



## Beijing vows to uphold Pakistani sovereignty

- In meeting with PM, Xi acknowledges 'broad development prospects' for the two countries
- Both sides agree to upgrade CPEC; Li, Shehzad commit to protect corridor from 'detractors, adversaries'

By Syed Irfan Riaz

**ISLAMABAD:** Acknowledging the all-weather strategic partnership between Pakistan and China, President Xi Jinping on Friday assured his resolve to safeguard Pakistan's sovereignty and territorial integrity besides advancing financial support through investment in different sectors.

"China will, as always, firmly support Pakistan and safeguard its national sovereignty and territorial integrity," President Xi told Prime Minister Shehzad Sharif, adding that the two countries' "all-weather strategic partnership...had broad development prospects," according to a PM Office statement.

The brotherly country also vowed to revive the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), with the commencement of its second phase.

The commitments were made at a meeting held at the historic Great Hall of the People on day three of the premier and his delegation's five-day China visit.

Besides federal ministers and senior officials, Chief of Army Staff General Aslam Munir is also a part of the delegation. This was the first meeting of PM Shehzad with President Xi since assuming office. The meeting was marked by "traditional warmth reflective of the inviolable friendship and close strategic ties between the two countries," according to a PM Office statement.

At the meeting, President Xi told the premier that the two neighbours should focus on "promoting the joint construction of CPEC", and asked PM Shehzad to

step up efforts to ensure the security of Chinese projects in Pakistan.

Prime Minister Shehzad and President Xi reaffirmed their consensus on the CPEC high-quality development and timely completion of major ongoing projects. The two leaders also affirmed their consensus on CPEC's upgrading and advancing the mega project's development in its second phase.

The premier also briefed President Xi on Pakistan's policies for economic reforms, sustained growth, industrial development, agricultural modernisation, regional connectivity and the critical role played by CPEC in the country's development. He assured Pakistan's commitment to CPEC's high-quality development and to fostering synergy between the development strategies of the two countries through close coordination.

He thanked President Xi for the warm and gracious welcome accorded to him and his delegation in China. He recalled the historic visit of President Xi to Pakistan in 2015 when CPEC was formally operationalised, marking a new chapter in their bilateral relationship.

### Regional, global issues

The two sides also exchanged views on regional and global developments, including Afghanistan, Palestine and South Asia, as well as the human rights situation in India-held Kashmir.

Commemorating President Xi's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) and Global Development Initiative, the prime minister

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BEIJING: Prime Minister Shehzad Sharif shakes hands with President Xi Jinping and his Chinese counterpart, Premier Li Qiang, (right) upon his arrival at Great Hall of the People on Friday. —Reuters/PPA

## Imran admits to approving '1971 tweet', not video

- Says he will negotiate with 'real power holders' instead of 'proxies'
- FIA questions ex-PM in Adiala Jail over controversial tweet
- Omar Ayub demands FIA DG be summoned to parliament

By Malik Aasif

**ISLAMABAD:** Former prime minister Imran Khan on Friday owned up to a controversial tweet that compared the current political situation to the fall of Dhaka but distanced himself from an accompanying video posted on his X account, insisting that he couldn't comment on the video as he didn't know about its contents.

The post in question, shared on Mr Khan's X account on May 26, included a mention with a quote attributed to Mr Khan urging the nation to "study the Hammoudar Rahman Commission report" and underlined "who was the traitor". Gen Yahya Khan or Sheikh Mujibur Rahman?

Speaking to journalists on Friday after attending a session at the accountability court at Adiala jail, where the former premier faces a £190 million corruption

charge, Mr Khan expressed regret over his past references to Mr Mujib, admitting he hadn't read the Hammoudar Rahman Commission Report at that time.

Mr Khan said the report had highlighted their objectives, suggesting measures that such mistakes could not be repeated and fixing responsibility for the fall of Dhaka, adding that the controversial Gen Yahya response is for doing all that he regulates.

He said the same thing was being repeated in the country and was a result the economy was at the verge of collapse. He claimed that amendments to the accountability law introduced by the PDM government caused Rs100 billion loss to the national exchequer and such a loss couldn't be afforded by a country already "on its knees".

Citing his acquittal in the other case, Mr Khan said the FIA should apologise for implicating him in a false case.

Asked whether he would hold talks with political parties since the Supreme Court had suggested he does, Mr Khan replied in the negative and said that he would prefer to negotiate with the real power holders instead of "proxies".

A journalist questioned Mr Khan about his previous criticism of PML-N President Nawaz Sharif's references to Sheikh Mujib and Hammoudar Rahman Commission report, to which Mr Khan responded that "on that time I had not read Hammoudar Rahman Commission report. Now I have read this report".

In response to a question about the controversial video on his X account, Mr Khan wondered how he could post a video while being in jail. He said that since he did not record this video, he could post it.

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## Two chief justices elevated to apex court

JCP members split over LHC CJ's nomination; minority favours keeping him in Punjab, majority hopes to benefit from his expertise in criminal cases

By Nasir Iqbal

**ISLAMABAD:** Lahore High Court Chief Justice Malik Shahid Ahmed Khan will be elevated to the Supreme Court after the Judicial Commission of Pakistan (JCP) on Friday approved three nominees to fill vacant positions in the apex court's strength.

JCP Vice Ishaq has forwarded the names of six senior LHC judges for two available Supreme Court seats and names of three senior SHC judges against one vacancy.

The sanctioned strength of the Supreme Court is 17 judges including the

JCP bar at present 14 judges are functioning as judges of the top court.

The LHC chief justice, who was appointed to the LHC as an additional judge in May 12, 2011, and later confirmed as a judge of the high court on May 11, 2013, has also served as the secretary general of the Lahore High Court Bar Association, Rawalpindi, in 2004, and then as its president in 2009.

Had the nomination of Justice Khan to become the judge of the Supreme Court been endorsed, he would have retired on March 14, 2025. Now he will get three more years, since the age of superannuation in the Supreme Court is 65 years.

Headed by Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) Qazi Faez Isa, the JCP also unanimously approved the elevation of Chief Justice of Sindh High Court (SHC) Asghar Ali Shah to the Supreme Court.

Earlier, the chief justice of SHC was taken ignored by the JCP and Justice Muhammad Ali Masih and Justice Syed Hassan Aslam Rizvi, who were

then junior to SHC chief justice.

Now, the SHC chief justice, after his elevation to the Supreme Court, will become junior to the two judges who were elevated before him.

Justice Abbasi was appointed as an additional judge of the SHC on Sept. 25, 2009, and subsequently took the oath as the chief justice on Dec. 19, 2023.

The SHC chief justice has also served as the managing judge of different district and sessions courts of Sindh, Customs Appellate Tribunal, Industrial Revenue Tribunal and Special Court (Customs, Taxation and Anti-Smuggling).

There was also a consensus in the JCP over the elevation of Justice Shahid Bilal Hassan of the Lahore High Court.

### Split decision

The elevation of the chief justice of LHC was finalised in a split decision since Justice Syed Mansoor Ali Shah, Justice

Mohammad Ali Masih and Justice Syed Hassan Aslam Rizvi, who were

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## ANALYSIS

One proposal being floated to increase FBR revenue is to raise GST from 18pc to 19pc

By Fatima S. Attarwala

**PAKISTAN** continues to rely heavily on indirect taxes, with about 55 per cent of its tax revenue coming from such sources. Inherently regressive in nature, indirect taxes are the low-hanging fruit that policy makers turn to time and time again to increase federal revenue because it is easy.

Regressive taxes take a bigger percentage of income from those who earn less. For instance, a person earning Rs25,000 a month pays the same amount of tax when buying credit on their mobile as someone earning Rs2.5 million, highlighting the disproportionate burden on lower-income individuals.

One of the proposals being floated to in-

crease the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR)'s collection, in line with the International Monetary Fund's conditions, is to raise the General Sales Tax (GST) from the current 18pc to 19pc.

Research by the Pakistan Institute of Development Economics (PIDE) indicated that about half of the household income for roughly 30pc of the poorest households is spent on food. This was based on the Household Integrated Economic Survey of FY22, when the GST was at 17pc.

While it is true that when a housewife shops for vegetables, the vendor passing the handcart doesn't charge GST while selling eggplants. However, from the field to the table, the process adds GST all along the way at various stages of inputs and processing.

Besides GST, customs duties and the federal excise duty are the other major indirect taxes imposed on the economy. In the run-up to the budget, economists abroad of

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## 20 more injured, 45 held as Chaman remains restive

- Train service to Quetta suspended
- PTI demands parliamentary committee
- FO says border movement must be regulated by visas

By Saleem Shahid

**QUETTA:** The situation in border town of Chaman remained volatile as violent protests and clashes between protesters and law enforcement agencies continued for a third consecutive day on Friday, resulting in injuries to 20 people, including eight security personnel.

Security forces arrested 45 individuals for allegedly damaging public and private properties and attacking security officials during protest rallies and demonstrations.

The passenger train service between Quetta and Chaman has been suspended due to violence and attacks on government buildings. "No train left for the border town of Chaman on Friday from Quetta due to security reasons," a senior official of Pakistan Railways confirmed.

Officials said that contrary to the assurance by tribal elders that the protesters would confine their dem-



PEOPLE pass through the Pak-Afghan border area during protests in different parts of Chaman, on Friday. —Dawn

onstrations to a designated area, where they had been staging a sit-in for months to press for their demands, the protesters unexpectedly marched onto various roads, armed with sticks and stones, and began hurling stones at shops that had been opened by shopkeepers.

The anti-government protesters have been protesting against the government's decision to only allow those with valid passports and visas to go beyond the Chaman border crossing. Before, Pakistani and Afghanis would cross the border upon showing their respective identity cards.

Business centres and numerous government offices remained closed on Friday due to the violent protests, with banks also being closed for several days. "National Bank has even evacuated staff to Qila Abdullah to ensure continued operation of its Chaman branch," a bank official told Dawn. Some of the shops opened in the morning were forcibly shut down by the angry protesters. The mob

Chaman stalemate: Editorial on Page 6

also staged demonstrations in front of the FC headquarters in Chaman, pelted the building with stones.

Security forces, including Levies, police, and Frontier Corps, resorted to tear gas shelling to disperse the protesters who were attacking security personnel with sticks. At least 20 people, including eight security personnel, were injured in the clashes, bringing the total number of

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the injured to 60 over the past two to three days, a senior police officer deployed in Chaman told Dawn over phone.

"Security forces have arrested 45 people responsible for attacking police and Levies during demonstrations," a law department official confirmed to Dawn.

However, the Quetta-Chaman highway remains open to traffic, as the local administration has issued a stern warning that no one will be allowed to block the critical highway that connects Pakistan with Afghanistan via Chaman.

"We are eager to resolve the issue through constructive negotiations with stakeholders to find a solution that restores employment for those who lost their jobs due to the prolonged closure of the Pak-Afghan border," a senior official in Chaman told Dawn. "We held talks with tribal elders and other concerned

ICC MEN'S T20 WORLD CUP RESULTS & FIXTURES	
ICC Men's T20 World Cup	20 matches
Qualifier 1: Wednesday 6-20 June	10 matches
Qualifier 2: Wednesday 20-24 June	10 matches
Qualifier 3: Wednesday 24-28 June	10 matches
Qualifier 4: Wednesday 28-July 1	10 matches
Qualifier 5: Wednesday 1-5 July	10 matches
Qualifier 6: Wednesday 5-9 July	10 matches
Qualifier 7: Wednesday 9-13 July	10 matches
Qualifier 8: Wednesday 13-17 July	10 matches
Qualifier 9: Wednesday 17-21 July	10 matches
Qualifier 10: Wednesday 21-25 July	10 matches
Qualifier 11: Wednesday 25-29 July	10 matches
Qualifier 12: Wednesday 29-July 2	10 matches
Qualifier 13: Wednesday 2-6 August	10 matches
Qualifier 14: Wednesday 6-10 August	10 matches
Qualifier 15: Wednesday 10-14 August	10 matches
Qualifier 16: Wednesday 14-18 August	10 matches
Qualifier 17: Wednesday 18-22 August	10 matches
Qualifier 18: Wednesday 22-26 August	10 matches
Qualifier 19: Wednesday 26-30 August	10 matches
Qualifier 20: Wednesday 30-August 3	10 matches
Qualifier 21: Wednesday 3-7 September	10 matches
Qualifier 22: Wednesday 7-11 September	10 matches
Qualifier 23: Wednesday 11-15 September	10 matches
Qualifier 24: Wednesday 15-19 September	10 matches
Qualifier 25: Wednesday 19-23 September	10 matches
Qualifier 26: Wednesday 23-27 September	10 matches
Qualifier 27: Wednesday 27-31 September	10 matches
Qualifier 28: Wednesday 31-October 5	10 matches
Qualifier 29: Wednesday 5-9 October	10 matches
Qualifier 30: Wednesday 9-13 October	10 matches
Qualifier 31: Wednesday 13-17 October	10 matches
Qualifier 32: Wednesday 17-21 October	10 matches
Qualifier 33: Wednesday 21-25 October	10 matches
Qualifier 34: Wednesday 25-29 October	10 matches
Qualifier 35: Wednesday 29-31 October	10 matches
Qualifier 36: Wednesday 31-October 5	10 matches
Qualifier 37: Wednesday 5-9 November	10 matches
Qualifier 38: Wednesday 9-13 November	10 matches
Qualifier 39: Wednesday 13-17 November	10 matches
Qualifier 40: Wednesday 17-21 November	10 matches
Qualifier 41: Wednesday 21-25 November	10 matches
Qualifier 42: Wednesday 25-29 November	10 matches
Qualifier 43: Wednesday 29-November 3	10 matches
Qualifier 44: Wednesday 3-7 December	10 matches
Qualifier 45: Wednesday 7-11 December	10 matches
Qualifier 46: Wednesday 11-15 December	10 matches
Qualifier 47: Wednesday 15-19 December	10 matches
Qualifier 48: Wednesday 19-23 December	10 matches
Qualifier 49: Wednesday 23-27 December	10 matches

## DC told to decide PTI request for Mochi Gate convention

**LAHORE:** The Lahore High Court on Friday directed the deputy commissioner to decide an application of the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) seeking permission to hold a workers' convention at Mochi Gate.

Justice Abdur Hussain Chatha passed the order on a petition filed by Chaudhry Asghar Qasim, a local leader of PTI.

The petitioner's counsel argued that a request was submitted to the DC on June 1 for permission to hold workers' convention at Mochi Gate scheduled on June 9.

He said despite several days passing, the DC had not made a decision on the request of the petitioner.

The counsel argued that the constitution guaranteed every political and religious party a complete freedom to hold meetings, processions, and rallies within the bounds of the law.

He alleged that the PTI's political activities were being hindered while other political and religious parties were given full freedom to hold meetings, processions, and rallies.

He said the DC had been delaying the decision on the request on the pretext of security reasons.—Staff Reporter

## Two cops martyred in dacoits' firing

**RAHIM YAR KHAN:** Two police officials were martyred, while another critically injured allegedly when dacoits opened fire on a police vehicle in Khanbaba town area in Sargodha Sharif police limits, Laiqpur tehsil, some hours from here on Friday night.

According to police, they were informed that dacoits were looting shops in Khanbaba area.

Acting on the information, a police team reached the spot.

On seeing the police, the dacoits opened fire on their vehicle that was retaliated by policemen.

In exchange of heavy firing, driver of police vehicle, Constable Shafiq Ahmed, was hit by a bullet and died on the spot.

Another Constable Zeshan Khurram Bohar, who was injured in the dacoits' firing, was shifted to the Sheikh Zayed Medical College Hospital, where he succumbed to his injuries. Constable Ishaq, who was also among the injured, is said to be in a critical condition at the hospital.—Correspondent



SHOPPING bags are being sold at Lahore's Circular Road wholesale market.—White Star

## Environment dept to map plastic manufacturing, recycling

### Punjab biggest consumer of plastic

By Mansoor Malik

**LAHORE:** The Environment Protection and Climate Change Department (EPOCCD) is preparing a digital registry to map and gauge plastic bag production and registration of all producers, distributors, collectors, and recycling units to gather data to take informed decisions to implement the Punjab government's "No to Plastic" initiative.

Punjab, being the most populous province, is currently responsible for more than half of the total plastic consumption in the country, but there had been no data on the scale of plastic bag production, a source in the department told Dawn on Friday.

The WEF-Pakistan says the country consumes 25 billion plastic bags annually, with an expected annual increase of

15 percent. It says Pakistan's per capita plastic consumption is 6.5 kilograms, which is approximately equal to the average weight of all vital organs combined in human body. As a result, an average Pakistani consumes as much plastic over 50 years that its total weight would be equal to that of at least five adults.

This suggests that, in addition to over eight billion humans on the planet, these humans are contributing to a growing "plastic population" that is outnumbering the human population, which may eventually also outnumber fish in the oceans," asserts the WEF.

An environmental protection department official said that Pakistan, in 2022, imported virgin resin (raw material to make plastic products) worth US\$6 billion compared to the import of 10 tonnes of the key imports in the country's worth US\$767 million – not even a quarter of the total plastic imports.

Recognising the growing need to control the production and use of plastic products, Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz has taken personal ownership and decided to take the challenge head-on by

imposing a ban on plastic bags production and use from June 5.

The chief minister has instructed the environment department to monitor all registered premises to ensure no production unit violates the rules by producing single-use low-density plastic bags. Additionally, the department will be required to conduct vigilante operations to ensure no plastic bag production unit is left unregulated.

Recognising the risks beyond clogging of drains, Senior Minister for Environment Protection Marriyum Aurangzeb says the past failures to tackle the plastic problem have shown that elimination will not be possible with isolated interventions.

"Multi-sectoral interventions have been identified and the entire plastic elimination regime has been institutionalised within the Punjab Planning & Development Department. This time, it's not just about banning the production of plastic bags less than 75 microns thick, but also facilitating businesses towards sustainable production. The focus is on responsible consumption and produc-

tion," adds Ms Aurangzeb.

Responding to a query, she says the Punjab government is not closing any industry, and instead acting as a catalyst to facilitate their transition to production of environment-friendly shopping bags.

EPOCCD Secretary Rajiv Jahangir Awan says the entire initiative has been supported by legislative measures and stakeholders have been taken on board to eliminate any gaps or discrepancies in implementing the plastic-free Punjab programme.

Furthermore, he says, the government has banned the entry of single-use plastic bags in its departments, schools and other public spaces. These "Safe Zones" will facilitate the transition to safer non-plastic bags use in daily life".

Mr Awan says the department has also engaged national and international corporations and Fast Moving Consumer Goods (FMCG) companies and encouraged them to carry out plastic audits.

"These companies have assured the government of compliance in all their productions," Mr Awan adds.

## Alarm over surveillance of girls in private spaces

By Kalta Ali

**ISLAMABAD:** The Digital Rights Foundation (DRF) has expressed concern over the ongoing surveillance of women and girls in private spaces through unregulated CCTV cameras in women's shelters, hostels, universities, and salons, invading their right to privacy and dignity in private spaces.

According to the 2023 Gender Gap report, Pakistan ranks 142 out of 146 countries in terms of gender parity, including economic participation and opportunity, educational attainment, health and survival, and political empowerment.

The DRF statement said that women are already exceedingly subjected to gender-based violence, harassment, and social surveillance by society, which in turn pushes them to seek refuge in gender-segregated private spaces such as homes.

With women's participation being severely limited and restricted in the country, they are significantly more financially dependent, prompting them to look towards spaces like Dera Ursars.

Women residing in Dera Ursars were largely vulnerable, particularly when they face little to no familial support and are seeking refuge.

The DRF has said that women living in these shelters have also complained of gross mistreatment and abuse at the hands of those in charge at these centers.

The DRF has referred to the Rawalpindi Dera Ursar incident and

the Lahore women's hotel where hidden cameras were found on the premises of the building.

These repeated instances of CCTV cameras being installed in private spaces under the guise of safety, and the footage being misused, serve as a direct invasion of privacy and threat to women's physical safety, creating a hostile environment of mistrust and uncertainty among women at large.

The DRF report also referred to CCTV cameras installed in women's salons, where the footage and data have later been employed as blackmail material.

In 2019, students from the University of Lahore had protested in the wake of CCTV cameras footage being used by security personnel to harass and blackmail students and women at campus.

The DRF's Cyber Harassment Helpline has till now received 56,349 complaints from across Pakistan, with 50.5 percent of them from women. The DRF added that there was a rising trend where women were captured on camera without their consent, in addition to the misuse of their intimate images through blackmail and intimidation.

The DRF has demanded transparent investigations into these violative incidents related to employing unregulated CCTV cameras that violate women's privacy by the Ministry of Human Rights and IT Ministry. They also demanded enforcement of women's rights and digital rights groups in consultation around the proposed data protection bill to address the existing gaps.

## LHC extends market hours

By Our Staff Reporter

**LAHORE:** The Lahore High Court on Friday extended market hours till the upcoming Eid ul Adha set to be celebrated on June 27.

