allen advanced eight places to 18th. In the bowling department, New Zealand's Jacob Duffy has made significant gains, climbing 23 places to reach 12th in the T20I bowler rankings after taking six wickets in the series. Beyond the Pakistan-New Zealand series, other ranking changes include Netherlands' Aryan Dutt, who moved up two spots to 33rd, while his teammate Paul van Meekeren climbed six places to secure 61st in the ODI bowler rankings. Additionally, Namibia's Gerhard Erasmus advanced two places to claim the 10th spot in the ODI all-rounder rankings following consistent performances in League 2 matches.

Wazir Club wins Floodlight Football Tournament

DERA ISMAIL KHAN (APP): The Wazir Club Wana has won All-Pakistan Floodlight Football Tournament by defeating Afghan Football Club in a penalty shootout in the final match. According to information, the final match of the first All-Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf Floodlight Football Tournament was held between Wazir Club Wana and Afghan Football Club Dera Ismail Khan at the Indus Football Ground here. The match ended in a draw after the given time, leading to a penalty shootout, which Wazir Club Wana won. The special guest at the event was City Mayor Sardar Omar Amin Khan Ghandapur, while Regional Sports Officer Razi Ullah Khan Bettani and other political leaders were also present. A large number of spectators enthusiastically witness the thrilling moments of the final match. The fans expressed that the event was a great initiative for the region, highlighting not only local sports and culture but also providing players with an opportunity to showcase their talents. Speaking on this occasion, City Mayor Omar Amin Khan Ghandapur emphasized that organizing such events were aimed to promote regional culture, sports, arts, and other activities besides providing the people with opportunities for recreational and healthy activities.

Gulberg HC and Youth HC Triumph in Hockey C'ship

KARACHI (APP): The KHA Ramadan Inter Club Hockey Championship saw two thrilling matches on Day 3 at the Olympian Hanif Khan and Dr. Junaid Ali Shah Hockey Stadium in Gulshan Iqbal. Organized by the Karachi Hockey Association, the tournament continues to showcase exciting hockey action. In the first match, Gulberg Hockey Club delivered a dominant performance, crushing Dolphin Hockey Club 8-0.

Faisalabad's special athlete wins 3 medals in Italy Olympics

FAISALABAD (APP): A 16-year-old special student of Tanzeem-ul-Lisan, Abdul Saboor Ahmad, has brought pride to Pakistan by winning three medals in the Special Olympics 2025 World Winter Games held in Italy. A spokesman for Tanzeem-ul-Lisan said here on Wednesday that he secured a gold medal in the 400-meter snowshoeing event, a bronze medal in the 100-meter snowshoeing and a silver medal in the 400-meter relay snowshoeing event. Abdul Saboor is currently receiving training at Al-Masoom Center run by the voluntary special education organization Tanzeem-ul-Lisan, he added.

Meanwhile, Deputy Commissioner (DC) Captain (Retired) Nadeem Nasir during a ceremony

presented honorary shield to Abdul Saboor Ahmad.

He extended a warm welcome to the athlete his remarkable achievements and congratulated him, his parents and the management of Tanzeem-ul-Lisan for their efforts in nurturing young special athletes.

He also termed Abdul Saboor as a role model for special children and said that his outstanding performance on the international stage has made the entire nation proud.

Deputy Commissioner commended the Tanzeem-ul-Lisan for its dedicated efforts in providing quality education, training and sports opportunities for special children.

He said that the children with special needs possess immense potential and it is imperative to integrate them into education, training and social activities.

He assured full government support for the welfare and rehabilitation of special children and acknowledged the invaluable contributions of voluntary organizations.

President Tanzeem-ul-Lisan Dr. Iftikhar Ahmed also provided insights into the training and academic programs offered for special children. He also highlighted the organization's commitment to empower special children through education and sports.

Deputy Director Social Welfare Aamina Alam, District Sports Officer Sajida Lateef, Vice President Tanzeem-ul-Lisan Chaudhary Sarfraz Ahmed, General Secretary Subhan Ali and others were also present on the occasion.

HBL PSL trophy "Luminara" arrives in Lodhran



F.P. Report

LODHRAN: The prestigious HBL Pakistan Super League (PSL) Season 10 champion trophy, Luminara, reached Lodhran, stirring a wave of excitement among cricket enthusiasts, students, and aspiring cricketers.

The trophy was displayed at Amna Girls School and Tareen Cricket Academy, where students,

fans and Youngsters took selfie with the trophy.

The event also featured an impressive Taekwondo performance, adding to the celebratory atmosphere. Meanwhile, at Tareen Cricket Academy, local cricketers lined up to welcome the trophy with great enthusiasm, reflecting their passion for the game.

Officials from the Pakistan Cricket Board

(PCB) and Multan Sultans' management were also present at the occasion.

Fans in Lodhran expressed their gratitude to Ali Tareen, the owner of Multan Sultans, for bringing the trophy to their city.

Weighing 10 kilograms, Luminara is adorned with 22,850 sparkling zircon stones and crafted HBL PSL 10 is scheduled to start from 11th April.

Umar claims he helped Babar beat spin challenges

KARACHI (Monitoring Desk): Batter Umar Akmal has made a surprising claim about helping star Pakistan batter Babar Azam overcome his struggles against spin bowlers.

The right-handed batter has been facing scrutiny over his struggles against spinners as most of his dismissals came against such bowlers in recent months.

Several former cricketers also raised concerns over Babar Azam's limited range of shots against spinners.

Amid his struggles against spinners, wicket-keeping batter Umar Akmal has recalled giving advice

to the former Pakistan batter on how to tackle spin.

During a recent interview with a private TV channel, Akmal recalled an instance when Babar Azam approached him for help in overcoming his spin struggles.

"I remember clearly that he was struggling against spinners. He was getting out at midwicket, so he came to me and said, 'Umar bhai, I'm struggling a little,'" Umar Akmal said.

"I asked him about his bat grip and advised him that when the spinner approaches, he should change his grip and watch

the ball until the halfway point. Then he could either cut it or hit it in a way that wouldn't be flat," Umar Akmal added.

Babar Azam, once known the best against spinners for averaging 82.1 against them till the end of 2021, has averaged around 48 since then.

In 2023, the former Pakistan captain played at a strike rate of 77.7 against spin, which fell to 68.4 the following year.

His strike rate dropped to just 60.3 in 2025 while he has been dismissed 20 times to spin in his last 39 innings.

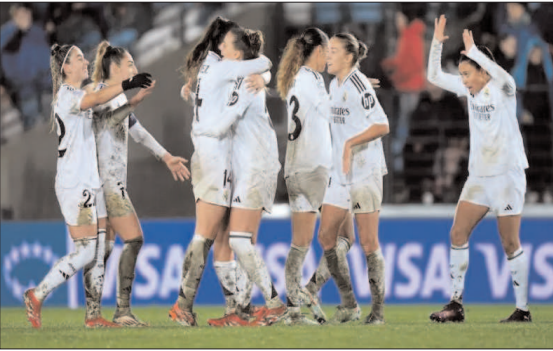
Real Madrid take advantage over Arsenal in Champions League

PARIS (AFP/APP): A goal in each half from Linda Caicedo and Athenea del Castillo gave Real Madrid a valuable 2-0 win over Arsenal at the Estadio Alfredo Di Stefano in their women's Champions League quarter-final first leg on Tuesday.

The English side made the early running but were hit on the counter when Madrid made their first chance of the match in the 22nd minute. Real's Sandie Toletti intercepted an Arsenal pass in her own half and picked out former Manchester United striker Signe Bruun.

Her pass found Colombian international Caicedo who held off the challenge of USA defender Emily Fox before surging into the box and finding the bottom left of goal with a neat finish. Beth Mead went close to leveling just before half-time but slid her shot just wide of Misa Rodriguez's right-hand post.

Arsenal, in a joint-record 16th quarter-final and look-



ing to reach an eighth semi-final, pressed in the second half for an equaliser, forcing Misa into a series of saves but the Gunners were again hit on the counter eight minutes from time.

This time Scottish midfielder Caroline Weir, playing against her old club fed substitute Athenea down the left channel. Chasing to the edge of the Arsenal box, she stepped inside and drilled a drive towards the left post Arsenal goalkeeper Manuela Zinsberger could only palm into the corner of the net.

"It's a great result and a

great win," said Bruun. "We had to stick together and work as a team. We are very happy with the score-line, but there is another game to go and now we have to focus on it."

Arsenal captain Kim Little admitted her side were "disappointed" with the defeat and would need to step up a level in next week's second leg in London if they are to make it into a semi-final against either Bayern Munich or record eight-times champion Lyon. "Now we are sad but we have to recover so that the second leg will be different," said Little.



MIAMI: Emma Raducanu of Great Britain in action against Sayaka Ishii of Japan in the first round on Day 2 of the Miami Open at Hard Rock Stadium.

Leicestershire sign Shan Masood on all-format deal

LONDON (Agencies): Leicestershire have signed Pakistan Test captain Shan Masood on an all-format deal for the 2025 summer.

The 35-year-old, who oversaw a Test series win against England last year, will bring experience and batting pedigree to Grace Road. He is due to begin his stint in May, following the conclusion of the Pakistan Super League, and should make his Leicestershire debut on May 31, against his former county, Derbyshire.

The move confirms the end of Masood's association with Yorkshire, following the culmination of a two-year deal which saw him captain the club since 2023. The left-handed opener amassed 1,240 County Championship runs at an average of 53.91 in 15 matches, helping Yorkshire earn promotion back to Division One in 2024.

He had originally moved to Headingley following an impressive 2022 summer with Derbyshire, in which he scored 1,078 first-class runs at 82.61. It was during this stint, in April, that Masood struck 219 against Leicestershire in an innings victory, becoming the first Derbyshire batter to score back-to-back double centuries following 239 versus Sussex the week before.

Masood has been capped 90 times by Pakistan across all formats, including 42 Test caps, and joins club captain Peter Handscomb and Netherlands allrounder Logan van Beek as Leicestershire's overseas options for the upcoming campaign. He is expected to be available throughout the season, with no Test matches scheduled over the English summer. That could change if the PCB decide to recall him to their limited-overs set-up for a tour of the Caribbean starting on July 31, though Masood's last international white-ball appearance came in May 2023.

"I am really excited to have the chance to play all three formats for Leicestershire. I have always admired the club and have had great conversations with a lot of the team during the last three seasons," Masood said in a statement released on Tuesday.

"I love playing at Uptonsteel County Ground. The fans get behind the team in strong numbers and the games I have been a part of have always been a great spectacle. The club has been very competitive in all formats and produced some fantastic young players over the last few years. It is an exciting time to join the Foxes."

Director of Cricket, Claude Henderson, added: "We are delighted to welcome someone of Shan's calibre to Leicestershire. He is a proven talent both internationally and in county cricket, and someone who can win matches in all three formats."

"Shan completes a fantastic line-up of overseas additions to our squad. His leadership and experience will be invaluable to the team both on and off the pitch."

Raducanu breezes into second round of Miami Open

MIAMI (Agencies): Emma Raducanu breezed into the second round of the Miami Open with a commanding straight-set win against Japanese teenager Sayaka Ishii.

The British number two took just over an hour to progress 6-2 6-1 and will next face American eighth seed Emma Navarro.

Raducanu, the 2021 US Open champion, lost in the first round of Indian Wells earlier this month in what was her first match since the traumatic experience of dealing with a stalker at a tournament in Dubai.

This is also her first proper event with new coach Vladimir Platenik and the partnership is off to a promising start.

"I am really proud of how I competed. It hasn't been easy for me coming into this but I feel I put in a good performance," said Raducanu. "I hadn't won a match here before in my professional career. I am just so happy to now be able to score a win."

There was a little hesi-

tancy early on from Raducanu but she broke her opponent at the first time of asking and became stronger from then on.

Unforced errors also did not help Ishii's cause, with the 19-year-old making 12 compared to six for Raducanu in the first set. By then the damage was done and Raducanu made light work of her opponent, winning the next five games in a row before serving to seal the second set 6-1.

Osaka wants to 'play with the big dogs' after Miami win: Former world number one Naomi Osaka wants to "play with the big dogs" again after battling to a three-set win against Yulia Starodubtseva in the first round of the Miami Open.

Osaka came from a set down to beat Ukraine's Starodubtseva 3-6 6-4 6-3 and claim her first victory since the Australian Open second round in January.

It comes after the Japanese player described her first-round loss against Camila Osorio at Indian

Wells two weeks ago as the "worst match I've ever played in my life".

"I want to play with the big dogs so bad and I just see everyone playing so well and I want to do the same," she said after her two-and-a-half-hour epic against Starodubtseva.

"But I have to remember it's a process." The four-time Grand Slam winner has had several breaks from playing to prioritise her mental health as well as a maternity break.

She has not progressed past the third round of a major since her most recent triumph at the 2021 Australian Open. "I knew that I wasn't playing too well, but I thought, 'let me try to stay on the court as long as possible', because I consider Miami my home," Osaka added.

"At Indian Wells I was just over-hitting a lot, so I tried to use my legs. "I was going to run into every corner if I had to, and we were going to have to play for three hours if she was going to beat me."

Rangers embarrassed by 'shameful' banner after Uefa charges



GLASGOW (Agencies): Rangers have described the display by supporters of an anti-woke banner at their Europa League game against Fenerbahce - and which has led to a disciplinary charge from Uefa - as "shameful" and "embarrassing".

The Scottish Premiership club also hit out at the throwing of objects on to the pitch, and the continued use of pyrotechnics, saying fans who carry out such acts are not welcome at their matches.

While thanking most supporters for their recent backing during games against the Turkish side and Celtic, Rangers state, external it is "deeply saddening and frankly embarrassing that the club is now set to face significant sanctions for the actions of a very small minority".

The banner displayed at Ibrox during Thursday's aggregate win over Fenerbahce stated: "Keep woke foreign ideologies out - defend Europe."

Rangers say European football's governing body has described it as "racist and/or discriminatory". "Rangers is a modern, progressive football club and we are fiercely proud

of our diverse playing squads, workforce and support," the club say in a website statement.

"For the club to be charged with such a matter in 2025 is shameful and the disdain for those responsible will be shared by the overwhelming majority of our supporters."

This charge will bring consequences for the club, while the club is also working to identify those responsible and will ensure they also face consequences.

"For the avoidance of doubt, if you do not believe in 2025 that absolutely everyone is welcome to follow Rangers, whether at Ibrox or away, then Rangers is not the club for you and you should disassociate yourself with the club immediately."

Rangers have also been charged over objects thrown on Thursday but say their own players and staff were "targeted with missiles" during Sunday's Old Firm derby win at Celtic Park.

"This is becoming a regular occurrence, not just at Rangers matches but across stadia in Scotland," Rangers state.

"Focusing on Ibrox, however, there was a

widely-reported incident in the January Old Firm game, whilst at the recent game with Motherwell, one of our own supporters was hit and injured by an object thrown towards the away end.

"This senseless and criminal behaviour has no place in sport, nor in society. Again, if you think such behaviour is acceptable, you are not welcome at Rangers matches."

Rangers also face a Uefa sanction for the blocking of passageways at the Fenerbahce match and urge fans to follow the advice of stewards and police.

In addition, Rangers say that: "Despite clear warnings to the contrary, pyrotechnics were used by two individuals following Sunday's Old Firm victory at Parkhead."

"This runs the risk of an additional 800 of our supporters being unable to attend a match in the latter stages of the Premier Sports Cup at Hampden, in addition to the 500 that will already miss out as a result of the use of pyrotechnics."

"All of the above behaviours will have consequences for the club and, either directly or indirectly, the club's supporters."