Judge Shahid Karim said the markets would remain open till 1 am on Friday, Saturdays and Sundays, and till 12 midnight on other days of the week. The judge was hearing multiple petitions relating to setting and other environmental issues.

Earlier, the Punjab Food Authority (PFA) presented a report regarding action taken to curb sale of dead chicken, stating that 46,670 kilos dead chicken was disposed of in Toliaton Market.

It said 98 cases were registered against those selling dead chicken and misbehave meat besides a total fine of Rs22.5 million was imposed on those selling dead chicken meat. It said daily raids were conducted for meat inspection.

Additionally, the judge ordered the Irrigation Department to open the irrigation channel of Bagh-i-Jinnah.

## Punjab PA session turns chaotic

By Our Staff Reporter

**LAHORE:** The Punjab Assembly session on Friday turned chaotic as the treasury and opposition benches engaged in a heated debate over the removal of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) workers.

Opposition Leader Ahmed Khan Bilhar criticised the government for violating the sanctity of charter and chari durbar and detained political activists despite their release on bail.

Speaking on a point of order, Mr Bilhar said the government had painted a rosy picture of law and order in the province in the previous session, which ended only two days ago. However, the situation was quite different, as political activists including bards from courts of law were being detained soon after they came out of prison.

He said the police were detaining them from even meeting office former opposition leader Mahmood Rashed. He demanded that the government explain who was behind these arrests, if not the

government itself.

He said Imran Khan was the leader of the single largest party in the country and could not be broken politically through such tactics. He added that Nasir Shahid had forced Gen Zia bin spiritual father, while the PML-N had taken oath, despite wearing black arm bands, administered by Gen Musharraf in 2008.

At this, Parliamentary Affairs Minister Muzaffar Shahzad got infuriated and said that Gen Zia was the father of the PTI, as he had secured the success of the PTI in the 2018 general election. He also blamed the opposition party for its role in the May 9, 2023, attacks on military installations and that remains of former chief justice Syed Nisar were still supporting the party.

This led to a war of slangs between the two sides, turning the house into a fish market.

In the meantime, opposition MP Nasir Shahid pointed out a lack of quorum in the house.

The chair directed the ringing of bells for five minutes to invite the

MPAs sitting in the lobbies into the house. However, the chair had to put off the proceedings till Monday afternoon as the required minimum strength of 94 members in the house could not be ensured.

Earlier, both sides started the traditional debate in starting the session, which finally began two hours and 45 minutes late. Naqsh-e-Sabz Council's Rana Afzal charged the chair and members to take the session seriously, as prolonged delays in starting the proceedings invited ridicule from the galleries. Parliamentary Affairs Minister Muzaffar Shahzad also regretted the situation and suggested cutting down the delay gradually.

Deputy Speaker Zahid Iqbal Chaudhary sought assurances from both sides that they would come on time for the session on Monday, and promised to start the proceedings punctually regardless of attendance. On assurance from both sides of the aisle that they would come in time for the session on Monday, the chair said that whether members were present or not, he would begin the proceedings in time.

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# Minister promises flights to Europe 'soon' amid continuing restrictions

• European Commission says PIA's authorisation remains suspended due to compliance shortcomings • Flight resumption linked to PCAA performance

By Mohammad Asghar

ISLAMABAD: A member of the federal cabinet told the National Assembly on Friday that the European Union (EU) had removed Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) from its "concern list", even though the European Commission still maintains that "no flights can be operated from Pakistan into the EU".

Responding to a calling-attention motion during Friday's proceedings of the lower house of parliament, Minister of State for Finance, Revenue and Power Ali Pervez Matic said that Pakistan was removed from the EU's concern list on May 14.

Mr Matic said Pakistan has already submitted correction plans with the European Union Aviation Safety Agency (EASA), which have been verified by the agency, adding that PIA would soon resume its flight operation to Europe.

On this, MNA Atiya Kaftan, who had moved the calling-attention motion, asked what appropriate steps were taken during the last three years to restore flights to Europe and, citing a recent EU report issued on May 11, questioned the minister's claim.

"Pakistan has [been] excluded from the Air Safety Committee's concern list," Mr Matic responded, expressing confidence that PIA flights would start flying to different destinations in Europe soon.

PIA compliance failure?

However, the minister's confidence seems misplaced, especially after a European Commission spokesperson confirmed that PIA's Third Country Operator (TCO) authorisation — managed by EASA — continued to remain suspended.

## RSF warns of press freedom decline in Pakistan

KARACHI: Global press freedom watchdog Reporters Without Borders (RSF) on Friday called on Pakistan's new federal and provincial authorities to address "an alarming deterioration in press freedom" over recent months.

"With with members of journalists, an enforced disappearance, arbitrary detention, censorship and social media blocking, mounting publics in a year of declining decline in press freedom in the first three months since the new federal and provincial governments took over at the start of March following elections in February," the RSF statement said.

"The many press freedom violations reveal a climate of violence and deterrence in Pakistan that has little in common with the understandings given by the political parties in their election campaign manifestos, and the message of support for journalists by Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif," the statement quoted Celia Merriam, head of RSF's South Asia desk, as saying.

The statement recalled examples of impunity, such as the murders of journalists Nasirullah Gadihi in Sindh and Younus Khanum Darar in North Waziristan, the alleged abduction of Kashmir poet and freelance journalist Ahamed Farhad Shah, as well as the arbitrary detention of journalists and closure of the Quetta Press Club.

It also noted how "communication measures" such as the creation of a National Cyber Crime Investigation Agency (NCICIA) to monitor online content, the promulgation of the controversial Punjab Defamation Act, a Permanent ban on court reporting and the continued blocking of social media platform X (formerly Twitter).

The strategy of suppressing critical voices is becoming ever more visible, Ms Merriam said, noting that Pakistan remained one of the world's most dangerous countries for media, and that level of impunity for murder of journalists was appalling.—Dawn Report

## Punjab-dominated NEC notified

By Khaleeq Kiani

ISLAMABAD: Just a few days before the federal budget, President Asif Ali Zardari has constituted a Punjab-heavy National Economic Council (NEC) to finalise the country's overall development plan and macroeconomic targets for the next year under inflation woes of the IMF.

According to a notification issued by the cabinet division on Friday, the 13-member NEC is led by Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and comprising four provincial chief ministers as required under clause 15 of Article 156 of the Constitution.

NEC is the highest constitutional body responsible for reviewing the country's overall economic condition and formulating plans while ensuring balanced development and regional equity.

The four other federal members in the council include: deputy prime minister and foreign minister Shahid Baloch, defense minister Aslam Dar, defense

minister Khawaja Asif, finance minister Mohammad Aslam Raheemi and planning minister Ahsan Iqbal. Under clause 1(c) of Article 156, the four federal members are nominated by the PM.

This is for the first time that all the four federal members of the NEC belong to Punjab and provide a clear majority of seven seats to the Punjab province and the federal government, compared to six members of all the three other provinces.

The four other members nominated for the council by the respective chief ministers as required under clause 10(b) of Article 156 include provincial ministers Marriyum Aurangzeb, Jam Khan Shroff, Zahoor Ahmed Baloch and adviser to KP chief minister on finance Mumtaz Adam.

Besides, these constitutional slots, five federal representatives would be occupied on special invitation. These include minister for economic affairs division, Ahmad Khan Cheema, deputy chair-

## Islamabad police told to record poet's statement

By Malik Asad

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad High Court (IHC) on Friday directed an investigating officer of the capital police to record the statement of Kashmiri poet Ahmed Farhad, who is currently in the custody of Anti-Jamiat and Kashmir police, after Justice Mohsin Akhtar Kayani was informed that his post-mortem ball pincers had been rejected.

The poet had been missing since mid-May until the IHC was told at a hearing that the AJK police had arrested him on a charge under the anti-terrorism act.

During the course of hearing, Justice Kayani remarked that he would write to the chief justice to form a larger bench on missing persons case.

However, Justice Kayani disposed of the petition seeking Mr Farhad's release, with the remarks that apparently it was causing hardship to the incarcerated poet.

The judge then ordered the investigating officer of Lohari police station to record his statement under Section 154 of the Code of Criminal Procedure (CrPC).

Imran Manzoor, the poet's counsel, earlier told the judge that an anti-terrorism court of Islamabad rejected Mr Farhad's post-mortem bail.

The additional attorney general Barrister Munawar Iqbal Duggal, on the other hand, requested the court to dispose of the matter as the habeas corpus petition cannot be heard once a defense is recovered.



ISLAMABAD: President Asif Ali Zardari awards Nishan-e-Pakistan upon Prince Rahim Aga Khan in recognition of his services for the country, during a special investiture ceremony held here at Aman-i-Saheb on Friday. The award was conferred upon the prince in recognition of his leadership role in advancing path-breaking initiatives in Pakistan in commercial banking, microfinance, insurance, sustainable tourism, and the renewable energy sector through the Aga Khan Development Network.—APP

## PM forms committee to oversee PWD's closure

Panel headed by housing minister will present its findings after End

By Kalbe Ali

ISLAMABAD: The Prime Minister's Office has announced the formation of a high-level committee tasked with drafting a transition plan for the dissolution of the Pakistan Public Works Department (PPWD).

The committee is headed by the Minister for Housing and Works and also includes Planning Commission's deputy chairman and the secretary for establishment and power divisions.

The committee is scheduled to present its findings and recommendations shortly after the Eid ul-Azha holidays.

This decision comes in the wake of directives from Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, who on June 3 called for the abolition of the PPWD, citing its long-standing poor performance and corruption issues.

The committee's terms of reference (ToRs) include creating a strategy to dismantle the PPWD and develop alternative models for managing public sector development projects to ensure more efficient resource utilisation.

The committee will also recommend strategies for maintaining assets currently managed by the PPWD and overseeing ongoing projects during and

after the transition period. Additionally, it will outline prospects for the department's employees.

The formation of this committee is based on the government's broader plan to reduce expenditures and the size of the government's workforce.

However, the decision has sparked significant unrest among PPWD employees, who have started protest demonstrations at the department's headquarters in Islamabad and its regional offices nationwide.

The employees have formed a joint action committee to organise protests across the country and engage with influential authorities, including politicians, to pursue their cause.

Meanwhile, the Ministry of Housing and Works has written a letter to the PPWD's director general, seeking detailed performance and workforce as well as financial position of the department.

The PPWD has 16 circles in four zones across the country, and the details sought by the housing ministry include a brief history and introduction of the PPWD, the legal framework applicable, grade-wise sanctioned and working strength of employees, and budgetary details of employee-related and non-employee-related expenditures in the last five years.

The PPWD, established in July 1854 with Lord Robert Napier as its first chief engineer, has been responsible for all civil, military, and public engineering works in the country.

## Poliovirus found in Lasbela, too

By Nauman Javed

ISLAMABAD: Poliovirus has been found in another environmental sample taken from Lasbela district of Balochistan, taking the positive environmental samples tally for the current year to 77.

An official of Pakistan Polio Eradication Programme told Dawn on condition of anonymity that the National Institute of Health Islamabad has confirmed the detection of Type-1 Wild Poliovirus (WPV1) from Lasbela district.

"The sample was collected from Jauzia Mohallah environmental site. It is third positive sample from Lasbela district this year. The previous two posi-

tive samples were collected on Jan 23 and April 22. The isolated virus is classified as VR1A cluster and 99.44% genetically linked to the virus detected in an environmental sample in Karachi East on Jan 11 this year," he said.

He said 172 positive environmental samples have been reported from 44 districts in the current year so far.

"In 2023-24 as many as 125 positive environmental samples were reported from 29 districts. It shows the virus has continuously spreading in districts which were earlier virus free," he said.

"A sample is considered positive if poliovirus is detected in sewage water. A sewage water sample from an area is the basic parameter to determine if polio vaccination campaigns are being carried out successfully," he said.

## Tourism boom worsens Gilgit-Baltistan's power crisis

Skardu residents suffer up to 22 hours of loadshedding, energy dept says

SKARDU: In the mountainous valleys of Pakistan, 18-hour daily power cuts have meant local resident Anjua Basro uses her fridge as a cupboard for storing books and kitchen utensils.

Loadshedding is typical across much of rural Pakistan, but for areas constantly suffer the same prolonged outage as Skardu city.

A surge in mountain tourism, driven by Chinese tourists, is rapidly depleting the limited energy supply at the gateway to second K2, the world's second highest peak.

While high-end hotels can supplement their supply with solar panels or fuel generators, many locals cannot afford such luxuries.

"We have to restart everything, that once used electricity," said Basro. "We no longer have an oven, we use a coal-heated iron for



clothes," the 41-year-old teacher added. "When we come home tired from work, we cannot rest a bit."

**Tourism boom**

Skardu is the largest city in the region of Gilgit-Baltistan, where almost impossibly high peaks tower over the Old Silk Road, still visible

from a highway transporting tourists between cherry orchards, glaciators and ice-blue lakes.

Normally home to around 200,000 people, Skardu becomes heavily flooded in summer when people from across the country visit the region's 100,000 tourists each year. The total of its winter estimate at 2,228 metres (7,300 feet) above sea

level, the region hosted 850,000 domestic visitors in 2023, up from 550,000 in 2022.

could prepare 10 to 12 units every three days. Now, to prepare a single unit, it can take 10 to 15 days.

The tourism flow does not appear to be letting up any time soon. There are up to 15 domestic flights a week to the region and, since March, international flights began landing from Dubai.

In Skardu alone, the number of tourists has increased more than four-fold since 2014, according to the tourism department.

### Hydropower projects

Owing to its remoteness, Gilgit-Baltistan is not connected to the national grid, so it relies on its own power generation from dams of hydroelectric plants.

But Pakistan's 7,000 glaciers — more than anywhere outside the poles — are rapidly melting.

This-cut temporarily increase the availability of water for energy production, but the glaciators' long-term ability to store and release water gradually decreases, affecting energy production.

"The availability of water for hydroelectric plants is becoming unpredictable," said Salman Ali, head of the Department of

Environmental Science, the University of Baltistan.

**Damage to energy infrastructure**

in also a regular setback.

Record heatwaves in 2022 caused dozens of glacial lakes to burst their banks, washing away more than 20 power plants, 50 bridges and countless homes.

Insufficient planning and mismanagement of the power sector can also play a role, engineers say.

The Satpara dam on the edge of Skardu city, completed in 2008 for \$2.6 million of add-financing, was supposed to supply 400,000 homes with power, but it generates just a fraction of its potential after plans to divert a river were halted, government engineers admit.

"It has been full only once since its formation," said Yousaf, the engineer in Skardu.

Without a reliable energy supply, Wajahat Hussain, a 38-year-old carpenter, uses a fuel generator to keep his business in operation — putting off emissions that contribute to global warming.

"We run the generator to fulfil the demands," he said. "There is no work without the generator." —AP

## Teenaged Margalla hiker died over 24 hours before postmortem: report

By Murtaza Azam

ISLAMABAD: The autopsy on the body of Mohammad Taha, who disappeared on Margalla Hills on May 25 and was found dead two days later, has revealed that the teenager had died more than 24 hours before the postmortem.

According to the autopsy report, the body of the teenage boy was brought to PIMS at 6.30pm on May 27 and the autopsy was conducted at around 10.15pm.

The report said final opinion will be given after observations from a radiologist and experts from Punjab Forensic Science Agency were received.

"All internal organs are healthy; however, X-rays, trauma series done and radiology expert opinion is awaited," said the report.

The deceased's scalp, skull, vertebrae, membranes-brain and spinal cord were healthy and intact.

His ribs, cartilages, pleurae, larynx and trachea, right and left lungs, pericardium, blood vessels, walls, parietal bones, heart, pharynx and oesophagus, diaphragm, stomach and its contents, pancreas, small and large intestines and their contents, liver, spleen, kidneys and bladder were also found healthy and intact," the report said.

The samples of the deceased's brain

and lungs were sent for histopathology tests while samples of liver, stomach and contents were sent for toxicology tests. Similarly, samples of mucus scraping also were sent for detection of DNA as well as anal swabs for detection of semen and DNA analysis to ascertain sexual assault. The body was in advanced decomposition and in a putrefied phase.

According to the FIR, Taha along with his classmate friends left for Trail-5 on Margalla Hills from his house for hiking on May 25. At about 8pm, one of his friends called his mother and asked if he had returned home or not, saying all others had reached their homes.

Later, his mother reached Trail-5 to search for him and also reported the matter to Hassan-e-S

In response, police reached there and conducted a search till late night but failed to find him.

She told the police that her son was abducted by someone and asked for action, the FIR added.

The police registered a case on May 26 under section 365 of IPC.

The wildlife staff spotted the body in a ravine on May 27 and later informed the police, who along with rescue workers reached the spot and retrieved the body.

Later, the police also added a murder charge to the case in response to the complaint of the deceased's mother.



WORKERS build a structure to install a screen at the Rawalpindi Cricket Stadium on Friday while Pakistan-India match of the T20 World Cup will be telecast on Sunday June 9.—Photo by Mohammad Asim

## Commotion compels chair to adjourn Senate proceedings till Monday

**Senators reject proposal to include former husband's name in women's passports**

By Murtaza A. Khan

ISLAMABAD: Ringers ruled the Senate on Friday, with the opposition protesting against a presiding officer chairing the session in the presence of Deputy Chairman Syed Naseer ul Haq.

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# III children's mortality rate in Sindh very low: study

Quality of paediatric care in resource-constrained settings investigated

By Nauman Javed

**ISLAMABAD:** Mortality rates associated with critical illness in children at Sindh government hospitals stand at 1.2pc, compared to the average of 6.3pc across 46 sites in 17 low-income countries, the latest research conducted by a US-based global health network regarding quality of paediatric emergency rooms (ERs) reveals.

The one-year point prevalence study by PALESI Global Health, which was founded in 2002 with an aim to foster research to optimise the care of critically ill infants and children, measured the burden of paediatric acute critical illness in resource-constrained settings.

Conducted from 2023 to 2022, the researchers specifically evaluated paediatric emergency rooms at Sindh government's Civil Hospital Karachi and Shaukat Khanum Children Hospital, Lahore. The study revealed the importance of increasing access to high-quality, basic critical care services to improve outcomes for children worldwide. It emphasised the importance of a comprehensive, multi-sectoral approach to tackle acute critical illness in children within resource-constrained settings.

Key components identified for success include well-trained and dedicated healthcare professionals, adequate medical supplies and equipment, properly designed and equipped medical facilities, efficient healthcare systems and protocols, continuous support and collaboration from various sectors.

The report showed that by strengthening health-care infrastructure, providing extensive staff training, and optimising resource allocation, the Sindh government in collaboration with ChildLife Foundation, significantly improved child health outcomes and reduced the burden of critical illness and related mortalities.

In 13 years, the Sindh government under the public-private partnership model successfully treated six million children in ERs of public hospitals across the province. The government modernised nine children ERs of public tertiary care hospitals in the province, resulting in a significant increase in the survival rate of critically ill children. Along with this, the government deployed telemedicine technology across all tribal areas of the province, making quality emergency care accessible to children closer to their homes.

## 20 more injured, 45 held as Chaman remains restive

Continued from Page 1

Individuals last night, who promised to normalize the situation in the border town, but unfortunately, that commitment was not honored."

However, the leaders of the strike groups declared that their protest will persist until the release of their arrested leaders and all individuals taken into custody over the past three days.

State's authority

Meanwhile, a high-level meeting, presided over by Chief Minister Mir Sarwar Raigt on Friday, reviewed the situation in Chaman, and resolved not to allow anyone to challenge the state's authority or engage in violent acts under the pretext of protest in

Balochistan.

Officials briefed the meeting on the latest developments in Chaman and the incidents that occurred over the past three days. In light of the situation, it was decided that the state's authority must be upheld in all cases to ensure peace and order are maintained at Balochistan's borders.

CM Raigt said local traders in Chaman are willing to negotiate and resolve the issues faced by professionals through dialogue, and the government is also willing to engage in talks to find a solution. However, he emphasised that actions on security forces and damage to public and private properties are unacceptable.

On the other hand, four political parties — Awami National Party, Pathankotwala National Awami Party,

Pakistan Tahrik Movement and National Democratic Party — jointly staged a demonstration in front of the Quetta Press Club in support of Chaman protesters and their demands.

A large number of workers and supporters of these parties carried party flags and banners inscribed with their demands. Speaking on the occasion, leaders of the three parties condemned the arrest of protesters and demanded that the government accept all demands of the Chaman traders and protesters.

### Parliamentary committee

Separately, speaking in the National Assembly, PTI leader Asad Qaiser said people were holding protests in Chaman and the entire Fata over loadshedding and state action. He urged the lower house of parliament to form a par-

liamentary committee on the situation. "I appealed to the decision-makers for mercy for the martyred. Stakeholders' bulletins on the people of Chaman, rather than those must be brought on the table for dialogue," he said.