In brief

Police arrest 54 professional beggars

RAWALPINDI (APP): The Rawalpindi Police in a single day on Wednesday arrested some 54 professional beggars from across the city. During the ongoing crackdown launched on the instructions of City Police Officer Syed Khalid Hamdani, a total of 433 beggars had been arrested this year, the police spokesman said. He said special police squads were formed to take action against the professional beggars. Most of the professional beggars, he said, were also involved in theft, drug trafficking and other crimes. The beggars caused traffic congestion on busy highways and inconvenience to citizens, he added.

IRSA releases 63,442 cusecs water

ISLAMABAD (APP): Indus River System Authority (IRSA) on Wednesday released 63,442 cusecs water from various rim stations with inflow of 64,627 cusecs. According to the data released by IRSA, the water level in River Indus at Tarbela Dam was 1402.09 feet and was at its dead level of 1402 feet. Water inflow and outflow in the dam were recorded as 18,300 cusecs and 20,000 cusecs, respectively. The water level in River Jhelum at Mangla Dam was 1054 feet, which was 4 feet higher than its dead level of 1,050 feet. The inflow and outflow of water were recorded as 23,200 cusecs and 20,351 cusecs, respectively. The release of water at Kalabagh, Taunsa, Guddu and Sukkur was recorded as 14,665, 26,400, 16,400 and 6,200 cusecs respectively. Similarly, from River Kabul, a total of 10,500 cusecs of water released at Nowshera and 9000 cusecs released from River Chenab at Marala.

Police arrest 13 outlaws

RAWALPINDI (APP): The Rawalpindi Police during operations against outlaws across the district arrested 13 accused including a drug supplier, illegal arms owners, Tenancy Act violators and a kite seller. According to the police spokesman, the R A Bazaar Police took action and arrested drug supplier Obaid with 1.5 kilograms of charas. About seven suspects were held for having illegal weapons and ammunition. The Pirwadhai Police recovered a 30-bore pistol each from accused Faisal and Hamza, and 35 cartridges of a 12-bore rifle from accused Altaf. Similarly, the Naseerabad Police held three accused Akhtar Ali, Javed and Zulfiqar with a 30-bore pistol each, while Gujar Khan Police also recovered a 30-bore pistol from accused Nasir. Likewise, during search operations in different areas, four suspects Sajid, Nadeem, Shahzad and Mazhar were taken into custody for violation of the Tenancy Act. Meanwhile, the Airport Police nabbed accused Isa recovering 70 kites and from strings from him.

IESCO to hold Open Kachery

ISLAMABAD (APP): Islamabad Electric Supply Company (IESCO) has issued a schedule for Open Kachery in all operational circles, aiming to resolve and register the complaints of consumers related to power issues. Open Kachery will be held on 20th March from 10:00 AM to 12:00 PM, said a press release. It said that Open Kachery will be held in Islamabad Circle at F-8 Sub Division, IESCO, Rawalpindi City Circle at Muslim Town Sub Division, Rawalpindi Cantt Circle near Abbasia Restaurant, Azad Patan Road Kahra, Attock Circle at Mohra Chowk Sub Division, Jhelum Circle.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Communications, Abdul Aleem Khan presides over joint meeting of NHA & MHMP. —APP Photo

Rs724.4m spent on protest prevention, Red Zone security in Islamabad: Talal

ISLAMABAD (INP): Minister of State for Interior, Senator Talal Chaudhry, revealed that a total of Rs724.4 million was spent on protest prevention and Red Zone security in Islamabad during the fiscal year 2022-23. He shared these details while addressing the National Assembly's Question Hour on Wednesday.

According to Senator Chaudhry, in 2019-20, the government spent Rs150 million on Red Zone security, a significantly lower amount compared to 2022-23, due to fewer protests. For the current fiscal year, an additional grant of Rs100 million has been allocated for Red Zone security.

He explained that security expenditures generally fall under two categories including movement, food, and accommodation of security forces and procurement of containers used to block roads and prevent unlawful gatherings. Chaudhry stated that 2022-23 saw the highest

security expenditure in the past five years due to the large number of protests and sit-ins in the capital. He emphasized that if opposition parties had protested within legal boundaries, these expenses could have been avoided and used for public welfare instead.

Dr Mehreen Razaq Bhutto raised a question in the House regarding the total security costs for protests in the last five years. Responding to a supplementary question by Senator Sehar Kamran, Chaudhry clarified that empty containers are legally procured by the administration for security purposes, with proper payments made to the respective companies.

He also recalled an incident where a loaded container truck was mistakenly placed on the roads, causing additional logistical issues.

Moreover, to another query he replied to the concerns raised about the staffing levels at the Capital Development Authority (CDA) hospital, which has faced continuous

calls for adequate personnel amidst budgetary constraints.

He said that multiple advertisements have been issued to fill vacancies; however, the required staffing levels remain unmet, leading to deficiencies in patient care. It was noted that while significant improvements have been made in hospital services, further assistance from elected representatives is essential.

Regarding issues of immigration and passport security, he responded to queries about the effectiveness of current systems. Furthermore, in response to questions about begging and the homeless population in Islamabad, the Minister of State for Interior, Talal Chaudhry, reported that numerous arrests have been made under the current crackdown on professional begging. He emphasized that many individuals apprehended are part of organized groups rather than genuine cases of need, advocating for stricter laws to address this issue effectively.

BISP, WB discuss collaboration on skill development and cybersecurity

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chairperson of the Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP), Senator Rubina Khalid, held a meeting with World Bank Country Director Mr. Najy Benhassine at the BISP Headquarters to explore avenues of collaboration on skill development and the re-certification of BISP Registration Centres.

During the discussion, Senator Rubina Khalid underscored the importance of the Skill Development Programme

in empowering BISP beneficiary families by alleviating poverty and promoting financial independence.

The meeting also reviewed BISP's progress concerning Disbursement-Linked Indicators, with a particular focus on enhancing the technical capacity of BISP field officials through specialized training programmes.

Both parties agreed to form dedicated teams to develop proposals aimed at improving the technical expertise of BISP field staff. Additionally, Senator

Rubina Khalid sought the World Bank's support in strengthening BISP's IT and cybersecurity framework.

In response, Mr. Najy Benhassine assured the World Bank's full cooperation in assisting BISP in digital transformation and cybersecurity enhancement.

The meeting concluded with a commitment to strengthening collaboration between BISP and the World Bank to ensure effective service delivery and capacity building for the welfare of underprivileged communities.

IESCO issues power suspension programme

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

According to IESCO spokesperson, the power supply of different feeders and grid stations would remain suspended on Thursday 20th March 2025, from 07:00 AM to 11:00 AM, Islamabad Circle,

CST, Flour Mill-I, Industrial-II, Athal, Treat, T&T, Bhara Kahu, I&II, NIH, Golf City, Mohra Noor Bani Gala, Diplomatic, Bani Gala, Mohra Noor Feeders, Rawalpindi City Circle, AFOHS, KRL, Khanna-II, F-Block, Sector-IV, Airport Society, Chakra, Saham, Range Road, Modern Flour Mill, Millatabad, KTM, Peshawar Road, Quaid-e-Azam Hospital Feeders, Rawalpindi Cantt Circle, Rehmatatabad-I, Chaklala, Mall Road, Japan Road,

Jinnah-I&II Feeders, Attock Circle, Salar Gah, Ghauri, Hussainabad, Munirabad, Ahmed Nagar, Col. Sher Khan, Lala Zar, Lala Rukh feeders, From 08:00 am to 11:00 pm, GSO Circle, Captain Amir Shaheed, Kamalabad, Gulshan Saeed, Dharmal Road, UC Lakhana Feeders, Major Riaz Manzoor, Tulsa Road feeders and surrounding areas will remain closed.

IESCO management apologizes to its esteemed customers for the power outage.

DIG Tariq reviews security measures across city

ISLAMABAD (APP): Deputy Inspector General of Police (DIG) Muhammad Jawad Tariq visited various mosques across the district to assess security arrangements.

A police spokesperson told APP on Wednesday that during the visit, DIG Tariq met with Islamabad Police officers deployed on duty and emphasized the importance of ensuring public safety. Officers and personnel stationed at security points were commended for their dedication. Senior police officials were also present on this occasion.