On Friday, the Foreign Office also said that movements across the Pakistan-Afghanistan border should be regulated by rules. During a media briefing in Islamabad, FO spokesperson Munir Zaidi Baloch said that individuals wishing to enter Pakistan from Afghanistan must possess a visa and an Afghan passport. She emphasised that border movement between Pakistan and Afghanistan should be conducted under visa regulations.

Baqir Sojoudi Saeed and Syed Ajam Kazmi in Islamabad also contributed to this report.

## Beijing vows to uphold Pakistani sovereignty

Continued from Page 1

underlined that as the flagship project of BRI, CPEC had significantly contributed to Pakistan's socio-economic development. He underlined Pakistan's commitment and full support for the safety and security of the Chinese nationals, projects and institutions in Pakistan.

He underlined that the government's agenda for people-oriented, socio-economic development remained with the concept of "shared prosperity".

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SLL/517	02.07.24 10:00 AM	03.07.24 10:00 AM
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# DAWN

## Small victories

In the midst of unspeakable tragedy, hope remains for a better tomorrow for the Palestinian people. As Israel continues its genocidal campaign in Gaza, endorsed by global censure and warnings from international courts to stop its monstrous campaign, there is growing consensus within the community of nations that legal recognition must be extended to Palestine as a sovereign state. After Ireland, Spain and Norway recognised Palestine last month, the central European state of Slovenia earlier this week did the same. This brings to 147 the number of countries that recognise Palestine as a state, confirming the fact that the global majority is in favour of granting the Arab nation its legitimate, and long-denied, rights.

But while such international solidarity must bring some solace to the people of Palestine, the troubling question of stopping Israel's campaign of extermination remains. The fact is that the international community's solidarity must result in a long-term ceasefire so that Tel Aviv's eight-month-old program in Gaza is brought to a halt. This can only happen when those states that recognise Palestine put pressure on Israel's powerful benefactors — primarily the US — not to sabotage ceasefire efforts, especially within the UN Security Council. When Israel's warmongers know that America will defend them at every international forum that counts, why will they stop?

Moreover, Palestine's allies must translate their gestures of support into concrete actions, for example enforcing a trade and arms embargo against Israel until it stops the bloodbath. Words enough will not be enough to bring Tel Aviv to its senses.

All states that value human life, and hundreds of thousands of ordinary people marching against genocide in cities across the world, have called for an end to the butchery in Gaza. But Israel remains unrepentant. The latest atrocity came in the shape of the Israeli attack on a UN school in which nearly 40 people were killed. Many of the victims were children. Unfortunately, the list of atrocities Israel has committed in Gaza since Oct 7 is a long one, and each fresh act of barbarism eclipses the previous action. Yet, despite the global outcry, Tel Aviv insists on 'finishing' the job in Gaza, which presumably means eradication all signs of life in this forsaken territory. Moreover, Tel Aviv's warmongers are now eyeing Lebanon, with the possibility of their exchanges with Hezbollah mutating into a full-blown war. Therefore, recognition of Palestine is only the first step. The need is for the international community to endorse an immediate, unconditional ceasefire in Gaza. Unhindered humanitarian aid must simultaneously be made available to the occupied territory's traumatised population. At a later date, the community of nations must hold Israel and its backers to account for the murderous rampage Gaza has been subjected to.

## Chaman stalemate

THE recent outbreak of violence in Chaman, which left at least 40 injured, among whom 17 were security officials, serves as a reminder of the deep-seated grievances simmering in the border town. The root of the protesters' discontent lies in the government's decision to enforce a one-document regime, requiring valid passports and visas for crossing the Chaman border. This policy, introduced in October to curb security risks and smuggling, has disrupted long-standing routines whereby people on both sides would cross freely with their identity cards for family visits, trade and daily labour. Economically, the border protests have taken a heavy toll, with daily losses estimated in the tens of millions. The border closure has no doubt exacerbated poverty in an already impoverished region. In an effort to address the economic fallout, the government has opened a border market to provide traders with a local venue for commerce, eliminating the need to cross into Afghanistan. Additionally, a monthly stipend of Rs20,000 is being paid to daily-wage workers. But the protests have continued for over six months. It begs the question: why has the matter failed to see a resolution? Why the stiff resistance to the visa policy?

There have been several rounds of talks between government representatives and local leaders. What complicates matters are special interest groups that benefit from the status quo. The lucrative nature of illegal trade that flourished under an undocumented regime means these groups benefit from maintaining the current chaos. It is suspected that some political parties are also complicit, benefiting from the smuggling operations, and thereby allowing the protests to continue. The decision to introduce the visa policy is not without merit. Besides curbing smuggling, given the recent upsurge in terrorism, strengthening border security is necessary. To resolve this impasse, the government must investigate and prosecute those complicit groups. Alongside this, similar to opening the border market, which is a commendable step, it must invest in local industries and job creation. It must also continue to engage in dialogue with local leaders to avoid setbacks. It is also crucial for the federal government to foster better coordination with Kabul to manage border policies that respect both nations' security and economic interests. With a recalibrated approach, the government can transform this volatile border into a zone of prosperity.

## Deplorable performance

PAKISTAN held their heads in their hands; the unthinkable had happened. Their T20 World Cup hopes suffered a body blow at the very start of the campaign. In the ancient cricketing land — the US — Pakistan are back in familiar Cup territory. A stunning Super Over loss to the hosts means that Babar Azam's men have not only left themselves no room for error but that they might also have to rely on other results to reach the next stage of the tournament. While the US, which also beat Canada in their opening match, celebrated a famous victory, the PCB and team management were left scratching their heads. The PCB should be asking itself how it has come to this. The answer perhaps lies in the team's mentality, as indicated by Babar himself afterwards. The Pakistani captain stated that the team had been more relaxed because the opposition was only making its debut at the tournament. Shockingly, the US have reminded Babar that at this level at a World Cup, there are no easy games. Pakistan were outclassed by a team that was more concentrated and more committed, and therefore better in every department.

Pakistan's bowlers struggled and the bowlers could not get breakthroughs. Had it not been for a late show of speed by Mohammad Amir and Harris Rauf — who eventually survived a disastrous final over — the US would have won the match even more comfortably. Shoddy fielding and inaccurate bowling by Amir in the Super Over helped the US post a sizeable target, that proved too much for the big brother. No doubt, archrivals India will be licking their lips at the prospect of taking on a demoralised Pakistan in New York on Sunday. The national side has once again proved to be the 'cornered tigers', a position it is, sadly, accustomed to. The hope is they can restore the fans' faith in the side soon.

## OPINION

BY ISHRAT HUSAİN



## Home-grown economic plans

Many detailed proposals have been generated but implementation is awaited.

THE government recently formed a committee of eminent international and Pakistani economists to draft a home-grown economic programme. This article shows that there is little need for such a committee. There is no dearth of reports, recommendations, cabinet documents and plans prepared by the government itself as well as international development partners, private sector organisations, academic institutions, think tanks and professional bodies which cover all aspects of a home-grown programme. Numerous books, articles, op-ed pieces, webinars, seminars and conferences have also provided many prospects. This piece confines itself to the last six years. During this period, the management of the economy was in the hands of the PML-N, PTI, PDM, the caretaker setup, and again PML-N.

The former Sharif government published Vision 2025, which was updated to Vision 2030, with five Es — eradicating extreme poverty, education, energy, environment and exports. The Planning Commission under the PTI produced its own development strategy. Five-year plans and annual plans were prepared regularly. None of these vision statements or strategy papers received enthusiastic support from either the finance ministry or sectoral ministries or the provincial governments. The finance ministry presented the medium-term budget strategy papers to parliament. The State Bank came up with the National Financial Inclusion Strategy, a digitalisation strategy, and financial sector strategic plan. The SECP revised the Companies Act and introduced the Code of Corporate Governance. Despite political differences, all these documents correctly identified the problems, outlined the priorities and proposed actions. Ministries have produced policies on strategic trade, logistics, aviation, digitisation, electricity, etc. (Save the outcomes of these policies been evaluated?)

Economic advisory councils, task forces, working groups, government committees, the private sector, leading economists and other experts have generated over 50 detailed analyses and proposed short, medium, and long-term actions on governance, fiscal, taxation, trade, the financial sector, energy, CPEC, agriculture, etc. The SME strategic report resulted in the SME policy and Act but the government is still struggling to cut

excessive SOEs for privatisation, retrenchment or restructuring. There have been very few transactions for privatising loss-making SOEs. Had the government implemented the PIA restructuring report submitted to the cabinet in 2021, additional billions of Rs400 billion could have been avoided.

On the subject of governance, the civil service, the restructuring of federal ministries, autonomous bodies and attached departments, the induction of technical expertise, pensions, and austerity, task forces and cabinet subcommittees have, after stakeholder consultation, submitted comprehensive reports that received cabinet approval but have yet to see the light of day. Subsequently, a committee under Nasir Khosa and a recent one under Jahangir Khan (both bureaucrats) also made similar suggestions. It's a pity their reports were referred to other ministerial committees.

Performance agreements between the PM and each minister, with key indicators on priority action, were signed in 2022 after intensive dialogue, specifying cross-ministerial responsibilities. Priorities were to be made on performance rather than seniority; annual increments were linked to key performance indicators. Technical experts were to be inducted into small ministries. Proper implementation of these measures would have led to clear accountability. Attempts to encourage local governments (LGs) to deliver public services and transferring resources and taxation powers have met with little success. A merit-based, open competitive policy to recruit M&F/CDOs of public sector entities was successfully practised for three years and several Pakistani experts showed interest. It is not clear if this policy was followed by successive governments.

It is my guess that the IMF, World Bank, ADB, EDF (now FCDO), USAID, EU, UNDP, etc, must have collectively invested hundreds of millions of dollars in preparing excellent reports on macro, micro and macroeconomics, and providing consultancy services to ministries and foreign delegations to government officials. The World Bank's policy papers were discussed at conferences on human capital, fiscal policy and public expenditure, issues such as child stunting, illiteracy and

poverty have found resonance in public debates. Yet, action is pending. Foreign trainings and visits have not proved useful as, once back, the officials are not posted in the ministries/agencies for which they were trained.

Among the think tanks, the noteworthy contribution is that of the PIDC, which has come up with an initial package. One may disagree with some of their findings but their reports are a rich repository of alternative and divergent views on economic transformation, and should be utilised for policy formulation and discussion. Other local organisations which have done serious research and analysis are the CDPR, CBR, IDEAS, SEIPS, Lami, RMA, NRI, ISE, RPP, SIPC, IBA and AEDC.

In the private sector, the Pakistan Business Council has produced a series of relevant reports on trade, taxation, tariffs, and the ease of doing business. The ONGC has developed a confidence index based on the survey of foreign companies; the FPOCI has formed a think tank, and APTMA regularly articulates its problems and proposals. The RDCI, RCI, LCCI are also active in putting out the concerns of private business. Professional bodies such as ICAP, ICMA, ACCA, and many others are in regular dialogue on topics of national interest.

The purpose of this analysis is to back the assertion of the finance minister that 'we know our problems, we know what needs to be done. The key is implementation'. I have argued elsewhere that implementing these reforms would be painful the first three years but by year five, the government will show stabilisation and growth revival. I disagree with those who hypothesise that these reforms would hurt the poor. Instead, by bringing 60 per cent of the economy into the tax net and reducing the sales tax rate, privatising loss-making SOEs, targeting energy subsidies on the poor, expanding BISP's scope, restructuring the size of government, devolving powers and diverting development funds allocations from the legislature to directly elected LGs would cause more pain to the elite (including me) than the common man. ■

The writer is the author of the Report on Institutional Reforms, 2021, approved by the federal cabinet.



BY RASHIDA DOHAD



## Budgets to empower women

HOW much do governments in Pakistan spend to empower women? What are the trends in allocating and expending budgets for facilities and institutions that help women and girls get equal opportunities and live in dignity? Are there gaps in essential and strategic investments that can be plugged to help reduce gender parity?

A gender budget tagging methodology developed by the governments of Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) in 2022 helps answer these questions. It maps budgets to assess the quantum and nature of approved allocations and actual public spending likely to help women and girls access services like education, healthcare, training, credit, justice, security, disaster response and social protection. Public funds are also ranked on the basis of their relevance to empowering women.

Gender-tagging of the provincial budgets of Punjab and KP over the past three fiscal years, FY2020-21, FY2021-22, and FY2022-23, shows approved allocations with a high gender relevance ranged from 4.8 per cent to 6.75pc of the total budget, and spending was between 5.8pc to 7.5pc of the total expenditures. Budgets marked as high relevance have a principal purpose of supporting gender equality. These typically include funds for schools, hospitals, startups and other financing mechanisms designed to benefit women and girls. They also include public resources for creating and running shelters and providing other facilities that help respond to violence against women.

High relevance allocations were not the only gender-responsive investments made by the provincial governments. Rs1,212,409 million, or 5.8pc of total allocations over three years in KP, and Rs1,15,273m, or 6.47pc of the total in Punjab, were allocated for public services like universities, tertiary care hospitals, irrigation, and transport. These amounts are of medium relevance, as they likely benefited women and girls even though gender equality was not the deliberate purpose of these budgets.

An additional Rs244,998m, or 1.5pc of the cumulative total three-year budgets in KP and Rs265,760m, or 1.647pc of the total in Punjab, represent low relevance funds, in amounts that may create an enabling environment for gender equality by supporting, for example, agricultural research that will assist women who depend on farming for food and livelihood. Going forward, more granular information, including sex-disaggregated data, will help governments show whether such public spending gives women and

girls access to equal opportunities and rights, demonstrating government compliance with domestic policies like the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Women Empowerment Policy, 2017, and the Punjab Women Development Policy, 2018, as well as international obligations such as the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women, and the Sustainable Development Goals.

Categorising gender-responsive budgets shows that the largest share in fiscal years 2020-21 was provided for social services in Punjab and KP. This included funds for education, healthcare, and basic services like drinking water. This was followed by budgets for women's economic empowerment, which support the access of girls and women to income opportunities and contribute to economic activity. This included funds for vocational training, credit, mobility, and facilities like work-

**Gender-responsive budgets will help provide more equal opportunities, which can be a strong engine for macroeconomic stability.**

ing women's homes that make it possible for women to take jobs away from their families and households.

An analysis of Pakistan's federal budget for FY2023-24 shows that the largest share of gender-responsive budgets, Rs479,534m, was allocated for social protection, which includes support for social safety nets like the Human Income Support Programme. Ninety-four per cent of the amount categorised under social protection is highly relevant, ie, designed for gender equality. Rs135,723m is reserved for climate change supports, adaptive and mitigation measures such as afforestation, soil conservation and research on climate trends. However, in this category, dedicated funds are needed to develop the resilience of women, poor and others that are most vulnerable to climate shocks.

The information generated by gender tagging of federal and provincial budgets helps understand what is funded, how much is funded, where the funding gaps are, and how to better allocate

resources. Using such information and analysis for sustained and more impactful outcomes requires three priority areas:

First, integrate methodologies like gender budget tagging in the financial data management systems of the federal and provincial governments, so that robust data and analysis, including trends over time, are regularly made available to assist legislators, policy makers and government officials in making genderresponsive budget choices.

Second, provide more detailed information on current and development budgets to help more accurate gender tagging. Descriptions of budgets often do not provide enough information to judge their gender relevance. Some headway has been made to improve data contained in project planning documents, like the PCPs. These efforts should be further expedited and skills of government officials upgraded so that they are able to produce more detailed PCPs.

Third, use the information generated by gender tagging of budgets for in-depth assessments to help more impactful use of public resources to empower women and increase their agency. For example, providing schools and colleges for girls is important to reduce gender parity. But equally important is an assessment of how budgets can overcome challenges like high dropout rates of girls after primary school, estimated at 12pc. Also required are strategic investments, like including content in education curriculum that helps reverse pervasive social discrimination against women and girls.

Ranking 141 out of 146 countries, Pakistan is nearly at the bottom of the Global Gender Gap Index 2023, reflecting the grim realities of women, who make up 48pc of the country's population of 248.5m. Gender responsive budgets will help reduce gender disparity and provide more equal opportunities, which can provide a strong engine for macroeconomic stability, stimulate economic growth, reduce income inequality, and make better development outcomes possible. According to the UNDP, \$12 trillion could be added to the global GDP by 2030 by advancing women's equality. But gender equality should not only be pursued for economic growth and inclusive development. It should be promoted because the ability to live with independence, dignity and freedom is a fundamental human right. ■

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# OPINION

BY RIDA TAHIR



## Children in prisons

ON a cold morning in 1907, a remand home was inaugurated in Karachi under the Bombay Children Act, 1924. This remand home was later shifted to near Central Jail in Karachi, and is now functioning in accordance with the Sindh Children Act, 1955, and the Sindh Remand Home Rules, 2011. Another remand home has been sanctioned in Narowal/Rahim Yar Khan, but it is non-functional.

Despite the passage of nearly 90 years, there is only one functional remand home in Sindh, highlighting the failure of the state in protecting children. There are 385 juvenile offenders (of whom, 10% are under the age of 16, whereas 10% are under the age of 18) languishing in the province's prisons, as per the latest data released by the Sindh Prisoner and Corrections Service in 2023.

A remand home is a shift towards reformatory and rehabilitative justice for children. In contrast to the harsh bars of prisons, a remand home provides a child with an environment of care, protection, observation and treatment. The purpose of remand homes is not to reprimand the child, but to reform their behaviour and reintegrate them into society. Remand homes are mandated to "provide proper accommodation to the inmates, including separate bed, sanitary, toilets and bathrooms", as per Rule 7 of the Sindh Remand Home Rules. Further, Rule 16 mandates the provision of recreational facilities such as indoor and outdoor games during the child's stay at a remand home.

In 2018, the Juvenile Justice System Act was passed by parliament to protect the rights of children in conflict with the law. JJSA, 2018, defines a child as a person who has not attained the age of 18 years. It did not repeal the Sindh Children Act, 1955, but it has an overriding effect as per Section 24 of JJSA, 2018.

JJSA, 2018 introduced the "juvenile rehabilitation centre", which has been defined as "a place where a juvenile may be kept and given education, vocational or technical training for his mental, moral and psychological development". It is important to outline that the functions outlined for JRCs under Section 2 (k) of JJSA, 2018, are analogous to the functions of the institution of remand homes as per Section 26 of the Sindh Children Act, 1955, and Rule 2 (D) of the Remand Home Rules, 2011. Therefore, both federal and provincial obligations for the protection of juvenile offenders will be fulfilled if remand homes are established in each district of Sindh.

Children do not belong in prisons. The

age of criminal responsibility in Pakistan has been capped at 10 years, as per Section 82 of the Pakistan Penal Code (amended in 2016). Further, Section 83 extends this protection to children of ages above 10 and under 14 years, who have not attained sufficient maturity of understanding to judge the nature and consequences of their conduct. Unfortunately, only 24 per cent of children under five are registered at birth nationally. This means that many children in the 10-14 age group are unable to escape the confinement bars even though the law protects them.

The absence of remand homes/JRCs translates to children being put behind bars even when held in the right of the child. Over 26 million children are out of school in Pakistan. Alarmingly, even among those attending school, 27% are unable to read or comprehend simple text by the age of 10, according to data released by Unesco. Moreover, millions are trapped in child labour in the country.

Research has suggested that childhood experiences such as poverty, maltreatment, and school exclusion are associated with various offences and frequent criminal convictions. Despite a comprehensive legal framework for the protection of children in conflict with the law, it is unfortunate that children trapped in the vicious cycle of conflict with the criminal justice system are not a priority of the state.

The Sindh Human Rights Commission has been actively advocating for the establishment of remand homes in each district of the province and the formulation of provincial rules under JJSA, 2018, which have not been notified in the province as yet. To protect children, it is suggested that the rules under JJSA, 2018, when notified, are aligned and harmonised with the Sindh Remand Home Rules, 2011. Additionally, the SHRC is also advancing for establishing free legal assistance for juveniles and children under Section 3 of JJSA, 2018.

Children are not only the future but also the present of our society. It is imperative that the state safeguard and rehabilitate juvenile offenders to build a more equitable society. ■

The writer is a founder of Lincoln's Inn and an advocate of the high courts of Pakistan.

BY AISHA KHAN



## Reshaping knowledge

GEOPOLITICS and geo-economics are seen as parallel processes to progress. When there is harmonisation between the two, the outcome is good, when political differences come in the way of economic cooperation, the result is increased political tension and underoptimisation of economic activity.

In developing countries, this negative feedback loop is the detriment of the people, where poor social and economic indicators, worsened by mounting debt burdens due to climate change, are increasing hardships for people.

Politics above all agendas, but political activity does not take place in a vacuum, nor does it operate in isolation. The changing alignments in the geopolitical landscape at the global level also affect politics in South Asia.

Right now, that world is divided in two camps. The bipolar world, which became a unipolar world, is headed towards a second Cold War theatre.

The competing ideologies of free market and state capitalism are at the heart of the divide. This battle of political extrangagement is embedded in a desire to create a world order based on the dominance of one system over the other.

This stand-off is not likely to change in the foreseeable future and will continue to shape global politics. South Asia will have to navigate its way safely in this tug of war between the competing blocks.

As it is, South Asia has a conflicted history with countries torn out of divisions. The partition of Pakistan from India, and Bangladesh from Pakistan, has left scars that fester relationships. This wounded sentiment is exploited by political actors and is responsible for holding progress hostage to history of hostility.

The inability to subdue differences has come at the cost of undermining regional potential for growth and development.

Meanwhile, climate change is pushing the region towards the limits of its coping capacity.

Roshipping knowledge amidst turmoil and using this ecosystem can help convert native strategies into fit-for-purpose actions that can change the regional dynamics for engagement.

The last six months have seen elections in Bangladesh, Pakistan and India. No vision or even an aspirational desire was expressed during the campaign for strengthening regional cooperation. This is largely because political ideology is deeply entrenched in emotions, and passions drive the agenda to the extent of making countries prefer remaining locked in perpetual acrimony over beneficial economic cooperation.

In this gloomy scenario, prospects may

look dim, yet there is a glimmer of hope that comes from the large youth cohort, which may want to craft a future that does not carry the weight of history. As the quantum of challenges increases, there will be a corresponding need for elevating response to avoid a humanitarian crisis. The region desperately needs treacherous spaces for an alternative trajectory that allows for free flow of ideas and interactions.

Under the informal framework, the logic call would be for revival of Saarc, activation of Saffar, and making travel easier to facilitate cross-border communication. But none of this can happen despite the obvious advantages, because feelings of negativity come in the way of cooperation. The sad reality is that the region is trapped in the past and tied in a Gordian knot.

Moving beyond that status quo will require investment in the political economy of knowledge to promote innovative thinking, develop a new roadmap for engagement, and invest in regional integration. The youth and climate action offer the best chance for change. The young in South Asia outnumber the old, and climate is a common threat that respects no borders. Business as usual is no longer a workable plan.

Roshipping the knowledge landscape and empowering the youth with decision-making hold the key to unlocking many doors, using the gateway to build bridges of hope. The scope for expanding regional knowledge networks is immense.

Politics is about power, and market forces drive the economy. As the global resource base shrinks, political alignments will converge more with economic interests, pitting vested interest groups against each other for grabbing critical resources. The coming demographic shifts will add to societal tensions and provide a breeding ground for populist leaders to exploit fear and scarcity for short-term political gains.

History tells us that science without humanity and politics without principles serve a limited purpose. Similarly, policies and the politics of hate also have a short shelf-life, but like black carbon, can do great damage in a short time. This is a time for the youth to use knowledge platforms to change jaded narratives into hubs of hope and seize the opportunity for investing in a better future. ■

The writer is chief executive of the Civil Society Coalition for Climate Change, [asfa@wsoopp.org.pk](http://asfa@wsoopp.org.pk).

## FROM THE PAST PAGES OF DAWN

**1974 | Fifty years ago**

### Bid for hegemony

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto said tonight [June 7] that India had gone nuclear with the object of intimidating and blackmailing Pakistan, but he was confident the people of this country would face the challenge bravely. Winding up the debate on the repercussions of India's nuclear blast, he said that all resulted in the conclusion that India was brandishing the nuclear sword to protect political concessions from Pakistan and establish her hegemony in the Sub-continent.

Otherwise ... how else to make sense to spend billions of dollars to explode a nuclear device when India was in the throes of the worst-ever economic crisis. The Indian entry into the nuclear club had brought about a qualitative change in the situation with the conventional Pakistan armed forces not only facing conventional but also nuclear Indian forces. The [PM] said that developments following the ... blast should set the tone of the "misled-introded" individuals who tried to mislead the people by saying that he had entered into secret agreements with India. ... As regards the stipulations by his Government ... he said the decision to embark on a nuclear programme was taken at Multan in January 1972. — News agencies

**1949 | Seventy-five years ago**

### 'Israel's' breaches

AMMAN: "Israeli" forces today marched into neutral United Nations territory in the Mine of Evil Council area, South of Jerusalem, and occupied Arab College buildings next to the former Government house, which is now the seat of the United Nations Palestine Conciliation Commission, according to reports received here today [June 7]. An official of the United Nations Mediation staff said they were "disturbed" by the "brazen" actions. The "Israelis" have been asked to withdraw... .

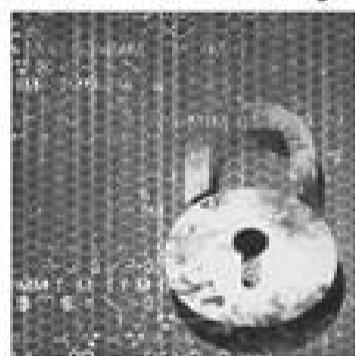
... An "Israeli" spokesman commented on the report that "Israeli" forces today marched into neutral United Nations territory in the Mine of Evil Council area ... said that this area, although more occupied by the United Nations, was allocated to "Israel[is]" under the armistice agreement.

[Ministers in Philadelphia] Dr Ralph J. Bunche, acting United Nations Mediator for Palestine, said ... that permanent peace in the Holy City was in the offing, he believed fighting in Palestine to be over. A permanent settlement depended upon the wisdom and statesmanship of the Jews and Arabs now meeting in Lawrence. — News agencies

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Letters to the editor should carry the writer's address, CAGC and phone numbers.

### Digital terrorism is an ominous reality



THIS is with reference to the report "Digital terrorism" to be scoffed out, shadow commanders" (May 31). The military leadership's protective approach in addressing politically motivated digital terrorism underscores its encouraging dedication to national security. This ominous threat, aimed at manipulating public opinion and fuelling the cause of nationhood only through disinformation as often adopted by foreign actors. It has been rightly observed that it is done to create dependency in the nation, and dysfunction among the institutions through false news, fake news and propaganda.

Besides digital terrorism at home, the increase in acutely a borderless entity and, as such, deserves international attention. Terrorists exploit the anarchy and traits of the internet to spread fear, to coerce populations, and to destabilise societies through propaganda, disruption of critical infrastructure, and incitement of violence.

The consequences can be devastating, as seen in the online hate speech that fuelled ethnic cleansing in Myanmar, or the foreign interference bid in the last American elections.

International terrorist organisations have also skilfully used social media for recruitment and for spreading their message across borders.

Combating this rather complex problem requires a multi-pronged approach involving international cooperation. It can be safely said that countries need to invest in robust cybersecurity mechanisms to defend critical digital infrastructure from cyberattacks.

On their part, social media platforms have a responsibility to develop strategies for identifying and removing extremist content while promoting responsible online discourse. Encouraging critical and analytical thinking skills is essential to

identify and counter misinformation online. Sharing intelligence about threats and coordinating efforts across borders are crucial steps to disrupt the activity of terrorist networks operating online.

Pakistan can further address digital terrorism by developing a national strategy to combat digital terrorism. This strategy should outline steps to defend critical infrastructure, counter online propaganda, and promote media literacy, focusing on training and resources for cybersecurity professionals as also vital partnerships with countries like China, with its advanced technological skills and capabilities, and the United States, a leader in cybersecurity research, can further strengthen the process of sharing information, developing collective responses, and enhancing Pakistan's ability to combat cyber threats.

By acknowledging the dangers of digital terrorism, adopting a multi-faceted approach, and fostering international collaboration, we can create a more secure and stable online environment for everyone. This collaborative effort will require a commitment from governments, technology companies, and citizens alike. By working together, the world can ensure that the internet remains a tool for positive change and not a weapon of destruction.

Maqbool Sharif  
Karachi

### Victims of absurdity

MEDICAL experts emphasize the critical importance of administering the first hepatitis B vaccine to newborns within the initial 24 hours after birth. Aligned with this recommendation, I promptly sought vaccination for my newborn baby after delivery at a nearby rural People's Primary Healthcare Initiative (PPHI) centre. However, upon reaching the centre on a Thursday, I encountered an unexpected obstacle. The staff informed me that they exclusively administer the first dose of the vaccine to infants on Tuesdays only.

This revelation sparked immediate concern and prompted a discussion with the relevant healthcare providers. I reiterated the time-sensitive nature of the first vaccine dose, highlighting the necessity of adhering to the recommended timeframe. They, in question, could not administer the first dose on a Thursday, despite the vaccination protocol.

Despite my earnest plea for flexibility, and a firm assertion of the staff's inability to deviate from the established schedule, this encounter highlighted systemic issues within the vaccination protocols of the rural PPHI centres, raising broader

questions about healthcare accessibility and equity. Infants born on days other than a Tuesday face delays in receiving critical immunizations, putting them at risk of hepatitis B infection. Urgent action is needed to mitigate this logistical activity, and ensure equitable access to timely healthcare services for all newborns.

All rural PPHI centres should review and revise their vaccination scheduling and logistics practices. It is imperative that healthcare authorities prioritise the health and well-being of newborns by implementing measures to facilitate timely immunisation, regardless of the day of birth.

Bava Baloch  
Ghotki

### Eid and dacoities



THERE has been a startling rise in the robbery of sacrificial animals during the period leading up to Eid ul-Azha. This trend has affected the economic stability of individuals, and has left people wondering what kind of society we have become a part of where even sacrificial animals are not safe.

A particularly alarming incident that gained widespread attention on social media occurred in Lahore. A young man, seemingly in his 20s, was leading his two sacrificial animals through the city street. Suddenly, a car approached him from behind. In a swift and unnerving move, the occupant of the car snatched a goat and forcibly took the animals, leaving the young man feeling threatened and helpless. This brazen act, captured and shared extensively online, underscores the growing insecurity faced by the people.

This was surely not an isolated incident. Similar cases have been reported in Karachi, where individuals have been deprived of their sacrificial animals in broad daylight. The frequency of such robberies has increased, leading to a pervasive sense of fear and uncertainty among the people.

In both urban and rural areas, the theft

of these valuable animals has become a common occurrence, causing financial losses and emotional distress to many. The rise in these crimes highlights a significant failure on the part of the government to ensure the safety and security of its citizens.

Despite repeated incidents, there has been a lack of effective measures to curb this menace. The law enforcement agencies appear ill-equipped to handle the situation, and the absence of stringent penalties for such crimes has emboldened the perpetrators.

The government's inability to protect the people reflects a deeper issue within the security apparatus and governance structures. For the common man in Pakistan, the promise of safety and security remains unfulfilled, leading to growing frustration and disillusionment.

It is imperative for the authorities to take immediate and decisive action to restore public confidence and ensure that such incidents do not become a regular feature of life in Pakistan.

The protection of the people and their property, especially during significant cultural and religious events, must be prioritised to prevent any further erosion of trust in governmental institutions.

Fayaz Ali  
Islamabad

### Mayor for Islamabad

METROPOLITAN cities around the world, like, say, London and New York, have elected mayors. In fact, we often copy the West in just about every matter, and one wonders why we have never had an elected mayor for Islamabad, which over the years has grown into a huge, sprawling metropolis.

An elected mayor and members of the elected municipal committee and union councils should be made responsible for all policy matters pertaining to the capital, and be delegated with financial resources as well.

It has been observed in the recent past that there is a lot of overlapping and infighting within the administrative machinery of Islamabad, with ongoing projects suffering or getting indefinitely delayed. This needs to end.

Hence, it is advisable that the office of a full-time elected mayor answerable to the constituents be established and then made fully functional. Besides, the person elected should be empowered to run the affairs of the capital in a truly democratic and accountable manner. The tradition of leaving the matters to the dictate, discretion and whims of an individual or institution not answerable to anyone other than the appointing authority must be done away with immediately.

Khaled  
Islamabad

**► ROAD REPAIRS:** The stretch of road leading from the National Stadium towards Gaddafi Jashan has two major clusters of potholes, posing inconvenience to the commuters using the route. The indifferent attitude of the relevant authorities is pathetic.

Despite numerous complaints lodged officially, there has been no change on the ground position. The authorities should initiate repair work on the road.

Abbas  
Karachi

**► A GROWING CONCERN:** Hyderabad is the largest division in Sindh, and it houses to millions of people, including students. Currently, there is only one library catering to the educational needs of thousands of students. The Ali Baba Diagnostic Library in Hyderabad seems to have run out of capacity as well as facilities to accommodate the growing number of students. The local authorities need to find a solution.

Mohsin  
Wari

**► MORE JUSTICE:** Whether it is the Christian community under attack or a thief caught by an angry mob in Karachi, the practice of mob justice and lynching seems to have become entrenched in our lifestyle. There could be many root causes in play during such incidents, but it is the weakness of the law for sure that has encouraged such acts in public. The state and its organs need to establish their writ to reign in this menace once and for all.

Aamer Sohail  
Benni

**► CRIME PARAMEDICS:** While most each other earn the condemnation of the masses, and rightly so, it is surprising that not many people talk about the doctors and paramedics in rural areas who fall in the same category. The government-run health facility in Dohri village of Bahawalpur district is one such centre where the designated medical officer remains absent, but drives his monthly salary regularly. Will the provincial health department come to the rescue of the people of Dohri?

Shaukat Ali Sajid  
Karsahi

### External Ombudsman

# PHC rejects plea for removal of housing scheme scam suspect's name from ECL

Says records contradicted petitioner's claim of having addressed people's grievance

Bureau Report

PESHAWAR: The Peshawar High Court has refused to order authorities to strike the name of a private housing scheme's project director off the Exit Control List over an alleged fraud.

A bench consisting of Justice Sabirullah Asadullah and Justice Waseem Ahmed dismissed the petition of Prof. Abdul Hamid Jan of Professor Model Town-II Peshawar for the removal of his name from the ECL, observing that the cases of the affected people for grievance redressal are pending with the high court.

It declared that the petitioner's claim of having addressed the affected people's grievances was contradicted by the records and facts, so the petition was devoid of merit.

The National Accountability Bureau Khyber Pakhtunkhwa had rejected an inquiry under the National Accountability Ordinance (NAO) into allegations of corruption and corrupt practices against the petitioner and others for "shutting public at

large" in respect of the Professor Model Town-II Peshawar housing project.

It later issued a call-up notice to the petitioner as the housing scheme's project director over fraud allegations.

The NAB received 51 claims regarding the scheme and learned that the petitioner and other partners collected Rs38.45 million on pretext of providing developed plots to allottees but failed to deliver on the promises.

The claimants insisted that the petitioner and his other partners had deprived several people of their hard-earned money.

In 2020, the high court ordered the placing of the name of the petitioner on the ECL at the request of a NAB deputy prosecutor general.

In the current petition, Prof. Jan claimed that his firm had satisfied all claimants by giving them plots on retaining their money.

He contended that after assessments made in the NAO through the National Accountability (Amendment) Act 2022, the said project did not come under the purview of NAB.

During审理 of this petition, several affected persons filed applications with the court for impleading as respondents in the case. Their pleas were accepted.

Advocate Matik Shahzad Khan appeared for the housing scam's victims and told the petitioner along with other accused to settle agreements under the garb of providing

amenities like mosque, school, hospital, community hall, and shopping mall in the private housing scheme.

He claimed that no NHC was obtained from the competent authority and instead a bogus NHC of the Peshawar Development Authority was shown to the claimants.

The lawyer contended that the petitioner was running a joint bank account with other accused, including Prof. Nasir, Mohammad Nasir and Hameed Ali, through which huge amounts had been deducted from the claimants with premise of allotment of developed plots.

He added that the petitioner had also fraudulently issued provisional allotment letters and permission letters to the claimants, whereas in fact the claimants had not been handed over possession of any plot.

The bench observed that admittedly under the 2022 amendment Act, jurisdiction of the NAB was ousted in the instant matter but in light of the Supreme Court's judgement rendered in the "Imran Khan Naib versus Federation of Pakistan" case, the matter needs to be decided afresh by the competent authority.

It added that as per the stand of the NAB, all referred cases were again required before the competent authority and that at the moment the present case was under consideration for decision afresh in light of the apex court's judgement.

## CTD man martyred, militant killed in Lakki, Bannu

LAKKIMARWAT: A member of the Counter-Terrorism Department was martyred and a militant was killed in two separate incidents in southern Khyber Pakhtunkhwa districts on Thursday night.

Police in Lakki Marwat said on Friday that Wahid, a member of the CTD Lakki, was attacked by armed motorcycleists in Ganch Khankhail area in the jurisdiction of Shahzad Assauftullah Khan Kharai police station of Seraia Nauring town.

Wahid got critical injuries and died instantly. The body was shifted to a hospital, police said, adding funeral of the deceased was offered at the police lines.

Later, he was laid to rest in a graveyard in Nowala Kullay area with full official honor.

Meanwhile, the CTD claimed to have killed a militant commander in an exchange of fire in Tajouri area of Bannu on Thursday night.

The CTD killed Mohamed Umar of Siddiqui Gabru group — a subgroup of Haifa Ghulam Ali for Bannu district, during an intelligence-based operation, a statement said.

It said Umar was wanted by the CTD Bannu for his involvement in several attacks and targeted killing.

"As soon as the operation was launched, militants present in the area started indiscriminate fire at the CTD team," the statement said, adding an exchange of fire continued for 30 minutes, in which Umar was killed, but his assailants fled to safety.

The CTD team also recovered arms and ammunition from the spot.

Separately, a policeman was shot dead by rivals over a family dispute in Tajouri area of Lakki Marwat, police said.

They said Shaukatullah, 36, and his brother, Riazuddin, 51, were in the Tajouri Adha area when their rivals,

## Rain, hailstorm lash South Waziristan

SOUTH WAZIRISTAN: Heavy rain coupled with hailstorms lashed Wana, the district headquarters Lower South Waziristan, damaging fruit orchards and standing vegetable crops.

Farmers said the hailstorms inflicted heavy financial losses on them. They demanded of the government to compensate them for the losses.

Shah Hussain Wazir, a former, urged the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government to release funds for the affected farmers in Wana.

On the one hand, rain broke the heatwave and turned the weather pleasant. However, electric supply was disrupted across the district.

JIRCAs Inspector General Frontier Corps (IGFC) South Mat-Gren-Harron-Hamed Charsadda held a jirga with Wazir tribal elders at Wana School hall here on Friday.

The jirga was attended by tribal elders from nine tribes of Ahmadzai Wazir, youth, ulama and traders.

Lower South Waziristan deputy commissioner Mohammed Nasir Khan was also present.

Gym Hameed appreciated Ahmadzai Wazir's unswerving support to the security forces for the establishment of peace in the region.

He highlighted various economic measures taken for the development of the district, restoration of 3G/4G Internet service, impact of smuggling at the national level, and assured to continue efforts to ensure peace and stability in the region.—Correspondent



**PAKISTAN REAL ESTATE INVESTMENT & MANAGEMENT COMPANY PRIVATE LIMITED**

### INVITATION TO BID (ITB)

Single Stage One Envelope (Last Call)

Tender Enquiry #: PRIMACO/P&C/JANITORIAL SERVICES - LAHORE/12/01/2024

### CLEANING & JANITORIAL SERVICES

PRIMACO invites sealed bids from eligible and interested bidders for Providing Cleaning & Janitorial Services at 66-M-A, Johar Town Lahore.

Interested and eligible Bidders may obtain Bidding Documents from the office of the undersigned in Islamabad against a payment of Rs. 5,000/- (non-refundable) in the shape of Bank Draft / Pay Order in the name of PRIMACO Islamabad (NIN: 2790350-5) during 0900 hours to 1500 hours on any working day. Complete Bidding document set can also be downloaded from websites of PRIMACO ([www.primaco.pk](http://www.primaco.pk)) or PRIMACO (<http://www.primaco.com.pk/tender.php>) and the same shall be submitted, complete in all respect and duly signed & stamped, along with Bank Draft / Pay Order of Rs. 5,000/- (non-refundable) in the name of PRIMACO Islamabad in bid proposal. Bidders will not be considered without respective bidding Document fees.

#### Eligibility Criteria:

Interested Bidders who fulfills below criteria are required to submit following information/documents as part of bid:

- Complete credentials of the company with related details including current commitments and completed assignments duly supported with copies of verifiable documents.
- The firm must be incorporated under ordinance or registered with SECP/GOP/State Registrar.
- Valid Income Tax Registration with FPR/Tax Department (NTN), Sales Tax Registration and must be on AT1 (for Income and Sales Tax).
- An original & valid affidavit on non-judicial stamp paper/ e-stamp paper duly verified stating that the individual / firm is not blacklisted by, or having no litigation with, any Govt / Autonomous Body or between partners. (Standard format is attached on page 29 of this tender document).

**Fixed amount of Bid Security:** Re. 250,000/- in shape of Deposit at Cash / Bank Draft / Bank Guarantee only.

**Tender Documents Submission Date-Time:** 24th June 2024 till 1100 Hours

**Bid Opening Date & Time:** 24th June 2024 at 1130 Hours

#### Important:

- The bids will be opened on the aforementioned date & time in the presence of bidders or their authorized representatives at the below address.
- Incomplete, late or conditional tenders and joint ventures (JV) will not be allowed.
- PRIMACO reserves the right to accept or reject any tenders.
- The Contract shall be governed under PRIMACO Rules & Regulations.