On this occasion, DIG Tariq said that the Islamabad Police have implemented special security arrangements for mosques and imambargahs across the district during the holy month of Ramadan. DIG Tariq further stated that Islamabad Police officers are consistently working to protect the lives and property of citizens. "All available resources are being utilized to ensure peace and order in the federal capital, and no elements will be allowed to disrupt the peace of the citizens," he added.

No compromise on Pakistan's sovereignty: state minister

ISLAMABAD (APP): State Minister Shezra Mansab Ali Khan Kharal Wednesday reaffirmed that the government will not compromise on Pakistan's sovereignty under any circumstances and will prioritize the nation's security, integrity and independence above all else.

In an interview with PTV News, the minister reaffirmed the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz's (PML-N) commitment to safeguarding Pakistan's sovereignty, stating that the party will protect it at all costs. She said the PTI founder severely undermined Pakistan's founda-

tions and state institutions through his relentless online campaigns.

Minister criticized the PTI founder's online campaigns as harmful to Pakistan's image and termed Imran Khan a "Tsunami", implying his devastating impact on the country's reputation. The minister said whenever the country is on the brink of achieving stability, PTI attempts to derail this progress through foreign interventions and conspiracies.

She criticized PTI members in Parliament for accepting salaries while claiming to be against the

system, arguing that they should resign instead of benefiting from the very system they oppose.

The minister emphasized that PTI should demonstrate maturity and responsibility in the face of terrorism, urging the party to unite with the government against this common threat.

She stressed that terrorism is a national issue that requires a collective response, rather than political point-scoring. By working together, the minister argued, Pakistan can effectively combat terrorism and ensure a safer future for its citizens, she added.

Mustafa Kamal visits PIMS hospital

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Health, Syed Mustafa Kamal on Wednesday visited Pakistan Institute of Medical Sciences (PIMS) hospital to assess health-care services, ongoing projects, and the challenges faced by the institution.

During the visit, the hospital administration provided a detailed briefing to the minister. He was informed about the medical facilities available, the resources at hand, and the challenges faced by the hospital in delivering quality health-care. Additionally, the minister was updated on ongoing projects and the upgradation initiatives at PIMS.

During the briefing, the minister was informed that PIMS hospital receives approximately 6,000 to 7,000 patients daily. The

minister was also briefed on the construction of a new 200-bed emergency facility, which is expected to become functional by June 2025.

Mustafa Kamal inquired about the various tests being conducted in the hospital's laboratories. He instructed hospital authorities to submit a comprehensive report on the challenges, recommendations, and future plans for improvement at the earliest.

Following the briefing, the minister inspected the Outpatient Department (OPD) and emergency wards. He personally reviewed the facilities being provided to patients and interacted with them to understand their concerns.

The minister emphasized the importance of compassionate healthcare. "Those

who come to hospitals are in distress, and we must work to ease their suffering, not add to it," he remarked.

He said, "It is our duty to serve patients with sincerity and dedication. We must fulfill our responsibilities with integrity."

The minister urged doctors, paramedical staff, and nurses to treat patients with kindness and professionalism. "A few kind words can be a source of healing for patients. We must ensure the provision of quality healthcare and do everything in our power to improve hospital services," he said.

Mustafa Kamal reaffirmed the government's commitment to strengthening healthcare infrastructure and ensuring the delivery of efficient medical services to the public.

District admin intensifies efforts to curb overpricing

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Islamabad district administration has intensified its efforts to curb overpricing during Ramadan, reporting 410 enforcement actions, 77 arrests, and the sealing of 18 shops for violating official price lists.

Meanwhile, the district administration teams also imposed fines totalling Rs 258,000 in a drive to protect consumers from illegal profiteering, said the spokesman of ICT administration here.

In a recent performance report, the district administration revealed that Assistant Commissioners and Price Control Magistrates conducted 410

inspections across markets to monitor compliance with government-mandated rates. Officials stated that 18 shops were sealed for selling essential items at inflated prices, while 77 individuals were arrested for defying official pricing guidelines.

Meanwhile, fines worth Rs 258,000 were issued to businesses found overcharging for goods during Ramadan. The administration emphasized that helpline complaints from citizens were addressed immediately, with teams dispatched to verify and act on reports of violations.

Deputy Commissioner (DC) of Islamabad, Irfan Nawaz Memon, confirmed

daily visits to Ramadan markets to ensure compliance with pricing rules and the availability of quality goods. "Our teams are taking strict action against illegal profiteers without exception," Memon said, urging residents to report overpricing via the official helpline.

The DC reiterated that the administration's priority is to maintain fair pricing and supply chains during the holy month, adding that no tolerance will be shown for exploitation of consumers. Residents are encouraged to report price violations immediately through the district helpline to trigger swift enforcement.

Anti-Dengue meeting held

RAWALPINDI (APP): An anti-dengue meeting was held on Wednesday in which a detailed briefing was given on the sweep-up activities from March 10 to 17.

The meeting was chaired by Add'l Deputy Commissioner Abdullah Khan, was informed that a total of 327 teams were deployed for indoor surveillance in 57,715 houses, who inspected 56,819 houses, achieving a target of 98.20%. During the inspection, dengue larvae were found in 68 houses.

Similarly, 109 teams were deployed to inspect

27,698 places under outdoor surveillance, who inspected 19,286 places with a target of 93.70%, out of which larvae were found in 10 places.

It was briefed that

157,288 houses were to be registered under household registration in 20 union councils, out of which 93,292 houses were registered, achieving 59.31% target. The meeting was informed that punitive actions against positive reports regarding dengue larvae presence, were taken as well. According to the statistical data, 3,913 inspections were conducted under preventive measures at the tehsil

level, resulting in 339 challans, 42 FIRs, 31 sealings, 2,687 notices and a fine of Rs.1,50,500.00. Furthermore, the meeting also reviewed the performance of indoor and outdoor teams.

Additional Deputy Commissioner Abdullah Khan appreciated the performance of the internal monitors and said that their report was satisfactory. The performance of the team was appreciated during the meeting. He said that in the next meeting, the top three monitors who showed the best performance would be awarded certificates.

Azeem's artwork exhibited at PAC

RAWALPINDI (APP): Punjab Arts Council (PAC) Rawalpindi organized a remarkable exhibition showcasing the artwork of renowned painter and calligrapher Azeem Iqbal in connection with the blessed month of Ramadan. The exhibition was inaugurated by Malik Abrar Ahmed, MNA who termed the exhibition of calligraphy based on Islamic culture and civilization is a commendable initiative.

"It is essential to provide opportunities to skilled individuals from all fields so they can further enhance their abilities", said the chief guest. Malik Abrar urged PAC to hunt the skilled and creative talents by giving them more opportunities to display their creativity. Former Director PAC, Waqar Ahmed also expressed his views, saying that such exhibitions provide a platform for young artists to refine their skills.

Prominent cultural figure Naheed Manzoor, who also attended the event, remarked that the promotion of Islamic arts is crucial for the preservation of our cultural heritage, and the Punjab Arts Council is rendering excellent services in this regard. Director PAC, Sajjad Hussain in his address highlighted the contribution of PAC in promoting art and culture, by organizing diverse programmes. He said that currently, the council was conducting more than thirty classes where various arts were being taught.

Azeem Iqbal's calligraphy exhibition has previously been displayed at the Pakistan National Council of Arts, Lok Virsa, National Book Foundation, Allama Iqbal Open University, Quaid-e-Azam University, and various embassies, where his work has been highly appreciated. Renowned calligraphers Khawaja Muhammad Hussain, Ghulam Muhammad Zuberi, and other artists praised Azeem Iqbal's work, stating that his art beautifully reflects Islamic culture and serves as an inspiration for the younger generation. Among the distinguished personalities attending the exhibition were Dr. Kamran Jahangir, Managing Director of National Book Foundation, Dr. Jalal Ahmed, well-known poet Anjum Saleemi, civil officers, women, and a large number of individuals associated with fine arts.