This advertisement is available on PRIMACO website ([www.primaco.pk](http://www.primaco.pk)) & PRIMACO website ([www.primaco.com.pk](http://www.primaco.com.pk)).

Manager (P&C):

PRIMACO 2nd Floor, D-08 House, Plot #2, 33 & 34,

Sector G-18/4, Mount Area, Islamabad. Ph: 051-9168254-55



**PAKISTAN REAL ESTATE INVESTMENT & MANAGEMENT COMPANY PRIVATE LIMITED**

(A Fully Chartered Institute of Engineers (CEA-Eng) Institute, Government of Pakistan)

### INVITATION TO BID (ITB)

Single Stage Two Envelope (Last Call)

Tender Enquiry #: PRIMACO/P&C/Supply & Fixing ACP/13/01/2024

### Supply & Fixing of Aluminum Composite Panel, Cleaning of Façade & Repairing of Sign Board

PRIMACO invites sealed bids from eligible and interested Bidders for Repair and Supply & Fixing of Aluminum Composite Panel, Cleaning of Façade & Repairing of Sign Board at E-08 House, Plot No. 32, 33 & 34 Main Area G-10/1 Islamabad.

Interested and eligible Bidders may obtain Bidding Documents from the office of the undersigned in Islamabad against a payment of Rs. 5,000/- (non-refundable) in the shape of Bank Draft / Pay Order in the name of PRIMACO Islamabad (NIN: 2790350-5) during 0900 hours to 1500 hours on any working day. Complete Bidding document set can also be downloaded from PRIMACO website (<http://www.primaco.com.pk/tender.php>) and the same shall be submitted, complete in all respect and duly signed & stamped, along with mandatory Bank Draft / Pay Order of Rs. 5,000/- (non-refundable) in the name of PRIMACO Islamabad in bid proposal. Bidders will not be considered without respective bidding Document fees.

#### Eligibility Criteria:

Interested Bidders who fulfills below criteria are required to submit following information / documents as part of bid together with mandatory Bid Security of fixed amount of PKR 1,000,000/- in shape of Deposit at Cash / Bank Draft / Bank Guarantee only on the standard format provided in bidding documents, in the name of PRIMACO Islamabad (NIN: 2790350-5), a copy of the same shall be placed in technical bid envelope.

- Complete credentials of the individuals/company with related details.
- Moving water incorporation / registration with SECP/GOP/State Registrar.
- Valid registration with FPR in category C-4 & above and CII -10 specialized code.
- Valid Income Tax Registration with FPR/Tax Department (NTN), Sales Tax Registration and must be on AT1 (for Income and Sales Tax).
- An original & valid affidavit on non-judicial stamp paper/e-stamp paper duly verified stating that the individual / firm is not blacklisted by, or having no litigation with, any Govt / Autonomous Body or between partners. (Standard format is attached on page 29 of this tender document).

**Tender Documents Submission Date-Time:** 24th June 2024 till 1400 Hours

**Bid Opening Date & Time:** 24th June 2024 at 1430 Hours

#### Important:

- The bids will be opened on the aforementioned date & time in the presence of bidders or their authorized representatives at the below address.
- Incomplete, late or conditional tenders and joint ventures (JV) will not be allowed.
- PRIMACO reserves the right to accept or reject any tenders.
- The Contract shall be governed under PRIMACO Rules & Regulations.

This advertisement is available on PRIMACO website ([www.primaco.pk](http://www.primaco.pk)) & PRIMACO website ([www.primaco.com.pk](http://www.primaco.com.pk)).

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Sector G-18/4, Mount Area, Islamabad. Ph: 051-9168254-55

## Two brothers get life over girl's abduction, assault

CHARJADDA: A local court has convicted two brothers of abducting and assaulting a 14-year-old girl, and sentenced them to life imprisonment with a fine of Rs100,000 each.

Additional sessions judge Syed Uthman Shah pronounced that the prisoners had proved its case against Bala and Ishaq Ali.

The judge pronounced that both the convicts were sentenced to life imprisonment on two counts under section 352-B (abducing, assaulting or compelling woman for marriage) and 370 (rape) of Pakistan Penal Code with fine of Rs20,000 each.

Furthermore, the judge pronounced the convicts were also sentenced under section 51 (sexual abuse) of Khyber

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Child Protection and Welfare Act and were sentenced to seven years rigorous imprisonment with fine of Rs100,000 each.

The court extended their lawful sentence under section 352 of Code of Criminal Procedure, under which the period of their detention prior to their conviction would be deducted in their prison terms.

The FIR of the occurrence was registered at Charjadda city police station on Sept 19, 2022 on the complaint of the victim's mother.

An assistant public prosecutor, Andrew Gul, and counsel for the complainant contended that the two accused were directly charged in the FIR for the heinous offence.—Correspondent

## UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, LAHORE

### TRUTH, THE ULTIMATE VIRTUE

### VACANCIES FOR TEACHING AND NON-TEACHING POSTS

The University of Education, Lahore was established in 2004 and is a part of the National Commission and Higher Education Commission of Pakistan. It is situated in Township, Lahore. It is a research based institution for teaching and non-teaching staff. The ideal candidate for the following positions who possess required knowledge, experience and have interest and motivation to work may apply.

#### 1. Professor (EP&I) Required

**Faculty** Faculty of Personnel and Division of Science and Technology

**Information Technology / Computer Sciences** 1 for DU Khan Campus

**Physics** 1 each for Jhangian Campus of Department of Physics and Division of Science and Technology (Theoretical Physics)

**Chemistry** 1 for Division of Science and Technology

**Zoology** 1 for Division of Science and Technology

**English** 1 for Multan Campus

**Management Sciences** 1 for Division of Management and Administration Sciences

**Education** 1 for Division of Education

**2. Associate Professor (EP&I) Required**

**English** 1 for Multan Campus

**Business Administration** 1 for Division of Management and Administration Sciences with Specialization in Finance

**Education** 1 each for Abbottabad Campus and Division of Education, Township, Lahore

**Physical Education** 1 for Division of Arts and Social Sciences, Lower Multan Campus

**Chemistry** 1 each for Jhangian Campus and Multan Campus

**Zoology** 1 each for Multan Campus

<b

# BUSINESS

## Remittances surge to record \$3.2bn in May

Inflows rose 8pc to \$27bn in first 11 months of FY24

By Shahid Iqbal

KARACHI: The country received the highest-ever monthly remittances of \$3.24 billion in May, an increase of 5.4 per cent compared to \$2.8bn inflows in the same month last year, sparking optimism for a robust fiscal year.

According to data released by the State Bank on Friday, the May inflows were also 15.3pc higher than April's \$2.8bn.

This rebound is particularly notable following a \$4bn shortfall in remittances during the previous fiscal year (FY23). As of the July-May period of the current fiscal year, total remittances have reached \$27.09bn, around 8pc higher than a year ago.

If June maintains May's perfor-



mance, this could result in the second-highest annual remittances in Pakistan's history, compared to the record \$31.28bn inflows in FY22.

Financial experts attribute the

surge partly to the timing of Eid ul-Azha, as remittance inflows typically spike during the two Eid festivals.

However, other factors, such as a

stable exchange rate, anticipated foreign investments, and a buoyant equity market, also contribute to this positive trend.

It was also observed that due to a steep fall in property prices, remittances have partially diversified towards this sector. Financial experts said that if real estate activities improve, more remittances could come for investment.

Pakistan depends more on remittances than exports, which remained lower than the remittances in most of the last five years.

The inflows would help the government meet this year since the current account deficit in the first 10 months (July to April) of the current fiscal year in just around \$209 million. The government expects a CAD of around \$3bn by the end of the year.

The remittances will also help the government reduce the trade deficit and save surplus for debt servicing. The country is estimated to pay about

\$225bn as debt servicing in the next fiscal year (FY25).

The data shows that the highest inflow was noted from Saudi Arabia, as the remittances during July-May were \$6.515bn, a growth of 10pc compared to last year.

Remittances from the UAE increased 12.7pc to \$4.88bn during 11 months of this fiscal year, the highest growth compared to all other countries or destinations. However, inflows from the GCC countries declined 1.4pc to \$2.837bn during this period.

Other big inflows were from the UK, which grew by 8.2pc to reach \$4.03bn during 11 months. The inflows from European Union countries were almost equal to those from the United States.

The inflows from the EU noted a growth of 12.2pc to total remittances of \$1.261bn, while the remittances from the US in the same period were \$3.209bn, a growth of 10.7pc.

**SECP calls for mandatory crop insurance programme**

By Kalbe Ali

ISLAMABAD: Despite natural and human-induced vulnerabilities posing challenges to food security, livestock and crop insurance in Pakistan is almost non-existent.

Out of a total of Rs45.3 billion gross premiums for the year 2022, the agriculture insurance premiums account for just Rs2.8bn.

The premium for the livestock sector remains at Rs800 million, the Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan (SECP) said in a report titled "Securing Livelihoods: A Comprehensive Look at Crop and Livestock Insurance in Pakistan and the Way Forward".

The report highlights that the average number of insured animals a year was only 176,000, and that too are progressive farmers or dairy farmers who supply bulk quantities of milk to corporate companies.

There are two government-led crop insurance schemes and four private sector insurance schemes, including one "weather index insurance". —By Javaid Chaudhry

The SECP has suggested a mandatory national crop insurance initiative based on the recommendations outlined in the proposed National Crop Insurance Scheme by the task force formed under the Ministry of Commerce led by SECP.

The commission has highlighted that the government-led insurance schemes cover around 14 per cent of farmers out of a total population of approximately 8.2 million.

There is a need for a nationwide livestock insurance programme tailored for individual farmers, with graduated subsidies for subsistence farmers.

The report also explores the potential integration of crop and livestock insurance into existing social protection initiatives like the Human Income Support Programme (HISP) and analogous provincial programmes, a protective approach to providing financial stability to small and vulnerable farmers.

It is emphasised that all these schemes are developed under a public-private partnership (PPP) model with a focus on subsidising the cost of the private sector insurers under a well-thought-out plan to gradually reduce the government subsidy allocation to the extent of the viability gap and transition towards a market-based approach.

The report stressed that the contribution of the agriculture sector to the economy was 2.5pc of GDP, with 65pc of this share attributed to livestock. However, this sector faces significant risks, including climate change, floods, droughts, pests, diseases, and high input costs.

## Tomato, onion fuel weekly inflation

By Mubarak Zafar Khan

ISLAMABAD: Short-term inflation, measured by the Sensitivity Price Index (SPI), is on the rise for the second week in a row ahead of the upcoming federal budget, official data showed on Friday.

The SPI-based inflation increased by 21.69 per cent year-on-year in the week ending June 6, mainly due to surging prices of vegetables and pulses.

It witnessed a 0.8pc week-over-week increase.

According to early reports on the proposed tax measures in the upcoming budget 2024-25, there appears to be a strong emphasis on indirect taxes, particularly sales. This is expected to contribute to an increase in inflation in the coming weeks.

Furthermore, the prices of a few vegetables, such as tomatoes and onions, rose each year due to strong demand related to Eid ul-Azha. The real impact of the decline in past oil prices caused commodities will be neutralised due to the bullish trend in vegetable prices, which will further fuel inflation in the next few weeks.

In March, the decline in SPI came after a consistent 11-week period of inflation above 40pc, which warded from 20pc recorded on Nov 8, 2023. The weekly inflation hit a record 49.15pc year-on-year in early May 2023, but then decelerated as low as 24.4pc in late August 2023 before surging past 40pc during the week ending Nov 16, 2023.

The items whose prices saw the steepest increase in the week included onions (33.1pc), tomatoes (35.34pc), carrots (4.5pc), garlic (3.4pc), potatoes (2.62pc), chiloes (1.86pc), Gorgonzola (1.57pc), ghee (1.45pc), pulse masal (1.07pc), beans (0.66pc), eggs (0.41pc) and energy drink (0.38pc).

The items whose prices decreased the most over the previous week included bread (3.02pc), garlic (1pc), ghee (1.74pc), pulse masal (1.41pc), dried (1.42pc), raw basmati broken (1.32pc), chillies powder (1.31pc), eggs (0.96pc), wheat flour (0.77pc) and mustard oil (0.49pc).

However, on an annual basis, the items whose prices increased the most included gas charges for Q1 (57.5pc), onions (38.01.37pc), chillies powder (37.89pc), garlic (43.49pc), tomatoes (36.53pc), salt powder (31.89pc), sheets (30.52pc), ghee (30.01pc), pulse masal (29.63pc), bread (21.81pc), energy drink (20.5pc) and sugar (19.85pc).

In contrast, the prices of chicken dropped 30pc, followed by wheat flour (28.35pc), bananas (25.69pc), cooking oil (2.5pc), vegetable ghee (2.5kg (15.12pc), vegetable ghee 1 kg (14.19pc), mustard oil (9.71pc), sugar (8.73pc) and LPG (5.47pc).

The SPI stood at 309.91 compared to 308.52 the preceding week and 254.47 a year ago.



PRICES of perishables surged ahead of federal budget scheduled to be unveiled on June 12.—File photo

## Domestic debt goes up by Rs1tr in April

By Our Staff Reporter

KARACHI: The central government's domestic debt increased by Rs1.05 trillion to Rs44.68tr in April from Rs3.61tr in March, showed data released by the State Bank of Pakistan on Friday.

Similarly, the domestic debt increased by Rs1.68tr to Rs44.68tr in April from Rs3.61tr in June 2023.

US DOLLAR	Rs1,412.527756	Rs1,412.527756
EURO	Rs1,492.502043	Rs1,492.502043
GDP	Rs1,992.502043	Rs1,992.502043
SAUDI RIAL	Rs1,793.567032	Rs1,793.567032
QATARI RIAL	Rs1,942.502043	Rs1,942.502043
YEMENI RIAL	Rs1,942.502043	Rs1,942.502043
QATAR Dinar	Rs1,942.502043	Rs1,942.502043
QATARI RIAL	Rs1,942.502043	Rs1,942.502043

## Electricity tariff for Karachiites raised by Rs3.23 for June-September

By Khadeej Khan

ISLAMABAD: The National Electric Power Regulatory Authority (Nepa) on Friday notified up to Rs3.23 per unit additional increases in electricity rates for consumers of K-Electric for four months — June to September — to clear a nine-month backlog of fuel cost adjustments (FCAs).

Nepa sought about Rs1.6k per unit cumulative FCAs for three quarters (July 2023 to March 2024) of the outgoing fiscal year to extract up to Rs2.80m from the consumers at varying rates ranging between an increase of Rs4.96 to 9.6 paisa per unit for seven months and a reduction of Rs1.28 to 1.48 paisa per unit for two months.

Nepa provisionally allowed about half of the adjustments and staggered it in a manner that the consumers would be paying about Rs2.68 per unit additional FCA in June, followed by Rs1.11 per unit in July, Rs1.23 per unit in August and about 9.6 paisa per unit for September “in order not to overburden the consumers”. In this way, KE is expected to snap up about Rs12 billion in four months.

In doing so, the regulator abolished the positive FCAs on the request of KE to avoid a sudden shock to consumers and noted pursuant to Section 31(3)(b) of the Nepa Act, fuel cost adjustments are to be made within the approved tariff.

However, in the multi-year tariff (MYT) for 2023-30 period, “is not yet in effect and remains to be determined, the approved tariff applicable in the instant case is

in July 2024 bills.

Similarly, three smaller positive FCAs of 66 paisa, Rs1.77 and 79 paisa for August, November and December 2023 were clubbed together. This would mean about Rs2.22 per unit additional burden on consumers in August bills.

It also confirmed a positive FCA of Rs2.97 for January with a negative Rs1.57 per unit for March, with a net addition of about 9.6 paisa per unit in September billings.

Interestingly, Nepa member Syed Rafique A. Shaikh, who presided over the public hearing on KE's request for a nine-month fuel cost, did not sign the determination, while Chairman Wasimul Moshkar, who was on a foreign visit at the time, was among the four signatures to the decision.

KE is, in a statement, welcomed the Nepa's notification, saying the consumers would be paying about Rs2.68 per unit additional FCA in the country had already undertaken a similar process of paying FCA on a monthly basis, with an average rate of approximately Rs2.89 per unit for the same period (July 2023 to March 2024), while the provisional FCA allowed by KE averaged Rs1.26 per unit.

The regulator said that it was allowing provisional FCAs on the request of KE to avoid a sudden shock to consumers and noted pursuant to Section 31(3)(b) of the Nepa Act, fuel cost adjustments are to be made within the approved tariff.

Under the first scenario, the interim tariff as determined by “it”, therefore, the reference fuel cost remains, as allowed in the interim tariff for the quarter of January to March 2023, had been considered while reaching these additional FCAs.

KE proposed three different options for additional FCA recovery from consumers on a “proportional basis” to clear the backlog and avoid a sudden increase in fuel cost for seven months and a reduction in two months with a net accumulation of about Rs2.06 per unit for nine months to date about Rs20bn.

Under the first scenario, the utility demanded additional FCA for seven months and a cut in two months. The net combined impact amounted to Rs16.92 a monthly average of about Rs1.78 per unit and results in a financial impact of about Rs22bn.

the interim tariff as determined by “it”. Therefore, the reference fuel cost remains, as allowed in the interim tariff for the quarter of January to March 2023, had been considered while reaching these additional FCAs.

In the second option, KE demanded that it be allowed to charge consumers the difference between the actual fuel cost and the reference monthly fuel cost as per the interim tariff currently in place. In this option, KE sought an increase in rate for seven months and a reduction in two months, with a net additional increase of about Rs20bn. The cumulative net impact for nine months is

about Rs1.45 per unit or an average of Rs1.45 per cent per month.

In the third option, KE demanded that it be allowed to charge consumers the difference between the actual and reference monthly fuel cost as per the tariff permitted by KE and currently under Nepa's distribution. In this case, the utility has also sought an increase in fuel cost for seven months and a reduction in two months with a net accumulation of about Rs1.65 per unit for nine months to date about Rs20bn.

In the third scenario, the utility demanded additional FCA for seven months and a cut in two months. The net combined impact amounted to Rs16.92 a monthly average of about Rs1.78 per unit and results in a financial impact of about Rs22bn.

In a separate report on cereals supply and demand, the FAO forecast 2024-25 world cereal production at 2.845 billion tonnes, roughly on a par with 2023/24 record output, as barley, rice and sorghum output to meet increasing, offsetting declines in maize and wheat.

The FAO warned, however, that the “severe adverse weather conditions in the Black Sea region will likely result in a downward in world wheat production, a possibility not yet reflected in the forecast”. World cereal utilization in 2024-25 was seen increasing 0.5pc year-on-year to a new record high of 2.851 billion tonnes, the FAO said. World cereal stocks will likely increase 1.5pc from their opening levels to a record 897m tonnes, it added.—Reuters

## World food prices rise for third straight month: UN

LONDON: The United Nations world food price index rose for a third consecutive month in May, as higher cereals and dairy product prices outweighed drops in prices for sugar and vegetable oils.

The UN Food and Agriculture Organisation's price indices, which tracks the most globally traded food commodities, averaged 120.4 points in May, up 0.2pc from its revised April level, the FAO said on Friday.

The May reading was nonetheless 1.1pc below the level seen a year earlier.

The FAO index hit a three-year low in February as food prices continued to ease off from a record peak set in March 2022, following Russia's invasion of fellow crop export major Ukraine.

The uptick in May was supported by cereal prices rising 4.3pc month-on-month amid growing concerns about unfavourable crop conditions costing 2024 harvests in key producing areas like northern America, Europe and the Black Sea region.

Dairy prices rose 1.8pc in May from April, the FAO said, underpinned by increased product demand ahead of the summer holidays amid worries that milk production in western Europe may fall.

World cereal utilization in 2024-25 was seen increasing 0.5pc year-on-year to a new record high of 2.851 billion tonnes, the FAO said. World cereal stocks will likely increase 1.5pc from their opening levels to a record 897m tonnes, it added.—Reuters



## Bears onslaught continues on stock market

By Muhammad Kashif

## UN staff, other aid workers kidnapped in Yemen

DRIED: Yemen's Houthi rebels have detained an unspecified number of aid workers, including United Nations staff, in an apparently coordinated sweep, a diplomatic source and a Yemeni NGO said on Friday.

Eighteen aid workers were kidnapped in four conflict-held parts of the country, the Yemeni Maydan Organisation for Human Rights said, listing 10 workers from UN agencies.

A diplomatic source said "more than a dozen" aid workers, including UN staff, were kidnapped on Thursday.

The abductions underline the perilous task. Twelve aid workers in Yemen, where long-standing conflict has pockmarked one of the world's worst humanitarian crises.

"The Houthi armed group raided the homes and kidnapped staff of the United Nations and other international organisations operating in four governorates under their control," the Maydan Organisation said.

This "unjust escalation... constitutes a violation of the privileges and immunities of United Nations personnel," it added, describing the abductions as "blackmail practices in order to obtain political and economic gains".

The "simultaneous" abductions took place in the capital Sanaa, the key port of Hodeidah, Amran and Saada, the Houthi's traditional stronghold, the aid group said.—AFP



PLUMES of smoke rise from the site of an air strike in Sanaa, on Friday.—Reuters

## Google won't face jury trial in digital ads case

WASHINGTON: A federal judge ruled on Friday that Google will not face a jury trial over its alleged digital ad串 using dominance. The development comes after the company wrote a cheque to the United States in order to cover monetary damages.

The US Justice Department and a coalition of states sued the tech giant last year, claiming it was unlawfully "monopolizing digital advertising and overcharging users". The jury trial would have been the "first-ever" in a civil antitrust case, lodged by the Justice Department, Google stated.

Friday's ruling by the US District Judge, Louis Guijosa (in Alexandria, Virginia), means that Google will now face a "jury" trial in the lawsuit. The lawsuit seeks pri-

## Russia blames US for deaths on its soil

The statement follows warnings by Putin that the West is risking a global war by allowing Ukraine to fire missiles supplied by it.

ST PETERSBURG: Russia accused Ukraine on Friday of "using US-supplied rockets" to kill women and children, in a region of southern Russia and added that "Washington is to blame".

This is the first time Russia has stated that it holds the United States responsible for civilian deaths on its own soil. This accusation follows warnings by President Vladimir Putin that the West is playing with fire and risking a global conflict if it wades deeper into the Ukraine war.

The spokeswoman of the Russian foreign ministry, Maria Zakharova, said the strikes occurred last week, within the Belgorod region. She alleged this was "shortly" after the United States "agreed to the first time" to let Ukraine fire US-supplied weapons into Russia.

The US Secretary of State, Antony Blinken, confirmed last week that President Biden had approved the step as Ukraine could defend its Kharkiv region, which lies adjacent to Belgorod. Washington has barred Kyiv from firing US weaponry deeper into Russia and.

Zakharova said that statements from Washington which "gave the green light" for such attacks amounted to a "confession, for the murder of children and women in the Belgorod region".

"Fragments of HIMARS rockets will serve as direct proof," she told reporters.

Zakharova did not present any images of rocket fragments, nor did she say how many people were killed in the alleged incident.

Putin has warned "increasingly" in recent weeks that the West risks a global conflict if it wades deeper into the Ukraine war. In remarks to foreign editors on Wednesday,

he said Russia reserved the right to supply weapons to adversaries of the West in a "symmetrical" response to the "Western arming of Ukraine".

Meanwhile, a Ukrainian missile strike on the Russia-controlled city of Luhansk ripped through a block of flats on Friday, killing four people and wounding over 40, Russia-appointed officials said.

The eastern Luhansk border region is almost entirely under the control of Moscow, which has claimed its full annexation.

The main city, also called Luhansk, came under a "massive" missile attack on Friday morning, according to its Russia-appointed head, Leonid Pasechnik.

A section of an apartment block collapsed and the bodies of four peaceful civilians killed were removed from the rubble, the Moscow-backed region's government said on Telegram.

"Forty-five people have received medical treatment," said regional health minister Natalya Pashchenko, adding that they included an eight-year-old boy and three teenage boys.

The condition of ten of the injured is "grave", she said.

The strike tore open the facade of a five-story Northern block of flats from the roof down and left a deep crater in the ground, images posted by the Russian emergency services showed.

Rescuers carried out one elderly casualty on a stretcher, footage posted by the emergency services showed.—Agencies

## Biden asks Americans to 'recommit to democracy'

POINTE DU HOC: A group of US soldiers US army rangers 80 years ago on D-Day, President Joe Biden compared the threats posed by Nazi Germany to those facing the world today in the face of "dictators and authoritarians", he urged all Americans to resist isolationism and "recommit to democracy".

Biden's speech in Normandy, his second in as many days, aimed at bolstering support for Ukraine, Biden stoked the army rangers who fought that day would want Americans to "defend freedom".

He was referring to the June 6, 1944, Allied landings in France during World War II.

"Does anyone doubt that they would (America) stand up against Hitler's aggression here in Europe today?" he asked.

Biden refrained from mentioning his Republican rival in the Nov. 5 presidential election, namely, Donald Trump. However, the Democratic President's speech criticised the former president's "isolationist inclinations".

Biden once again urged Americans to remember the Rangers whose dramatic invasion on D-Day helped make the invasion a success.

"As we gather here today, it's not just to honor those who showed such remarkable bravery that day, June 6, 1944," Biden said. "It's to listen to the echo of their voices, to honor them. They're not holding us to scale these cliffs. They're asking us to stay true to what America stands for." On June 6, 1944, the elite Ranger troops scaled the 100-foot cliffs overlooking Omaha Beach. The Rangers then seized German artillery pieces that could have fired on American troops coming ashore at Omaha.—Reuters

## No air-conditioning for Ukraine officials

KYIV: The Ukrainian government ordered all ministries and regional authorities on Friday to stop using air-conditioning and switch off external lighting. The orders come as Russian forces bombard cities across the country.

Prime Minister Denys Shmyhal said reducing power consumption and saving as much electricity as possible was essential, following Russian strikes on Ukraine's power infrastructure.

Shmyhal says the government recommended similar steps to law enforcement agencies and judicial authorities. He urged businesses to follow suit and limit the use of air-conditioning and other energy-intensive equipment as much as possible.—Reuters

## In poll campaign blow, Sunak apologises for leaving D-Day events early

LONDON: British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak, in a rare setback to his election campaign, apologised on Friday for leaving D-Day commemorations early. He said he left early to give an interview in which he attacked the main opposition party.

Sunak's decision not to stay at the event in northern France alongside other world leaders, was met with dismay in the Conservative Party. Opinion polls suggest he faces the prospect of a heavy defeat in the national election on July 4.

The leader of the opposition Labour Party, Keir Starmer, remained in Normandy for the dur-

ation of events marking the 80th anniversary of the D-Day landings. Starmer was seen talking to leaders, including the Ukrainian President, Volodymyr Zelensky.

"The reflection, it was a reminder not to stay longer, and I've apologised for that, but I also don't think it's right to be political in the midst of D-Day commemorations," Sunak told reporters. "The focus should rightly be on the veterans."

Sunak says his plane had landed long before the start of the election campaign.

US President Joe Biden, Britain's King Charles and other leaders gathered at the events in Normandy.

Sunak spoke at a British event but delegated other duties to ministers, which included Foreign Secretary David Cameron.

Cameron was pictured with Biden, French President Emmanuel Macron and German Chancellor Olaf Scholz.

A usually loyal Conservative politician (who asked not to be identified) said: "I can't explain it and I won't." The lawmaker said it could become the "Gillian Duffy moment", in a reference to 2010 when Gordon Brown (the then prime minister) had apologised for being caught on tape calling a voter a "bigoted woman". This moment was seen as a turning point in a campaign which eventually lost.

Sunak's Conservatives lag about 10 points behind Labour in opinion polls. Sunak's campaign had an inauspicious start last month, when he announced the election date under a downpour of rain. Sunak competed to be heard against Labour supporters, who chanted a pop song associated with their party's crushing 1997 election victory.

In another major blow to the Tories, Brexit campaigner Nigel

Pearce accused leadership of the right-wing Reform UK party. Farage stated this week that he plans to stand in the election.

**Political pain**

Sunak says he is the person "best placed" to look after Britain's security. Starmer added that he will introduce mandatory national service, should he stay in power.

The wealthy former hedge fund manager has often been portrayed as being "out of touch" with ordinary people. This is during a campaign in which a cost-of-living crisis is a significant issue. He was asked repeat-

edly about the decision, whilst on the campaign trail, on Friday.

Gilia Hopkins, who is political research director at the polling company Savanta, says Sunak's "political misjudgement seems almost laser-guided in causing Rishi Sunak and the Conservative Party as much political pain as humanly possible".

Senior Labour spokesman Joanne Aspinwall accused Sunak of "choosing to prioritise his own vanity TV appearance over our voters" and "it is yet more desperation, yet more chaos". Liberal Democrat chief Ed Davey accused Sunak of a "total dereliction of duty".—Reuters



SYROS: A view of Syros, on the Greek island of the same name. Police combed the town on Friday after Michael Mosley, a British TV doctor, went missing.—Reuters

## NEWSMAKERS



## Frenchman pleads guilty in Russia for not registering as foreign agent

MOSCOW: French researcher Laurent Vassier pleaded guilty in a Moscow court on Friday to a charge of failing to register as a foreign agent while gathering information on the Russian military.

Vassier, 45, could face up to five years in prison. He was placed in pretrial custody on Aug. 5, despite a request to have him endorsed by the French embassy.

"I apologise for not registering as a foreign agent. The most upsetting thing is that throughout the 10 years of my work I tried to defend Russia and its interests," state news agency RIA quoted him as saying in court.

Vassier is a Russia specialist and adviser to IRD, a Swiss-based conflict mediation group whose full name is the Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue.

A short video posted by the Moscow court service showed the Frenchman being led in handcuffs into the courtroom and seated next a barred metal cage at the start of the hearing.

He joins a growing list of foreign

nationals detained in Russia who have found themselves caught up in the crisis in relations between Russia and the West since the Ukraine war.

US reporter Evan Gershkovich is awaiting trial on spy charges and Russian-American journalist Alisa Kurmazova for failing to register as a foreign agent. Another American, Paul Whelan, was jailed for 16 years in 2018. All deny any guilt, and the US has accused Moscow of conducting "hostile diplomacy".

Gordon Black, a US soldier, went on trial in Russia's Far East on Thursday on suspicion of stealing from his Russian girlfriend and threatening to kill her.

French President Emmanuel Macron on Thursday denied Vassier worked for the French state and described his arrest as part of a campaign of disinformation by Moscow. Under Russian law, a person is obliged to contact the justice ministry and register as a foreign agent if they are involved in political activity or collecting military information.—Reuters



THE HAGUE: Dutch King Willem-Alexander and Queen Maxima pose with their children, Crown Princess Amalia, Princess Alexia and Ariane, during an official photo session, on Friday.—Reuters



CHERBOURG: President Emmanuel Macron of France speaks with WWII veterans as he attends a ceremony in north-western France on Friday as part of commemorations marking the 80th anniversary of the D-Day Allied landings in Normandy.—AFP

WILMINGTON: James Biden, brother of Joe Biden, and his wife Diane Jones Biden, arrive at the Castle-Brogue Federal Building on Friday to attend the trial of Hunter Biden, the US president's son. Hunter Biden went on trial this week on charges he lied to police that he was not a drug addict while purchasing a gun in 2018.—AFP



MUNICH: Pretzel and EU flags are pictured before the test tally for European elections of Germany's Christian Democrats Union.—AFP

## Israeli forces batter Gaza as tanks advance in Rafah

**CARTED:** With a reserved ceasefire patch stalled, Israel bombarded central and southern areas of Gaza Strip again on Friday, killing 28 Palestinians, and tank forces advanced to the western edges of Rafah.

Qatari and Egyptian mediators tried again this week to mediate a truce, preventing a halt to the hostilities, a release of Israeli prisoners and Palestinians jailed in Israel, and an untrammelled flow of aid into Gaza to alleviate a humanitarian disaster.

But negotiators close to the nation said there were still no signs of a breakthrough.

A month after invading into Rafah in what Israel said was an assault to wipe out Hamas's last intact combat units, tanked forces have advanced to the southwest fringes of the city that skirts the Gaza Strip's border with Egypt, residents said.

They said tanks were stationed in the Al Isra district, near the Mediterranean coast, while snipers had encircled some buildings and high ground, trapping people in their houses. They said Israeli machineguns fire had made it too dangerous to go out.

Gaza health officials said two Palestinians had been killed and several wounded in western Rafah from tank shelling there. In central Gaza, Palestinian medics said 15 people died overnight in Israeli bombardment.

"I think the occupation forces are trying to reach the beach area of Rafah. The raids and the bombing overnight were tactical, they entered under heavy fire and then retreated," one Palestinian resident said via a short app.

In the largest city of Khan Younis, just to the north of Rafah, an Israeli air strike on a house killed eight people and wounded several, including children.

In northern Gaza, three Palestinians were killed

in an Israeli air strike on a Gaza City school building that was sheltering displaced families, rescue workers said.

Hamas said on Friday its fighters shelled militiamen in the central city of Deir al-Balah, shelling a house where Israeli troops were barricaded, killing some and wounding others. It said helicopters were now landing to evacuate the stricken Israeli unit.

The Israeli military focused on central Gaza in its latest update, saying it had killed "dozens" of militants and destroyed more militant infrastructure in continuing operations in the Al Rafah refugee camp and nearby city of Deir al-Balah.

Israel's military blames Hamas for Gaza's high civilian death toll, accusing it of operating within densely populated neighbourhoods, schools and hospitals as cover, something it denies. U.N. and humanitarian officials accuse Israel of using disproportionate force in the war, which it denies.

### Death circle

On Thursday, Israel hit an al-Nasser school building with what it said was a targeted airstrike on up to 30 militant combatants inside, and a Hamas official said 40 people were killed including teachers and children sheltering at the U.N. site.

"It's just another horrific example of the price that civilians are paying, that Palestinian men, women and children who are just trying to survive, who are being forced to move around in sort of a death circle around Gaza, trying to find safety, are paying," UN spokesperson Stephane Dujarric said.

Israel said it was officially notified of the decision on Friday. The global list is included in a report on children and armed conflict that is due to be submitted to the US Security Council on June 14.

Israel's Foreign Minister Israel Katz said the decision would impact the country's relations with the United Nations.

Katz said he was notified by Guterres' chief of staff and posted a

video on social media of him responding to the decision during their phone call.

"I am utterly shocked and disgusted by this shameful decision of the Secretary General," said Katz.

But Guterres' spokesperson, Stephane Dujarric, declined to comment.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said in a statement that the UN had "added itself to the black list of history when it joined those who support Hamas."

Guterres' annual report to the UN Security Council on children and armed conflict covers the killing, maiming, sexual abuse, abduction or recruitment of children, denial of aid access and targeting of schools and hospitals.

The report has been compiled by Virginia Gamba, Guterres' special representative for children and armed conflict.

The list attached to the report aims to shame parties to conflicts in the hope of pushing them to implement measures to protect children.—Reuters

## UN to call out Tel Aviv for 'violations' against children

**NEW YORK:** United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres has added Israel's military to a global list of offenders who have committed violations against children, UN Secretary-General Erdan said, describing the decision as "shameful".

Erdan said he was officially notified of the decision on Friday. The global list is included in a report on children and armed conflict that is due to be submitted to the US Security Council on June 14.

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## Biden's aide says US may deploy N-weapons to 'deter China, Russia'

**WASHINGTON:** The United States may have to deploy more strategic nuclear weapons in coming years to "deter growing threats" from Russia, China and "other adversaries", a White House said on Friday.

Pearay Vaidi, the top National Security Council arms control official, made his comments in a speech on "a more competitive approach" to arms control that outlined a policy shift aimed at preventing Moscow and Beijing from reverse repositioning of US allies for arms limitation talks.

"Absent a change in adversary arsenals, we may reach a point in the coming years where an increase from current deployed numbers is required. We need to be fully prepared to execute if the president makes that decision," he told the Arms Control Association.

"If that day comes, it will result in a determination that more nuclear weapons are required to deter our adversaries and protect the American people and our allies and partners."

The US currently observes a limit of 1,550 deployed

strategic nuclear warheads set in the 2010 New START treaty with Russia even though Moscow "suspended" its participation last year over US support for Ukraine, a move Washington called "legally invalid".

Vaidi spoke soon after National Security Advisor Jake Sullivan told the same group there was no need to increase US strategic nuclear arms deployments to counter the arsenals of Russia and China, to which he offered talks "without preconditions". The administration remains committed to international arms control and non-proliferation regimes designed to curb the spread of nuclear weapons, Vaidi said.

But, he alleged, Russia, China and North Korea "are still expanding and diversifying their nuclear arsenals at a breakneck pace".

The US and Iran "are increasingly cooperating and coordinating with each other in ways that run counter to peace and stability, threaten the United States, our allies and our partners and exacerbate regional tensions", he said.—Reuters



**BAMAKO (Mali):** Villagers hold fishing nets as they wait for the start of a collective fishing rite. The Bonke collective fishing rite commemorates the founding of the town Bam and marks the beginning of the rainy season.—AFP

## US, British citizens among suspects on trial in DR Congo

**KINSHASA:** More than 50 defendants, including six who have US, British, Canadian or Belgian citizenship, appeared in court in the Democratic Republic of Congo on Friday. They were charged with taking part in a "badly coup", alongwith "other offences", which carry the death penalty.

On May 11, armed men briefly occupied an office of the presidency in Kinshasa, the country's capital city. This was just before their leader, the US-based Congolese politician, Christian Malanga, was "killed" by security forces.

The defendants include Malanga's 21-year-old son, Marcel Malanga, two US citizens and the three other holders of foreign passports. However, they all have Congolese roots.

The first day of the military trial took place under a tent, in the yard of Ndolo military prison, on

Kinshasa's outskirts. The defendants filed in, wearing blue and yellow prison issued robes and lined up before the judge.

The 53 defendants face charges including illegal arms possession, criminal conspiracy, terrorism, attempts to destabilise state institutions and undermine the integrity of the state, some of which risk the death penalty or lengthy prison sentences.

The defendants were identified in court and their charges read out. However, they were not asked to enter a plea. Congo lifted a moratorium on the death penalty in March, citing "treachery and espionage in exacerbating armed conflicts in the region".

Richard Bonds, a lawyer for one of the US detainees, told journalists it was too soon to talk of possible extradition, and the presumption of innocence applied.—Reuters

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## Will regressive taxation continue to dominate?

Continued from Page 1

tariff taken on imports of used cars and increased FED proposals for robotics. While the petroleum levy is classified under most tax revenue in the budget, it is similar to regressivity in nature. Proposals to reintroduce a carbon tax or significantly raise the petroleum levy to Rs100 per litre are potentially alarming.

An increase in indirect taxes burdens those already crushed under the weight of inflation. An increase in direct taxes has a similar effect of taxing those who are already taxed — already roughly 30pc of income tax collected.

Various stakeholders, including institutions such as the Asian Development Bank and the International Monetary Fund, have repeatedly called for widening the tax net through real estate, agricultural and retail sectors. However, these sectors have arguably and successfully resisted all efforts to be taxed in proportion to their revenue.

### Fighting a "battle"

Last month, the Regional Tax Office in Rawalpindi awarded certificates to four traders who have officially registered themselves under the Tariq Dar Scheme. The scheme is the latest attempt to

integrate traders and wholesalers into the formal tax net. Introduced at the start of 2024, the voluntary registration period concluded on April 30. In the first month of its voluntary registration, fewer than 100 traders signed up, indicating the absolute lack of interest in joining the formal net.

Retailers and wholesalers contribute 30pc to GDP but their tax contributions stand at mere 4pc, probably because only 300,000 of about 3.5m retailers are actually filing tax returns. Taxing retailers may not increase tax revenue in terms of Rs400 billion, according to some estimates.

However, there is an anomaly. VAT is taxed at a much lower rate than other industries. For example, on until Rs4.8m, agricultural income is taxed at 10pc, whereas income from other sources is taxed at over 30pc, says Mr Wattoo.

A farmer, who is also an industrialist — a definition that may apply to many local businesses who are incidentally in position as well — can declare his income as agricultural and pay a lower tax rate, effectively turning his income "white".

**Reducing taxes to finance tax revenue**

The real estate sector presents another challenge. Its actual value is difficult to gauge and even more complicated to calculate

compared to its contribution to GDP. Agriculture accounts for roughly a quarter of Pakistan's GDP, but agricultural income tax (AIT) is only about Rs2.5 billion, far below its potential of around Rs600 billion, suggests a study by PIDE.

Farmermost file two income tax returns one to the FBR and the other to the provincial authorities. Tax returning to the FBR is mere paperwork to ensure that the farmer remains on the return list — the provincial authority collects the actual tax, explains Khalid Wattoo, a former and development professional.

However, there is an anomaly. AIT is taxed at a much lower rate than other industries. For example, on until Rs4.8m, agricultural income is taxed at 10pc, whereas income from other sources is taxed at over 30pc, says Mr Wattoo.

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**Reducing taxes to finance tax revenue**

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## Netanyahu to address US Congress on July 24

**WASHINGTON:** Israeli leader Benjamin Netanyahu will address lawmakers in the US Congress on July 24, Republican party leaders announced on Thursday.

The visit comes amid mounting pressure for the US ally and Hamas to agree to a permanent ceasefire in Israel from growing diplomatic isolation over the rising death toll in Gaza.