4 killed in traffic accident

KANDAHAR CITY (Pajhwok): Four people have been killed as a result of traffic accident in the Daman district of Kandahar. Police spokesman Mullah Asadullah Jamshed said that the accident occurred when a fielder-type car collided with a truck in the Minara area on the Kabul-Kandahar highway. Jamshed confirmed that four individuals, including Haji Abdul Qayyum Agha, a tribal leader from Jagdalak district of Zabul, lost their lives in the collision.

The Frontier Post

AFGHANISTAN

Ramazan 19, 1446 — Thursday, March 20, 2025

Taliban flog two individuals

KABUL (Amu TV): Taliban publicly flogged a man and a woman in Ghazni's Deh Yak district on charges of moral corruption, sentencing each to 35 lashes and two years in prison. Taliban have not provided further detail in their statement. Taliban have increased public floggings in recent months, with data compiled by Amu TV indicating that more than 72 people—including several women—have been whipped in various provinces since early March.

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

Kazakhstan traders eye investment in Afghanistan's mines

KABUL (TOLOnews): The Ministry of Mines and Petroleum of Afghanistan said that Kazakhstan diplomats met with Hedayatullah Badri, the acting minister, to discuss investment in Afghanistan's mining sector.

Homayoun Afghan, the spokesperson for the Ministry of Mines and Petroleum, stated: "During this meeting, bilateral relations and investment opportunities in Afghanistan's mining sector were discussed and exchanged. The Kazakhstani diplomats expressed the interest of their country's businessmen in investing in Afghanistan's mining sector and added that several technical teams from Kazakhstan are scheduled

to visit Afghanistan in April to gather more information about the mines."

On the other hand, some economic experts believe that foreign businessmen's investment in various mines of Afghanistan, including oil and gas, can play a significant role in job creation and economic development.

"We need the cooperation and investment of foreign partners, industrialists, and international businessmen to work alongside Afghan industrialists and traders. This collaboration can help us identify, research, and determine the exact locations of Afghanistan's untapped oil and gas resources. Then, with the assistance of foreign

partners, we can extract and utilize these resources in a standard manner," stated Najibullah Siddiqi, an economic expert.

"Afghanistan is one of the countries rich in minerals and natural resources. If these resources are extracted and processed in a standardized manner, they can have a positive impact on the country's economic growth," said another economic expert, Abdul Zahoor Madber.

According to statistics, Afghanistan currently supplies only 10% of its oil needs from the Qashqari fields, while the remaining demand is met through imports from Iran, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, and Russia.

Underground water level falls sharply

KABUL (Pajhwok): The underground water level has fallen by up to five metres in the past year in some provinces.

The Ministry of Energy and Water (MoEW) linked the drop to the misuse of water in some agricultural and industrial areas as well as lack of water-injecting systems.

In a post on its X account, the ministry said the Department of Water Resources monitored last year the underground water level in 13 major cities in line with a plan.

The result of the study indicates the underground water level plummeted significantly in Kabul and the capitals of Balkh, Bamyán, Herat, Maidan Wardak and Kandahar provinces.

The declining underground water level was tied to misuse and lack of a system that feeds water back to the ground.

This comes as a number of residents of Kabul and other cities complain about potable water shortages.

Kandahar's \$447 million export boom

KABUL (TOLOnews): This year, 421,000 tons of export goods, valued at more than \$447 million, have been exported from Kandahar to Pakistan, India, China, the United States, the United Arab Emirates, Sweden, Iran, Turkey, and Germany.

Officials from the Kandahar Chamber of Commerce and Investment say that, in addition to fresh and dried fruits, the exported goods also include legumes, minerals, vegetables, and animal products.

According to local officials in Kandahar, despite road closures, the volume of exports has not decreased compared to last year.

Abdul Baqi Bina, Deputy of the Kandahar Chamber of Commerce and Investment, said: "Over the past eleven months, we have had good exports from Kandahar. The total volume of exports is 421,758 tons, with a total value of \$447,163,000, the majority of which consists of dried fruits."

On the other hand, several dried fruit exporters in Kandahar have called for expanding trade relations with other countries instead of relying on Pakistan.

Abdul Mateen, a dried fruit exporter, said: "If an alternative route to Pakistan is not found, this issue will not be resolved, as Pakistan always creates obstacles for us in the export sector."

Mohammad Yaqoob, another dried fruit exporter, stated: "First, the export challenges with Pakistan must be resolved. If these problems persist, agreements should be made with other countries to ensure a secure and stable export and import process."

Sayed Mohammad Agha, a dried fruit exporter, said: "Our largest market for dried fruits is India, but we export through Pakistan. However, Pakistan constantly blocks our trade routes. Meanwhile, our agricultural production is increasing day by day."

Aqa Mohammad, another carpet seller in Herat, said: "Carpets are not being exported. We buy yarn at 600 afghanis per kilogram, but when we sell the carpet, we can't even make back 300 afghanis per kilogram. For example, making a carpet costs 3,000 afghanis, but no one buys it for even 2,000 afghanis."

Sardar Mohammad, another carpet seller, said: "Currently, there are no buyers, and yarn is expensive. Those who weave carpets do not make a profit, and production has significantly decreased."

The beauty and elegance of Afghan handwoven carpets remain as strong as ever, yet the markets have lost their vibrancy. These carpets are globally renowned for their high quality and diversity. A significant portion of Afghan handwoven and traditional carpets is produced in the northern and western regions of the country.

wrote: "The humanitarian aid bridge's first flight of 2025 carrying over of critical medical supplies landed in Kabul tonight. Together with our humanitarian part-

ners & the EU funding, we're committed to supporting those in needs in Afghanistan." The EU has previously provided medical assistance to Afghanistan.

100 tonnes of medical supplies arrive in Kabul



KABUL (Pajhwok): Donated by European Union, 100 tonnes of medical supplies and medicines have arrived in Kabul.

Afghan carpets smuggled and exported

KABUL (TOLOnews): Local officials and carpet sellers in Herat have told TOLOnews that Afghan carpets, after being smuggled to Iran and Pakistan, are exported to the world under the names of these countries.

According to some carpet sellers in Herat, due to the decline in official carpet exports and the smuggling of carpets to neighboring countries, the price of traditional Afghan carpets has dropped in the markets.

Carpet sellers in Herat have called on the interim government to not only prevent the smuggling of Afghan handwoven carpets to neighboring countries but also to facilitate their export under Afghanistan's name.

Izzatullah Yousufi, the representative of handwoven carpet sellers in Herat, told TOLOnews: "Afghan handmade carpets are smuggled to Iran and Pakistan and then exported

to other countries under the names of Iranian and Pakistani carpets."

These carpets are crafted with the skill and hard work of female carpet weavers, who now struggle to find buyers. Not long ago, the intricate patterns and vibrant colors of these handwoven carpets served as ambassadors of Afghan culture and art in global markets; however, their demand has now diminished even within the country.

Abdul Ghafoor Iqbal, a carpet seller in Herat, said: "Afghan carpets are taken to Pakistan, where they are washed and then exported to Germany, the US, and other countries under the name of Pakistani carpets."

The decline in exports and the smuggling of these handwoven carpets to neighboring countries have led to a drop in their prices in domestic markets. As a result, carpet weavers have reduced their production.

Hanif meets ISO reps



KABUL (BNA): Qari Din Mohammad "Hanif," the Acting Minister of Economy, held a meeting with Milad "Daneshyar," the Head of Public Communications at Nile Mars, the Afghanistan branch of the International Organization for Standardization (ISO).

During the meeting, both sides underscored the importance of improving and standardizing Afghan-

istan's export products to align with international standards.

The ISO, an independent and non-governmental organization, plays a pivotal role in developing and publishing global standards across various sectors, including quality management, safety, environment, and technology. By collaborating with the ISO, Afghanistan seeks to leverage these standards to

enhance its trade capabilities and ensure compliance with international benchmarks.