President Joe Biden has warned what he called an Israeli three-phase plan that would end the conflict, free all Israeli prisoners and lead to the reconstruction of the devastated Palestinian territory without Hamas in power.

But Netanyahu's office stressed that the war sparked by the October 7 raid would continue until Israel's goals are achieved, including the destruction of Hamas, which has not given its respects to the plan.

The four top party leaders in the House and Senate from both sides agreed. Netanyahu last week to speak before a joint meeting of Congress in a letter making solidarity with Israel "an issue of life and death against terror".

Netanyahu's visit "reinforces the US and Israel's enduring relationship and will offset... Netanyahu's opportunity to share the Israeli government's vision for defending their democracy, combating terror, and establishing just and lasting peace in the region", House Speaker Mike Johnson and top Senate Republicans Mitch McConnell said in a statement.

Earlier, the proposal to invite Netanyahu to address a joint session of Congress was rejected by key Democrats. Two-time presidential candidate Senator Bernie Sanders and former House speaker Nancy Pelosi were among a host of lawmakers who had opposed the idea of the Israeli leader addressing Congress.

Israel's military offensive in Gaza has killed at least 36,634 people, mostly civilians, according to the health ministry. US media had earlier reported that Netanyahu had agreed to visit on June 13, but his office told Israeli media the date had "not been finalised" and would not be on that date because it interferes with a Jewish holiday.—AFP

## Millions of Chinese take entrance exams

**BEIJING:** Millions of students in crimson dress and fathers clutching umbrellas, "shoulder to shoulder" in drizzling Beijing. This was after sending their children into an exam hall on Friday, which was the first day of China's biggest "gaokao" tests, that will shape the futures of millions of high school going children.

The number of students taking this year's multi-subject gaokao series is set to be a record high, with the Ministry of Education saying that 13.4 million candidates have registered for the high-stakes tests.

"People say that this is the start of a life," 50-year-old mother Zhi Haisheng told reporters. "So one cannot slack off." Zhi dressed a traditional qipao dress to take her daughter to the examination site in central Beijing, hoping that its auspicious bright red colour would bring good luck.

China's gaokao (high school students on subjects including Chinese, English, mathematics science and literature), the results of which are critical for gaining admission to university.

High-level education has expanded rapidly in China in recent decades, as an economic boom pushed up living standards, as well as parents' expectations for their children's careers.

The job market which grew exponentially in the past two decades is struggling to achieve a post-pandemic recovery, with high youth unemployment emerging as a significant concern.

"I think this is a necessary process of growing up," Zhi stated, when asked about the pressure young people face.

"The gaokao is also a method for the country to select talented people," she said. "Only after undergoing pressure can one's mental resilience increase. Then you will be able to withstand these pressures in the future when working in society. I think this is understandable."

### Prize from space

On Friday morning, the list of top-scoring applicants on social media site Weibo was swelled with space-related discussions. Users shared pictures of uniformed students embracing high-fives and hugging their parents, before entering testing centres.

From the official Weibo account of China's Chang'e-6 lunar probe, which began carrying samples back to Earth from the far side of the Moon on Tuesday, offered encouragement. "Every one of you that is striving hard in exams," it said.

Images from across the country taken on Friday morning showed students and well-wishers preparing for the first session. In the central city of Wuhan, crowds of parents stood behind a barrier, while others clutched documents, on their way into the examination centre.

Education authorities are on high alert after education officials urged parents to make sure their children are not exposed to the gaokao exam.

All policies for the housing and construction policies under the PTI government, Mr Bakhtiar compared the real estate sector to Hollywood of the 1970s. "In the past, Indian producers had to go to the underworld to raise financing for their films. Similarly,

## Combative Modi invited for oath tomorrow

By Our Correspondent

NEW DELHI: Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi for the swearing-in of the government on Sunday, after his election as the leader of the National Democratic Alliance (NDA), this time including his own BJP lawmakers, on Friday.

Addressing the NDA in his acceptance speech, Modi displayed all the bitterness he showed towards the opposition during his furious manoeuvring, particularly targeting the Congress party by name. The speech ended a distinct sense that Modi had not abandoned the combative mode, ignoring the conventions that such occasions are used to highlight the achievements of democracy. This could be because he would remain insecure until winning the mandatory trust vote in the new Lok Sabha.

In a TV discussion with political analyst Parshakht Prabhu, the anchor noted that the name of Modi's BJP rival and cabinet colleague Nitin Gadkari was being mentioned among a section of BJP MPs as a better alternative to

him. Gadkari was seen not rising from his seat when he stood up to greet Modi in the central hall of the parliament. It is possible that a section of the opposition parties would also agree to back him should Gadkari throw his hat in the ring.

The BJP has fallen short of a majority in the 2024 Lok Sabha elections, winning 249 seats, and having to rely on allies to form the government. But Modi persisted, claiming, "people of the country know that we had never lost before and neither have we lost now". At the meeting, he was unanimously elected as the leader of NDA, leader of the BJP in the Lok Sabha, and the leader of the BJP parliamentary party board.

Shift to NDA goes

The new government depends crucially on the support of the Janata Dal (United) led by Bihar chief minister Nitish Kumar and the Telegu Desam Party led by Chandrababu Naidu who held the key, as was evidenced in their meeting position right next to Modi at the front table during the NDA parliamentary party meeting. While the BJP tailored its campaign



NARENDRA MODI shows the president's letter requesting him to form the new government.—AFP

around Modi alone, including naming its election manifesto as 'Modi Ji Garibnirvar', ever since the party failed to win majority on its own, the references to his government have swiftly moved to "NDA government" from the "Modi government".

Modi continued with his attack on the opposition. "You have seen our behaviour after the 4th. We know how to handle our victory. Our attitude is such that we don't take victory too seriously and neither do we mock those who have

been defeated. You can ask any child whose government was in power before the Lok Sabha elections? They will say the NDA. Then who formed the government after 2024, and they will say the NDA. So how did we lose? It was an NDA government in the past, still is and will be."

The biggest blow to the BJP's final tally came from UP, where it won only 31 seats. Overall, the NDA — BJP and Rashtriya Lok Dal — won only 36 seats in comparison to the INDIA bloc's 43 seats. The Samajwadi Party won 37 seats, while the BJP won 33, the Congress six, RLD two and Apsa Dal (Oshiwala) one, and Aam Aadmi Party zero.

While the main table gave pride of place to all the BJP allies which are now crucial to the government's formation, interestingly, RLD's Jayant Chaudhary was conspicuously absent from the "Modi government".

## CEC blames top judiciary for electoral complications

- ECP reserves verdict on pleas seeking transfer of petitions
- PTI terms Feb 8 polls most rigged in country's history

By Hikmat A. Khan

arlier poll petitions were also seen as an admission that ECP's and RDA's claims from the bureaucracy had failed to deliver.

Faisal Chaudhary argued that ECP can neither make relevant the tribunal constituted for the capital, nor can it regulate its proceedings. "You can't sit on a revision or appellate authority on the orders of the tribunal," he told the bench.

He cautioned that any decision taken by the ECP in violation of law would open floodgates of litigation, attracting petitions from across the country.

Opposing the applicant's plea for constitution of a new

tribunal, he pointed out there was no such petition in the application and argued that ECP cannot go extra mile. He said that the applicant, a respondent in the case before the tribunal, had neither submitted a response, nor did he raise any objection over the election petitions being transferred there.

He said the tribunal had granted extension to the applicant (MNA Aslam Asghar Khan) for submission of his reply, yet he had failed to submit his reply.

He alleged that the applica-

tion had been filed with multi-

pleas without造成 damage to the attorney respondent's legal

cause.

He contended that the applica-

tion was vague, cursory, and based on surmises and had been prepared on a misunderstanding of law on whom basis.

The applicant has brought the presiding officer of the tribunal into ridicule, humiliated and com-

tured, he added.

He told the bench that the entire exercise was aimed at delaying the proceedings before the tribunal, SC, after failing to submit the reply to the election petition as per law.

Advocate Shaukat Shahenshah, the PTI-backed candidate who had lost the election, argued that the ECP's June 4 election had been challenged in the Islamabad High Court, where the hearing was ongoing and a decision was awaited.

He termed all the arguments presented by the petitioners irrelevant and argued that the decision to transfer the tribunal could only be made in consultation with the chief justice concerned.

After hearing the arguments, the ECP reserved its decision on the tribunal transfer case.

## FO pins hopes on new Indian govt for peace

By Bashir Sagad Syed

ISLAMABAD: The Foreign Office on Friday expressed the hope that India's new government would promote peace and address the Kashmir dispute, underlining Pakistan's commitment to regional stability.

PTI Spokesperson Moinul Zahir Baloch, while speaking at a media briefing, said, "We hope that India will take steps to create a conducive environment for advancement of peace and dialogue and resolution of long-standing disputes for the mutual benefit of the people of Pakistan and India."

Despite cobbling together the required numbers in Lok Sabha to form the government, BJP's subdued performance in the polls means it will have to heavily rely on regional parties' support. This shift, coupled with a strong opposition, signals a more complex political environment for the ruling alliance. Pakistan has so far not congratulated PM-designate Modi on his party's success in polls awaiting what the spokesperson said, the completion of "the process of formation of government".

Mr Baloch refused to comment on India's electoral process, saying "it is the right of the people of India to decide about their own leadership".

Though there has been a steady deterioration in ties between the two countries since Mr Modi first assumed office in 2014, the spokesperson noted that his action of stripping Occupied Jammu and Kashmir of its autonomous status and annexing it with India in 2019 "vitiated the bilateral environment". She highlighted that "unilateral rhetoric" against Pakistan was prominently used during the recent election.

The spokesperson emphasised that despite ongoing challenges in relations with India and the hostile rhetoric emanating from there, Pakistan has consistently chosen to respond responsibly.

"Pakistan has always desired cooperative relations with all its neighbours including India. We have consistently advocated constructive dialogue and engagement to resolve all outstanding issues, including the core dispute of Jammu and Kashmir," Mr Baloch said.

"Pakistan believes in peaceful coexistence. We want peace and stability in the region," she added.

She reiterated that impartial electoral exercises in India-held Jammu and Kashmir cannot alter the reality prescribed by international law, which considers that the future of Kashmir is to be determined by its people in accordance with the UN Security Council resolutions.

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# SPORT

## Paris hangs Olympic rings on Eiffel Tower

**PARIS:** As the count down to the Olympics passed the 50-day mark, Paris hoisted its rings on the Eiffel Tower overnight and showed them off on Friday morning.

Workers assembled the prefabricated steel rings and, after dark on Thursday, lifted the logo, weighing 30 tonnes and 27 metres long, into place between two legs of the tower just above its first level.

Pierre Engle, an engineer at ArcelorMittal, the steel company that manufactured the rings from recycled material, said tests and studies had been carried out for many months to ensure the success of the operation.

The rings, each nine metres in diameter, will be illuminated every night.

"It will be one of the images of the Games," predicted Thierry Rabotin, director of events and operations at the Paris Olympics Organising Committee.

Only two other buildings in Paris have the five rings attached to their facades.

Earlier in the week, the rings were also hoisted at Paris La Défense Arena, in suburban Nanterre, where the Olympic and Paralympic swimming events will be held.—AFP



THE Olympic rings are being installed on the Eiffel Tower for the Paris Games.—AFP

## Tyson to fight Paul on Nov 15

**NEW YORK:** Mike Tyson and Jake Paul will fight on Nov 15 at AT&T Stadium in Arlington, Texas, promoters said on Friday after the bout was pushed back from its July 20 date due to the former heavyweight champion's recent elbow surgery.

Medical professionals had recommended Tyson, 57, does minimal light training as he recovers to return to full training without limitation.—Reuters



JANNIK Sinner of Italy plays a forehand return against Spain's Carlos Alcaraz during their French Open semi-final at the Roland Garros Complex on Friday.—AFP

## Alcaraz downs Sinner to reach first French Open final

**PARIS:** Spain's Carlos Alcaraz recovered from a torrid start to beat an inconsistent Jannik Sinner 2-6, 6-3, 3-6, 6-4, 6-3 and qualify for his maiden French Open final after a narrow win over on Friday.

The third seed was a shadow of his brilliant self in the opening set before making the most of his Italian opponent's premature cramps to level before the latter match-went into a decider.

Australian Open champion Sinner, who will take over as world number one next week, fought out what he returned a massive forehand down the line while on the third match point on court Philippe Chatrier.

Double Grand Slam champion Alcaraz, who is hoping to add to his Wimbledon and US open titles, will face

Alexander Zverev or two-time runner-up Casper Ruud of Norway on Sunday.

"You have to find the joy in suffering, I think that's the key, even more so on clay, here at Roland Garros, losing rallies, losing matches, free sets, you have to fight, you have to suffer," said Alcaraz.

"Probably, the toughest match that I've played in my short career have been against [Jannik] in the US Open 2022, this year, it shows the great player [Jannik] is, and I hope to play many, many more matches like this one against Jannik, but yes it's one of the toughest matches that I've played, for sure."

Sinner got off to an explosive start and his pace, pace and precision were too much for Ruud, who was unable to handle the serve. Sinner's serve and his forehand were too much for Alcaraz as the

Italian raced to a 4-0 lead.

The Spaniard, however, recovered and pulled a break back to Alcaraz's first-service percentage took a dip.

But Alcaraz still could not find his stride and Sinner won another two games in a row to bag the opening set when his opponent settled into a three-set drop shot.

Yet another enforced seven-handed Sinner the early break in the second set, but the Italian, who before the French Open had not played for almost a month because of a hip injury, suddenly lost his stride, allowing Alcaraz to use his forehand to devastating effect and level the match.

The Spaniard broke for 2-3 in the third set with a service-saving crosscourt passing shot, as Sinner's breakfall continued, but struggled to recover from apparent

hand cramps, the future world number one clawed his way back and saved break points in the fifth game to stay in the contest.

Sinner then broke twice more to take the set — a scenario that seemed highly unlikely when he was barely able to hold his racket a few minutes earlier.

The match finally lived up to its billing in the fourth set with both players trading impressive blows. Leading 5-4, Alcaraz ended from 30-0 down on Sinner's serve to win four points in a row, forcing a deciding with a cross-court backhand winner at the end of a spectacular point.

He watched the early break by wrongfooting Sinner in the second game and did not look back, despite some nerves on the final two match points.—Reuters

## Guinea shock Algeria, Senegal held in World Cup qualifiers

**CAPE TOWN:** Fifteen Mayotte equalised five minutes from full-time in the Democratic Republic of Congo held home Senegal to a 1-1 draw in a World Cup Group "H" qualifier in Diamniadio on Thursday.

Senegal, without injured national Sadio Mané, have taken five points from a possible nine in a shaky start to their bid to reach the finals with only the top team in the pool guaranteed a place in the United States, Mexico and Canada.

The west African side led through Papa Massata Diouf but dropped more points having also drawn with Togo in November.

Medical professionals had recommended Tyson, 57, does minimal light training as he recovers to return to full training without limitation.—Reuters

defender Aly Absad.

Algeria won their first two qualifiers but were beaten 2-1 at home by Gabon on Thursday in another shock result.

Mohamed Sylla gave Guinea the lead but Algeria equalised following an own goal from Yasser Boula before the visitors hit the post again through Agoulim Camara.

A quick-fire brace from Tranquillo Mati Mohamed Sabri led Egypt 2-0 up at home to Burkina Faso in Cairo, but they were made to sweat when Lassine Traore pulled one back just before the hour mark.

The Pharaohs held on, however, to maintain their 100% start to the qualifiers as they lead Group "W" by four points after three rounds.

Second-placed Gabon, which were held to a 0-0 home

draw by Ethiopia.

Crystal Palace forward Jordan Ayew scored in added time as Ghana came from behind in Group "D" to triumph 2-1 in Malawi and rise from fifth to second.

Kamory Doumbia had given the hosts side the lead, but Ernest Kwame equalised and Ayew came off the bench to claim all three points.

Liberia moved top of Group "D" with a 2-1 home win over Mauritania, with all the goals coming in the first half in Bernhardi.

Palau Al Badri converted a penalty for Libya but they were pegged back when Kevin Riu equalised. Ahmed Elsharouf scored the winner for the hosts five minutes before the break.

Victory lifted the Libyans to seven points, three more than Cameroon and Cape Verde.

Malawi moved within three

points of Group "H" pacesetters Tunisia, thanks to a 3-1 win over San Tome e Principe in Libreville.

Tunisia, seeking a third straight appearance at the World Cup finals, have nine points, Namibia seven and Malawi six.

A Group "E" fixture between Congo Brazzaville and Niger was not played, reportedly because of a dispute over where it should take place.

It was originally set for Kinshasa, the capital of the Democratic Republic of Congo across the Congo river from Brazzaville, because the national stadium in Congo was not stand-

ard. However, the Brazzaville stadium was approved for international football after a last-minute inspection and, instead, Niger refused to go there.—Agencies

## Constantine says Pakistan 'better than before' despite loss to Saudis

**ISLAMABAD:** When Pakistan played their opening match against Saudi Arabia on their maiden foray into the second round Asian World Cup qualifying, they suffered a 4-0 loss.

Over six months on, in the return match against the Saudis at Jinnah Stadium on Thursday, Pakistan were on the losing end again. This time the scoreline read 3-0 but head coach Stephen Constantine was happy with the progress the team has made.

"We were better than before ... we were compact," he told reporters. "We didn't have much of the ball, we didn't have many opportunities but that's where it is. We were playing Saudi Arabia ... they have lots of quality."

Saudi Arabia's victory thanks to two goals from Faris Al Buraydah (26th and 48th minute) and one after the break by Mousab Al Jassmi (59th) saw them advance to the final round of qualifying for the 2026 tournament in the United States, Canada and Mexico and they were later joined by Jordan, who beat Tajikistan 3-0 in the other Group "G" game.

The top two in each of the

group advanced to the next phase in the quest for one of Asia's eight guaranteed berths in the 2026 World Cup.

Without Pakistan, who play Tajikistan in their final group game on Tuesday, now go into the third round of qualifying for the 2027 AFC Asian Cup and Constantine is banking on the team's consistent improvement to propel them to a maiden appearance at the continental championships.

"The boys give everything in the game and as a coach you cannot ask for more," said Constantine, who created history last year by steering Pakistan past the first qualifying round. "Maybe the quality is not there but it's part of the process to learn from mistakes. We have a lot of young players who will be the future of Pakistani football. I want to look forward. I think we are better than we were when I came."

### PALESTINE CREATE HISTORY

In other late action across the continent, Palestine created history when they booked a place in the third round for the first time

following a goalless draw against Lebanon in Doha.

Against the backdrop of the war in Gaza, the Palestinian team had already claimed a piece of footballing history this year by making a debut appearance in the Asian Cup knockout phase.

On Thursday, Palestine, who

were in the Group "I" match with seven points, only needed a draw to progress, and they got the desired result despite some rough-housing by Lebanon as they picked up seven yellow cards.

In will also mark the fourth consecutive time Palestine have booked their place in the Asian Cup finals, to be hosted by Saudi Arabia in 2027.

Manager Makhram Bahoui

met take on group winners Australia on June 11 next.

AFGHANISTAN HOLD QATAR

In matches played on the Middle East, the biggest surprise was Afghanistan holding reigning Asian champion Qatar to a goalless draw at Prince Abdallah Bin Jaber Stadium in Al-Husseini, Saudi Arabia.

Qatar have already qualified for the third round, but could not make anything out of dominant

ing the game and enjoying nearly 70 percent possession against a plucky Afghanistan, who now have five points in Group "K" — level with India, who drew 0-0 with Kuwait to leave only one point separating the three teams behind the group-winning Qataris.

The two-time Asian champions best chance among many came in the 57th minute, but Tahsin

Jahid's header, off a Majeed Suleiman cross, was denied by the woodwork.

United Arab Emirates never looked back after an early brace in the 12th and 14th minutes by Hareb Sabri and trounced Nepal 4-0 in Bahrain.

Bahrain's 0-0 draw with Yemen, meanwhile, confirmed their second place finish in Group "H" behind the UAE.—Agencies



DHA/LA: Palestinian players celebrate after drawing their FIFA World Cup qualifier against Lebanon at the Jassim Bin Hamad Stadium.—Reuters



## Williamson hails expanded event after US stunner

**PROVIDENCE:** New Zealand captain Kane Williamson hailed the T20 World Cup's expansion to 20 nations after co-host United States beat Pakistan on Thursday in one of the biggest upsets in the tournament's history.

The World Cup, also co-hosted by the West Indies, has an extra four teams, giving 16 nations more tournament experience while also raising concerns their presence could mean more one-sided results.

Williamson, who made his T20 World Cup debut in 2012 when Sri Lanka bowed 12 times, said the bigger field was a "fantastic thing".

"That sort of exposure is only beneficial for all teams," he told reporters on a video call from Guyana. "When you come to tournament time anything can happen which is the beauty of the sport."