The Ministry of Economy expressed optimism about the potential outcomes of this collaboration, highlighting that adherence to ISO standards could significantly improve the quality of Afghan goods, ultimately benefiting local producers and the economy as a whole.

Kabul, Tashkent discuss mining cooperation

KABUL (Pajhwok): Acting Minister of Mines and Petroleum Mullah Hidayatullah Badri and Uzbek delegates have discussed bilateral cooperation in the survey, exploration, extraction and processing of minerals.

Badri met Advisor for Foreign Operations at Uzbekistan's Ministry of Geology and Mines Behzad Mermodov and the delegation accompanying him, the Ministry of Mines and Petroleum (MoMP) said in a statement.

Badri reaffirmed his ministry's commitment to expanding investment opportunities for both national and international investors in Afghanistan's mining sector. He assured



the Uzbek delegation of all necessary support.

For his part, Mermodov talked about the gas project in the Tuti Maidan area of

Jawzjan province and the iron mine in the Khwesh locality of Maidan Wardak province.

He expressed Uzbekis-

tan's interest in collaborating with Afghanistan at surveying, exploration, extraction and processing minerals.

Economic hardships force children into labor amid calls for support

KABUL (TOLOnews): The current economic challenges in the country have forced some children in the capital to engage in hard labor. These children call on the Islamic Emirate to provide them with access to education and support for their families.

One of the places where children in Kabul are engaged in difficult labor is car repair shops scattered across the city, where they work among heavy tools.

Bilal and Usman, both working from dawn to dusk to earn a living for their

families, are employed in one of these repair shops.

Bilal told TOLOnews: "We have economic problems. We ask the government to help us and provide us with education."

Usman, a child laborer, said: "At 8 AM, I go to school. After school, I return to the shop to work and take something home. I earn 100 afghanis a day, which I bring home for them to buy something."

Many children, like Bilal and Usman, are engaged in strenuous labor.

Musa, who also works in

a repair shop, told our reporter that he is currently in the seventh grade and wants to continue his studies. Musa called on the Islamic Emirate: "I work here from 8 AM to 4 PM to support my family and take something home."

"One of the serious psychological effects of hard labor on children is that they experience anxiety, which eventually leads to violence," said Navedullah Danishyar, a university scholar.

On the other hand, the Ministry of Labor and

Social Affairs has assured that efforts are underway to support child laborers across the country.

Samiullah Ebrahimi, spokesperson for the ministry of labor and social affairs, told TOLOnews: "Many of these children were engaged in hard labor, but they have been accommodated in orphanages according to the ministry's policies and conditions."

Poverty and unemployment in many parts of the country are among the fundamental reasons that force children into difficult labor.

Eleven individuals injured in Nuristan traffic accident

JALALABAD (Pajhwok): Eleven individuals were injured in a traffic accident in eastern Nuristan province on Wednesday, an official said.

Police spokesman Ghulam Rahman Haidari told Pajhwok Afghan News that the incident occurred when a passenger vehicle veered off the road and plunged into a ditch in Dahán Piyáz village of Doab district at around 6:00am.

Ghulam Rahman Haidari said that all 11 individuals sustained injuries in the accident.

He added that security



forces arrived at the scene and transported the injured to Doab Hospital for treatment.

Farmers struggle with market challenges and storage shortages

SAR-E-PUL (TOLOnews): A number of farmers in Sar-e-Pul say they have suffered financial losses due to the absence of a proper market, standard cold storage facilities, and challenging transportation routes for their agricultural products.

According to them, this solar year, no serious measures have been taken to facilitate the transportation of onions from the province, leading to financial setbacks for farmers.

Mohammad Qasim, a

farmer, said: "Our onions have been stuck at the Torkham border for almost 21 days. At home, they have started to rot. When we take them to the market, traders from Tajikistan and Uzbekistan refuse to buy them, saying they already have their own onions, which are of better quality."

Another farmer, Badr, stated: "Our livelihood depends on onion farming. We pay workers 300 Afghani daily, put in a lot of effort, and spend money on fertilizers and water. But

when our onions are ready, foreign onions flood the market, dropping our onion prices to just 50 Afghani, which is a huge loss for us."

However, the Sar-e-Pul Directorate of Agriculture and Irrigation assures that efforts are underway to find suitable markets for the province's agricultural products.

Sharifullah Mosdaq, head of the agricultural division at the Sar-e-Pul Directorate of Agriculture and Irrigation, said: "We have raised the issue in interna-

tional exhibitions and urged traders and business owners to export Sar-e-Pul's onions to other provinces and even abroad so that prices increase and farmers do not suffer losses."

According to data from the Sar-e-Pul Directorate of Agriculture and Irrigation, last year, onions were cultivated on 850 hectares of land in the province, yielding 20,000 tons of produce. However, this year, onion cultivation expanded to 900 hectares, producing 30,150 tons.

Helmand Environmental Department opens newly-built zoo

HELMAND (Ariana News): Helmand Environmental Protection Department recently opened a newly-built Zoo in the city of Lashkargar, in southern Afghanistan, in a bid to preserve the country's wildlife.

The Zoo, which reportedly cost US\$600,000 to build, is now home to 52 species of animals and birds.

Zoo officials said that during 40 years of war in Afghanistan natural forests were destroyed, and the number of wild birds and wild animals have dwindled.

Officials said by establishing the zoo, they hope to be able to prevent the extinction of some local

birds.

They have however appealed to the government to take the issue seriously and support their efforts to protect Afghanistan's wildlife.

Helmand resident's have welcomed the initiative and have also appealed to the government to provide the zoo with support.

Helmand Environmental Protection Department officials said however that when the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan (IEA) returned to power in August 2021, the authorities banned deforestation, and the hunting of wild birds and wild animals.

These officials said that over the past three years

they rescued dozens of wild animals that were held in captivity by members of the public. Most of these were released back into the wild.

Afghanistan has long been known for having diverse wildlife but many of the larger mammals in the country are categorized by the International Union for Conservation of Nature as globally threatened.

These include the snow leopard, Marco Polo sheep, Siberian musk deer, markhor, urial, and the Asiatic black bear.

Other species of concern are the ibex, the gray wolf, and the brown bear, striped hyenas, and numerous bird of prey species.



Most of the Marco Polo sheep and ibex are being poached for food, whereas wolves, snow leopards and bears are being killed for damage prevention. Snow leopards, Siberian tigers and brown bears live in the high elevation alpine

tundra regions while the Marco Polo sheep exclusively live in the Wakhan Corridor region of north-east Afghanistan. Foxes, wolves, otters, deer, wild sheep, lynx and other big cats populate the mountain forest region of the east.

Pak-Russian Navies conduct bilateral drills

F.P. Report

KARACHI: Pakistan Navy (PN) and Russian Federation Navy (RFN) conducted bilateral naval exercise Arabian Monsoon-VI in North Arabian Sea.

Various assets of Pakistan Navy, including a Destroyer, an Offshore Patrol Vessel, a Fast Attack Craft (Missile), a Maritime Patrol Aircraft, and a UAV, participated in the exercise alongside RFN ships. A key highlight of the exercise was the participation of Pakistan Air Force (PAF) fighter aircraft in various serials. The exercise featured multi-faceted maritime warfare serials and a coordinated patrol, aimed at enhancing interoperability and demonstrating a joint commitment to countering common maritime security threats.

Prior to the sea phase, RFN ships were hosted at Karachi, where cross-ship visits, harbour drills, and table-top discussions were conducted. RFN delegates also called on senior Pakistan Navy officials and paid tribute to the Founder of Pakistan by laying a wreath at Mazar-e-Quaid. Joint maritime exercises with key naval forces underscore Pakistan Navy's commitment to maintaining maritime security and ensuring a stable maritime order in the region.

ASI martyred in Nowshera

F.P. Report

NOWSHERA: Unknown miscreants on Wednesday shot and martyred a police officer in Nowshera district.

Police said, Assistant Sub-Inspector (ASI) Ilyas Khan was driving a car when unidentified assailants fired multiple shots at him. As a result of the gunfire, the police officer lost control of his vehicle, which veered off the road and fell into a ditch.

The body of the martyred ASI was retrieved from the vehicle and shifted to Qazi Complex Hospital. Following the incident, a search operation was launched in the area. The martyred police officer was stationed at Nowshera Cantt Police Station.

The funeral prayer of martyred police officer Muhammad Ilyas, who was martyred by unknown assailants in Nowshera, was offered with official honors at the Police Lines Nowshera on Wednesday. A large number of police officers, Pakistan Army personnel, district administration officials, political and social figures, and local dignitaries attended the funeral prayer.

Imran, Bushra move IHC

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) founder Imran Khan and his wife Bushra Bibi have filed petitions in the Islamabad High Court (IHC), seeking suspension of conviction in the £190 million case.

The petitions, filed through their lawyer Barrister Salman Safdar, argued that the National Accountability Bureau (NAB) had misused its authority and the conviction was based on incomplete investigations.

Fresh Israeli strikes kill 20 Palestinians

CAIRO (Reuters): Israeli strikes killed at least 20 Palestinians in Gaza on Wednesday, local health workers said, as the Israeli military resumed its bombardments and issued new orders for residents to evacuate combat zones. A foreign national was killed and four others were wounded in an Israeli airstrike on the site of a United Nations headquarters in central Gaza City on Wednesday, Gaza's health ministry said.

The Israeli military denied in a statement that it had struck the UN compound in Deir Al-Balah. It said it had struck a Hamas site in northern Gaza where it had detected preparations for firing into Israeli territory. Israeli airstrikes killed more than 400 people on Tuesday, according to Palestinian health authorities, in one of the highest single-day death tolls since the beginning of conflict, ending weeks of relative calm since a ceasefire in January.

Israel warned the onslaught was "just the beginning." Israel and Hamas accuse each other of breaching the truce, which had offered a respite for Gaza's 2.3 million residents after 17 months of war that has reduced the enclave to rubble and forced the majority of its population to displace multiple times. Israel has accused Hamas of using Palestinian civilians as human shields. The Palestinian group denies the accusations and accuses Israel of indiscriminate bombings.

Hamas-led gunmen attacked Israel on October 7, 2023, killing some 1,200 people and taking about 250 hostages, according to Israeli tallies, shattering Israel's reputation as invincible in a hostile region in the country's worst security disaster. The subsequent Israeli campaign in Gaza has killed more than 49,000 people, say Palestinian health authorities, and caused a humanitarian crisis with shortages of food, fuel and water.

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's decision to resume bombardments has triggered protests in Israel, where 59 hostages are still being held, with 24 of them believed to be still alive. A coalition of hostage families and protesters against Netanyahu's moves against the judiciary and other parts of the security establishment has regrouped and accuses the prime minister of using the war for political ends.

On Wednesday, the Israeli army dropped leaflets in the northern and south-

ern Gaza Strip, ordering residents to evacuate their homes, warning they were in "dangerous combat zones." "Staying in the shelters or the current tent puts your lives and that of your family members in danger, evacuate immediately," read a leaflet dropped on Beit Hanoun.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said on Tuesday that he had ordered strikes because Hamas had rejected proposals to secure an extension of the ceasefire until April. Hamas accused Israel of jeopardizing efforts by mediators to negotiate a permanent deal to end the fighting. European Union foreign policy chief Kaja Kallas said on Wednesday that she told Israeli Foreign Minister Gideon Saar that the situation in Gaza is "unacceptable."

Jordan's King Abdullah called for the ceasefire to be restored and for aid flows to resume. "Israel's resumption of attacks on Gaza is an extremely dangerous step that adds further devastation to an already dire humanitarian situation," he said on a visit to Paris for talks with French President Emmanuel Macron.

German Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock on Wednesday called for restraint from all sides ahead of her trip to Lebanon to discuss the conflict. "The resumption of fighting ... jeopardizes the positive efforts of the Arab states, which together want to pursue a peaceful path for Gaza, free from Hamas," Baerbock said in a statement. Israel and Western powers do not want Hamas to play any role in the enclave when the war is over. Israel has vowed to crush Hamas, but the Palestinian militant group remains the dominant force in Gaza.

Arab nations drew up a plan for peace and reconstruction in Gaza after a proposal from US President Donald Trump to resettle Palestinians and turn it into the "Riviera" of the Middle East triggered outrage in the region. In Wednesday's violence, three people were killed in an Israeli airstrike on a house in Gaza City, while another airstrike left two men dead and wounded six others in Beit Hanoun town in the north, the Gaza health officials said. Palestinian medics said Israeli tank shelling on the Salahdeen road killed one Palestinian and wounded others, while an Israeli airstrike killed three people in a house in Beit Lahiya town north of the enclave.

Trump's threats reignite talk of N-bombs in Iran

TEHRAN: The latest threats of military action against Iran by United States President Donald Trump have prompted more discussions about the possibility of Iran abandoning nuclear non-proliferation.

Senior White House officials have again said Iran must do away with its nuclear programme entirely, leaving all uranium enrichment activity, even at low levels. Amid intense US air strikes on Yemen, Trump has also said the US will hold Tehran responsible for any attacks by Yemen's Houthis, dismissing Iran's insistence that the group operates independently.

This has only led to more calls from within Iran to abandon its officially stated policy that it will never pursue nuclear weapons. On Tuesday, Vatan-e Emrooz, a top daily newspaper run by ultraconservatives, marked the upcoming end of the Iranian year on March 20 by saying more countries will ponder nuclear bombs for their security as a result of Trump's policies. "Nuclear year", read its headline, complete with an image of a massive nuclear explosion.

Nournews, an outlet affiliated with Iran's Supreme National Security Council, said there will be "no guarantees" Iran will not abandon the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) if Trump and his team keep threatening. Ahmad Naderi, a member of the presiding board of the

Iranian parliament, told a public session of the assembly last week that "perhaps it is time for us to rethink our nuclear, military and security doctrine". The Tehran lawmaker has also previously backed testing intercontinental ballistic missiles capable of carrying nuclear warheads, claiming "there will be no balance in the region" unless Iran possesses a bomb.

Such calls have increasingly gained favour among hardline factions in Iran, echoing a sentiment that the establishment is prepared to dash for a bomb if its existence is threatened. Last week, Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, whose religious ruling currently bars Iran from seeking nuclear warheads, claiming "there will be no balance in the region" unless Iran possesses a bomb.

According to the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), which carries out inspections of Iranian nuclear sites, Iran has amassed enough fissile material for multiple bombs but has made no effort to build one. In the years since Trump's 2018 unilateral withdrawal from Iran's nuclear deal with world powers, Washington's European allies have become increasingly hawkish on the Iranian nuclear programme. They

have pushed Iran to curb its nuclear advances despite no prospects of lifting sanctions, introduced censure resolutions at the board of the global nuclear watchdog, and demanded more answers over several nuclear-related cases – some dating back two decades.

Years of escalation over Tehran's cooperation with the IAEA, in addition to European anger over Iran's closer ties with Moscow in light of the Ukraine war, have prompted Iran to maintain closer coordination with China and Russia. The three countries have been holding talks in Beijing to present a more unified approach on the Iranian nuclear issue, especially over sanctions. France, Germany and the United Kingdom, the European powers still party to the Iranian nuclear accord of 2015, continue to threaten to activate its "snapback" mechanism to reinstate all United Nations sanctions against Iran.

China and Russia oppose the move. The E3 have said they are pursuing the snapback because they are concerned about the use of advanced centrifuges to enrich high-purity uranium, alleged non-compliance with the nuclear accord, and alleged provision of ballistic missiles by Iran to Russia. Iran has strongly rejected that it delivered missiles to Russia, and has maintained that it only sent some drones to Russia months before the start of the war. — Aljazeera



QUETTA: President Asif Ali Zardari being welcomed upon his arrival at airport by Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Sarfraz Bugti.

UK govt declares Hasan Nawaz 'tax defaulter'

LONDON: The United Kingdom (UK) government's Revenue and Customs (HMRC) has declared Hasan Nawaz, son of PML-N President and former prime minister Nawaz Sharif, as a "deliberate tax defaulter". The UK government has updated the list of defaulters on its official website, which included Hasan's name, declaring him a deliberate tax defaulter.

The UK government declared Hasan Nawaz "tax defaulter" as he failed to pay £9.4 million in taxes between April 5, 2015 and April 6, 2016. The UK tax authority has imposed a £5.2 million penalty on the son of former prime minister, according to the same website. The period of default is from April 6, 2015 to April 5, 2016.

Nawaz was not available for comment but a legal source close to him said he had paid all the "due taxes" for the same period but the HMRC asked him for more taxes several years later — after the time bar period — and he disputed and refused to pay more taxes. "Nawaz's bankruptcy will be sending next month, in April 2025," said the source. It emerged late last year that Hasan has been declared bankrupt by the London High Court in a tax and liability case of the UK government's tax and revenue department.

The official UK Gazette, which keeps the public record, had published details of the bankruptcy. It said that Hasan, a resident of Flat 17 Avenfield House, 118 Park Lane, and the company director had been declared bankrupt in the High Court Of Justice in case No 694 of 2023; filed on 25 August 2023. The bankruptcy order was issued on April 29, 2024, on a case brought by the creditors over non-payment.

The civil case was initiated by Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC) department against Nawaz, who was represented by Kaur Maxwell. According to the UK laws, a bankruptcy order is part of the personal insolvency process. It is issued to an individual from the court, making them bankrupt. Bankruptcy orders are only published in the London Gazette when received from The Insolvency Service. — Agencies

No progress sees on ground regarding climate; PHC observed

Humayun Khan

PESHAWAR: Peshawar High Court (PHC) Justice Ijaz Anwar observed that no concrete actions has taken on the ground to address environmental issues, despite discussions on climate change on paper in Pakistan. He emphasized that the government needs to seriously consider environmental issues, on Wednesday.

Justice Ijaz Anwar made these remarks during the hearing of cases related to environmental pollution. PHC divisional bench, comprising Justice Ijaz Anwar and Justice Sabit Ullah was informed by Secretary Environment Shahid Zaman that the government has taken several steps to address climate change.

Secretary Environment Shahid Zaman stated that the government has formulated several rules and regulations, including the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Rules of Environmental Audit 2024, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Quality Standards Rules 2024, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Environmental Protection Agency Uniform Rules, and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Smog Prevention Rules 2024.

However, Justice Ijaz Anwar expressed concern that despite these efforts, no tangible progress has been made on the ground. He pointed out that the construction of a treatment plant and a separate drain for household wastewater in Peshawar has been stalled for three years. The judge also noted that the Peshawar Development Authority (PDA) and the Tehsil Municipal Administration

PHC grants bail to two PTI leaders including Minister

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: The Peshawar High Court (PHC) has approved the protective bail application of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf leader and MNA Mohammad Asif Khan and Provincial Minister Aaqibullah Khan, restraining the institutions from arresting them. The court also issued notices to the relevant institutions for the details of the cases.

The two-member bench, comprising Justice Sahibzada Asadullah and Justice Aurangzeb, heard the case. The counsel for Asif Khan informed the court that cases have been registered against his client, but the details have not been provided yet. Justice Sahibzada Asadullah inquired whether the parties have submitted their reports. Deputy Attorney General Ubaidullah Khan informed the court that the FIA has responded, stating that they do not have any case against Asif Khan. However, they are waiting for a response from the Islamabad police.

The special prosecutor for NAB, Arbab Kaleemullah, informed the court that NAB's report has not arrived yet. The counsel for Anti-Corruption stated that they also do not have any case or inquiry against Asif Khan. The court extended Asif Khan's protective bail until April 15 and issued notices to the relevant authorities, seeking their response. Similarly, the bench heard the case of Provincial Minister Aaqibullah Khan and extended his protective bail until April 15.

(TMA) are dumping waste into the canals, exacerbating environmental problems.

Justice Ijaz Anwar observed that the government had initiated a project to convert brick kilns to zigzag technology, but no progress has been made. He also noted that the issue of crushing plants is a major environmental concern, and the government needs to take concrete steps to address it.

The secretary environment informed the court that the government has formulated rules to control pollution and established a committee to oversee the implementation of these rules.

However, Justice Ijaz Anwar observed that the committee has not been effective in controlling pollution.

Regarding the issue of brick kilns, the secretary environment stated that converting them to zigzag technology is a challenging and expensive task. He added that the government has taken action against non-compliant brick kilns, imposing fines.

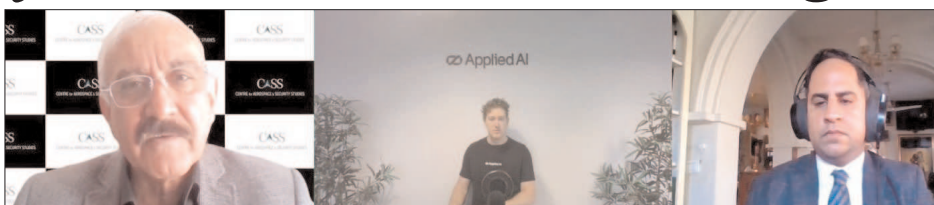
The judge inquired about the measures taken by the environment department to address the issue of crushing plants, which are also contributing to environmental problems.

Global policy consensus urged to tackle AI's regulatory and economic challenges

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: The Centre for Aerospace & Security Studies (CASS), Islamabad, organised a webinar on 'Applied AI for the Future Economy.' Dr Usman W. Chohan, Advisor on Economic Affairs and National Development at CASS, serving as moderator, set the context for the discussion on the transformative role of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in the economy. He highlighted that while it was widely acknowledged that AI plays a significant role across nearly all economic subsectors, the granular contributions and operational methodologies of strong AI companies, particularly startups, had remained less understood and appreciated. In his brief opening remarks, he pointed to both the conceptual and practical elements of AI applications, pointing to their impact and emerging nature of the field.

Guest Speaker Mr Phillip Kingston, CTO of AppliedAI, delivered a comprehensive presentation on the current state and future prospects of AI in the global market. Mr Kingston noted that while certain AI applications in consumer markets were demonstrating early promise and stability, their widespread institutional adoption was being hindered by the absence of a trusted AI delivery system. He reasoned that AI remained in its early stages, requiring human supervision to ensure accuracy and precision. This oversight, he explained, was critical to



facilitating rapid adoption within businesses and across the enterprise.

Addressing concerns over AI's influence on employment, Mr Kingston argued that current capabilities were often overestimated amid considerable hype. In the short to midterm, AI was unlikely to replace as many workers as speculated; instead, those who could work efficiently alongside AI were expected to outperform their less adaptable counterparts. However, he cautioned that the long-term impacts of AI might be largely underestimated.

The guest speaker also highlighted the potential threat posed by automation and AI to the South Asian region's thriving Business Process Outsourcing (BPO) sector. He warned that the erosion of cost advantages due to automation could significantly impact the export of knowledge work. He also outlined the diverse regulatory responses to AI around the world wherein some countries had imposed outright bans on certain AI systems, others had introduced licensing requirements, while some regulated AI as a potential risk to national security. Finally, Mr

Kingston observed that established AI players were lobbying for regulations that would favour incumbents and create barriers for new entrants and innovators, both foreign and domestic. Mr Kingston's expert presentation was followed by an interactive question-and-answer session.

The webinar concluded with remarks by President of CASS, Islamabad, Air Marshal Javid Ahmed (Retd.), who stressed that international consensus was essential for the development of AI. He noted that the disruption caused by DeepSeek had become a reality, and that the recent Paris Summit had failed to achieve consensus following the refusal of two major states to sign the proposed agreement. He also expressed concerns about emerging risks, particularly regarding Generation Beta's potential use of AI for research. The discussion provided valuable insights into the complex interplay of AI innovation, regulation, and market dynamics, while also underscoring the emerging labour and research challenges about which emerging economies like Pakistan must remain cognizant.



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