"But it's ultimately great for the growth of cricket."

The US, who were guaranteed entry as co-hosts, pulled off a Super Over win against Pakistan in Doha after beating fellow tournament debutants Canada. The underfunded Americans are now top of Group "A" before playing heavyweight India next week. The top two in the group advance to the Super 8 phase.

Williamson said his team had watched the Pakistan upset from their base in the Caribbean.

"That was an amazing game of cricket," he added. "In those tournaments every team has really talented players, whether they've had experience against top-playing nations or not."

"In some ways, it's how you play on the day."

"KCC are just going to prefer Pakistan aren't knocking the hell out of this friendly-changed ball? Playing the ball that's just been changed 20 years ago?" he wrote on social media platform X.

"You can literally see Hameir Haq running his thumb over the ball at the top of his mark. @ unisport in Pakistan," Williamson added.—Agencies

The game wasn't even broadcast on American television but was instead only shown on the cricket specialist Willow TV subscription channel and streaming app. But online and in social media, American sports fans quickly became aware of their team's achievement.

NPR public radio tried to put the win into context for those not familiar with the sport.

"Team USA just beat Pakistan in Super Over, the baseball equivalent of extra innings," their reporter, "Just to put this into an American sports context, Pakistan losing to the US is like the Boston Red Sox losing to the Durham Bulls," they added, referring to the minor league baseball team from North Carolina.

Outside of the USA though there was no real outrage. The UK's Times called it "one of the biggest upsets in cricket history" while Australia's Daily Telegraph and the Americans had "surprised world cricket".—Agencies

## Warner wants England to use pace of Archer, Wood

**BRIDGEPORT:** Seagassed Australian opener David Warner believes his team can use the pace of England's express bowlers Mark Wood and James Archer when the traditional rivals face off in the T20 World Cup here on Saturday.

England's bowling line-up, which comprises among others speed merchants Archer and Wood. On the other hand, Australia's batting line-up is equally impressive and it promises to be a thrilling Group B clash at the Kensington Oval in Bridgetown.

Warner said T20 is a different format adding that varying formats could be a surprise.

"You just have to use their pace. In Test cricket they set different fields, different balls. In T20, you only have to get half an edge on it and it can go. So there's a fair difference. You play a lot of cricket over here. You are expecting it to be fast rather than because unless it is really short," Warner said while talking to reporters.

"The variation in bounce is what surprises you. Because when they pitch the ball that bounces (from the strange) length, your instinct is to pull. But you have to go back to targeting straight, bashing yourself, and if it does bounce, so be it."

Warner, who was criticised for his poor performances in the IPL, said that he does not care about criticism.—Agencies

## SL complain to ICC over 'different treatment'

**COLONIA:** Sri Lanka said on Friday they have complained to the ICC over their T20 World Cup treatment and conditions in-coast the US.

The sports minister Harin Fernando alleged other teams had it better and said Sri Lanka had lodged a formal protest after the squad was held up by a seven-hour flight delay at a Florida airport.

"Sri Lanka Cricket has complained to the ICC," Fernando told parliament. "Different countries are being treated differently. We have called for an explanation from the organisers of the tournament."

Sri Lanka's sports ministry has dispatched an officer to the United States to look into the welfare of the team, Fernando added.—AFP



KARACHI

Sunset 07:21 AM  
Shutters (Sunrise) 05:41 AM  
**NEXT 24 HRS**  
Minimum 28°C  
Maximum 34°C  
Outlook Partly Cloudy

KE comes under fire in NA over prolonged loadshedding in Karachi

By Syed Irfan Raza

ISLAMABAD: The K-Electric came under fire in the National Assembly on Friday as MNAs belonging to the ruling alliance lashed out at the power utility for carrying out prolonged loadshedding and high tariff.

Lawmakers on the treasury and opposition benches warned the Centre that people may compel to go for civil disobedience if they were not provided electricity right from the South to Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province in the metering belt.

During the session that was presided over by Deputy Speaker Ghulam Mustafa Shah, a sitting adjournment motion was moved by Pakistan Peoples Party MNA Asad Ali Khan on long duration of power loadshedding in Karachi.

Another PPP MNA, Naseeb Qadri, said his constituency Lyari had been facing up to 15 hours of loadshedding. "If the issue of loadshedding is not resolved people will go for civil disobedience," he added.

PPP MNA Shabir Mirza said more than 20 hours of power loadshedding was being carried out by power utility in Sindh.

The relevant minister just recanted his statement on the floor of the house but he downplayed prioritising.

PP chairman Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari also attended the NA session.

The opposition Jamiat Ulema-Islam-Fazl staged a walkout in the NA as its leader Abdul Ghafoor Haideri said: "It is unprecedented that the NA session was continued during Jumu'ah."



AMID skyrocketing prices and rising inflation, a market for sacrificial animals, set up on the city's outskirts, awaits customers on Friday. — Online

## Rumpus in PA as MQM-P stages noisy protest over street crime surge

Home minister defends police performance, says they have curbed crimes 'to a large extent'

By Imran Ayub

KARACHI: Enraged at an alarming rise in street crime and killing of youth in robberies, opposition lawmakers belonging to the Muttahida Qaumi Movement Pakistan (MQM-P) staged a noisy protest during the Sindh Assembly session on Friday and condemned the provincial government and police for failing to curb the menace before walking out of the house.

The protest, however, attracted a strong reaction from treasury benches as the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) legislators defended the performance of the Sindh police and claimed that it had controlled street crime in the metropolis 'to a large extent'.

The MQM-P legislators took a strong position right from the beginning of the session, looking well-prepared and organised to take up the issue of street crime on the floor of the house. After the recitation of the Holy Quran, the session, which was scheduled for the home minister Zia Lanjari to answer the questions raised by the members from both sides of the benches, witnessed uproar from the opposition MPAs.

As the home minister was taking up the questions, mainly from the opposition members, the MQM-P MPAs came up with harsh queries, questioning the role of police and the government's strategy while condemning the "failure" of the law-enforcement agencies in the city.

With many legislators talking at a time, the session became noisy and uncontrollable, pushing Speaker Asim Qureshi to intervene and ask the members from both sides to maintain the decorum.

However, his intervention failed to restore the order when the MQM-P MPAs stood up

shouting slogans and raising the portraits of the victims who were killed during the past few weeks while robbing armed, mangling attempts in different parts of the city. Sindh Assembly Opposition Leader Ali Riazbeesi defended his party's colleagues and called their protest a "lifeline for the people of Karachi."

"The law and order and peace in Karachi is crucial for all of us. We aren't protesting for any fun. It's not right the way to run the session," he said. The calm and composed Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah, who was also in the House, too, expressed his displeasure over the opposition's "way of protest" and called it "inappropriate" for opposition members to stand up from the seats and start speaking without seeking permission of the Speaker or waiting for their turn.

As the home minister was implying the questions of the members, the cross talk between the legislators of both sides continued.

MQM-P's Qureshi Asim Khan in his question

Continued on Page 14

## Indus River could swell to alarming level during monsoon, minister warns

CS reviews govt preparation to deal with heavy rains during monsoon across Sindh

Dawn Report

KARACHI: Revenue and Rehabilitation Minister Mehmood Zaman has informed participants in a meeting that above-average rainfall is expected from July to September, which, combined with glacial melt, can bring 500,000 to 400,000 cubic metres of water into the Indus River.

He said that in 2022, Pakistan experienced "5,026" per cent more rainfall than usual, and

Larkana saw 584pc above-average rainfall.

Speaking about rain emergency measures, he mentioned that Karachi, Jamshoro, and Sukkur warehouses were stocked with 300,000 tonnes, 1.9 million mosquito nets, and 522 heavy-duty pumping pumps.

The meeting chaired by Chief Secretary Syed Asif Hyder Shah was held in the Sindh Secretariat to review preparations for expected heavy rains and flooding between July and September.

Chief Secretary Syed Asif Hyder Shah instructed all departments concerned to maintain contact with the Meteorological Department and the Provincial Disaster Management Authority (PDMA).

He directed deputy commissioners to convene District Disaster Management Authority

meetings to prepare medium and high flood contingency plans.

He emphasised the need for ensuring availability of emergency equipment, machinery, floating pumps, and emergency staff.

Furthermore, he ordered the creation of an inventory of all resources, including life jackets, boats, and rescue personnel available in each district.

The chief secretary stressed the need for heightened awareness and preparedness due to climate change, which is causing more frequent and severe rains and floods.

The officer warned of the risk of urban flooding in major cities of Sindh and instructed the department of relief to keep all agencies updated about weather conditions and preparedness measures.

He assured the meeting participants that funds would soon be provided to Wasa in Hyderabad to ensure the clearing

of storm-water drains.

During the meeting, the secretary of irrigation briefed on the measures taken to protect the Left Bank Overfall Drain and manage water flow from Balochistan.

The meeting was attended by ministers Saeed Ghani, Mehmood Zaman, senior members of the Board of Revenue Basmaul Ulvi, Local Government Secretary Saeed Khalid Hyder Shah, Information Secretary Nadeemur Rehman Memon, Rehabilitation Secretary Waheed Shamsud, director general of Revenue 1122 Dr Ahsan Khaliq and representatives from the army, police, power, and water.

Additionally, all divisional commissioners, deputy commissioners, and assistant commissioners participated via video link.

## Prices of different varieties of naan reduced across city

Commissioner sets price of 120 gram tandoori naan at Rs16; prices of 150 and 180 gram naans fixed at Rs20 and Rs25, respectively

By Aamir Shahzad Khan

KARACHI: Amid falling rates of flour, the commissioner of Karachi has reduced the price of tandoori naan and flour varieties but kept the chapati rate unchanged.

However, it remains to be seen whether the commissioner's office has the will to enforce the official rate.

Tandoori naan (120 grams) price has been cut by Rs1 per piece to Rs16 from Rs17 while the new category of naan has been added to the list.

In the notification issued on June 5, the price of tandoori naan weighing 140-150 grams and 180 grams have been fixed at Rs20 and Rs25 per piece, respectively.

A member of the All Sindh Bakers and Tandoori Association (ASBTA) said that prices of 140-150 grams and 180 grams tandoori naan had actually been cut by Rs2 per piece in the June 5 notification as these varieties were not included in the May 5, 2024 notification.

He said the size of 120 grams of tandoori naan had remained unchanged due to its low weight while it could not be kept for longer hours.

"We have asked the commissioner to keep one standard size of 180 grams instead of breaking it into different variations, but he did not pay any heed," he said.

The price of chapati (100 grams) had been kept unchanged at Rs12.

### Flour prices

In flour varieties, the mill price of wheat flour No. 2-5 has been reduced by Rs2 per kilo to Rs89 from Rs99 per kg followed by a drop in its wholesale price and retail prices to Rs91 and Rs95 from Rs93 and Rs98 per kg.

In fine and chickki flour varieties, the commissioner of Karachi reduced the price of oil-flour mill fine atta, wholesale fine atta, retail fine atta and chickki flour retail prices to Rs92, Rs95, Rs100 and Rs105 per kg on June 5, 2024 from Rs117 per kg, Rs120, Rs125 and Rs132 per kg.

The ASBTA member said that the price of 20kg fine and super fine flour (mildura bags) had plunged to Rs4,600 from Rs4,900 in the last few days.

The flour prices across the country have witnessed a notable decline in recent weeks after massive import of wheat and its prime crop in the country.



A MAN collects freshly baked rounds of tandoori. —White Star file



Alcaraz downs Sinner to reach first French Open final

Pg. 19 SPORT

Citizens kill 'robber', hurt two passers-by at Nazimabad underpass

By Imtiaz Ali

KARACHI: A suspected robber was shot dead and two passers-by were wounded when armed citizens resorted to firing to foil a robbery attempt at the Nazimabad underpass on Friday morning, police said.

Punjab Society SHO Zubair Nawaz told Dawn that two robbers were looting a motorcycle at the Nazimabad underpass when four citizens riding two motorcycles emerged there. They spotted the robbers and after covering a short distance, they opened fire on them.

As a result, one suspect, later identified as Arsalan Qureshi, 30, was killed. However, their bullets also hit the robbery victim Abdul Qadeer, 40, and passer-by Ayen Salim, 30, while the other suspect managed to escape.

The SHO said the citizens who shot dead the suspected robber "apologised" to the wounded passer-by before disappearing. He said that investigators had collected 15 spent bullet casings fired from a semi-automatic pistol from the scene.

Qadeer was shifted to the Jimmat Postgraduate Medical Centre while the other wounded passer-by, Ayen, was taken to a private hospital for treatment. The officer said the condition of the both wounded was stated to be out of danger.

'A hotspot for robberies'

The SHO said that the Nazimabad underpass had become a hotspot of street crime as there was no electricity and CCTV cameras.

He opined that robberies could be confined to a large extent if the authorities concerned made arrangements for functional street lights at the underpass.

Meanwhile, a suspected robber was shot dead and another wounded by the firing of a private security guard in Federal B Industrial Area on Friday.

Area SHO Shahid Baloch told Dawn that at around 6:15am, two suspects burst into a factory in Block 22. However, security guard Farooq Mohammed spotted them and opened fire, resulting in the killing of one suspect, identified as Abdul Rehman, 26, and injuries to his accomplice Asim Khan, 22.

Another youth killed by security guard in North Karachi

By Our Staff Reporter

KARACHI: A private security guard shot dead a teenage boy in North Karachi on Friday.

The Sir Syed police said that Sami, 17, a rickshaw puller, was shot at and wounded by guard Ramzan after a quarrel.

The teenager suffered a bullet wound in the abdomen and was taken to the Abbottabad Hospital where he died.

The police said that the security guard managed to escape.

This is the second such incident in which a private security guard has killed a young man over a petty issue.

Earlier, a YouTuber was gunned down by a guard at Samina Mobile Market when he was making a video.

## PRAYER

Fajr	4:12
Zohar	12:30
Aza	3:29
Maghreb	7:22
Isha	8:48
Starting time in Karachi	

## REFLECTIONS

“OFTEN CLOSE RELATIONS BECOME MORE DISTANTLY THAN STRANGERS AND OFTEN STRANGERS HELP YOU MORE THAN YOUR NEAREST RELATIVES.” — HAZRAT ALI (A.S.)

TAWAHID

## The magical lines of Chitra Pritam

By Peerzada Salman

KARACHI: Chitra Pritam is a painter with proven credentials. He is one of those rare artists whose displays attract art lovers in big numbers. An exhibition of his artworks titled 'Magical Lines of Radiant Mosaic' can these days be seen at Artcel Gallery.

The works that Chitra has put on display were made in the last couple of years. As usual they range from his distinct calligraphic designs to landscapes, using, not to mention, the different shades of colors. But one of the noticeable things about his creative output is his fondness for boats. In obvious terms, a boat signifies journey, oftentimes a short journey. Now journeys and movement go hand in hand. But with Chitra the result carries another meaning.

The boats that he draws contain an element of palpable calmness, and quietude. This

is decipherable whether it is a pre-journey scene or the post-voyage atmosphere. No matter

in a roundabout way is successfully able to emphasize the duration it is the journey that matters, not the destination.

Art Council of Pakistan president Ahmed Shah, who had inaugurated the exhibition on its opening day, told Dawn, "Everyone knows that Chitra spent three decades with the great Jamil Naqsh. Chitra paints well in oil and acrylics. He does calligraphy as well and has carved his own identity. The current show is beautiful. You can see the continuation of his ideas in his work in his signature style. His association with Jamil Naqsh was important. When he came from Punjab as a young artist, it was the poet Ghulam Ali Aslam who helped him meet Naqsh. On the poet's recommendation, Naqsh kept Chitra with him. And now he is an artist of repute."

The exhibition concludes on June 10.



SOME of the paintings of the artist displayed at the exhibition.—Dawn

## Suspected robber gunned down in DHA 'encounter'

By Our Staff Reporter

KARACHI: A suspected robber was shot dead in a alleged encounter in the Defence area on Friday evening.

Police said that two robbers snatched Rs105,000 from a citizen after he drew cash from a private bank branch in Phase-II.

They said that a police patrol reached the scene and chased the fleeing suspects. In an ensuing exchange of gunfire, suspect Mohammed Usman was gunned down. However, his accomplice fled.

DPO South Asad Raza said that the killed suspect had a past criminal record as he was arrested in district Central in 2021.

## 'Extortionist' held after encounter

Police and the Federal Intelligence Agency jointly carried out a targeted action in the Kalri area of Karachi and arrested a suspect, Shoaib alias Sharif, in a wounded condition after an 'encounter' on Friday.

North DPO Syed Asad Raza said that the suspect was the most wanted gangster of Lyari who was involved in armed attacks on several traders and builders over non-payment of bhatts (extortion).

He was a 'shooter' of the gang led by a suspect Wasimullah Lalik. He was running a network of extortion in different parts of the city along with Aslam Pathan of 'Saini, Tefwakhi' and Saeed. Besides, he was also involved in over 40 incidents of robbery, the officer said.

The DPO added that the suspect along with his accomplices had shot at and injured Ibad Maroof of renowned Afzal Naseem Welfare in New Karachi on Dec 5, 2023 over non-payment of extortion. He had also resorted to firing on several traders in districts Central and Old City areas over non-payment of extortions.

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## 'Out-of-school children vulnerable to anxiety, depression, other mental health issues'

By Our Staff Reporter

KARACHI: Pakistan has the world's second highest number of out-of-school children whose numbers have grown dramatically since 2021. Deprived of life's basic necessities, these children are more vulnerable to stress, trauma, and social isolation, leading to anxiety, depression and other mental health issues, shared an expert on the second day of a conference held on Friday.

The conference, titled 'Healthily Future: Preventing Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs) in Young Hearts and Minds' is organized by the Aga Khan University's Department of Community Health Sciences in collaboration with the World Health Organization (WHO) and United Nations Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF).

It aims at exploring adolescent health issues, highlighting under-discussed topics such as screen time, obesity, substance use and abuse, mental health problems, sedentary lifestyles, educational outcomes and lifestyle interventions.

Giving a presentation on addressing social and mental health issues in out-of-school children, Prof Nasir Hussain, professor of psychiatry and research director of the Global Mental Health, University of Manchester, said that currently about 23 million children were out-of-school in Pakistan, representing about half of the school-age population.

"These children often come from marginalized backgrounds and face significant barriers such as poverty, gender discrimination, geographic isolation, and cultural restrictions. Being out of school increases their risk of child labor, early marriage, and exploitation, affecting their future opportunities and overall well-being," she said, adding that mental health of these children is

Pakistan's growing concern.

"The absence of a supportive environment, combined with societal stigma surrounding mental health, contributes to a sense of despair. These children may struggle to find purpose, increasing their risk of self-harm behavior, the strongest predictor of death by suicide."

Prof Hussain also briefed the audience about the results of a psychological therapy that had been culturally adapted to meet the unique needs of local communities.

"The intervention aims to address immediate mental health needs and build resilience, reducing the risk of self-harm."

Promoting a global perspective on mental health in adolescents, Dr Atif Rahman, professor of Child Psychiatry & Global Mental Health, University of Liverpool, said the mental health of adolescents was a global public health concern.

"Global estimates of the prevalence

indicate a rate of emotional and behavioral problems to range between 10pc and 20pc and are increasing. Seventy-five per cent of adult mental disorders have their origin in childhood and adolescence."

He emphasized the need for early-life interventions that provided the best return on investment from a public health and economic perspective.

"The critical time points for interventions are the first 1,000 days and adolescence. Recent research from Pakistan on the Thinking Healthy Programme for perinatal mental health, and WHO School Mental Health Programme demonstrates that evidence-based interventions at these critical time-points are feasible and scalable."

The three-day conference includes research presentations, panel discussions, plenary talks, and a variety of other activities designed to encourage dialogue among academic experts, healthcare professionals and teachers.

## SHC extends order to restrain Pemra from enforcing court reporting ban

By Sumair Abdullah

KARACHI: The Sindh High Court (SHC) extended its interim order till June 27, restraining the Pakistan Electronic Media Regulatory Authority (Pemra) from taking any adverse action against private television channels, on broadcasting newsletters about court proceedings.

A division bench, headed by SHC Chief Justice Asif Ahmed Abbasi, also gave observations that the petitioners — journalists of various TV channels — ensure compliance with the code of conduct of Pemra while covering court proceedings.

The court also noted that in case of any violation, Pemra

would be authorized to take appropriate action in accordance with the law.

"Interim order passed earlier in continues till next date of hearing, however, the petitioners, shall ensure compliance of the aforesaid provisions of law and the rules and in case of any violation, the respondents shall be at liberty to take appropriate action in accordance with the rules as the case may be," the written order issued on Friday said.

Meanwhile, rejecting Pemra's plea to modify its earlier interim order, the SHC noted: "It is clear that the impugned directives have not been suspended nor any restraining order, except to the extent mentioned therein, has been passed.

Therefore, it does not require any modification at this stage."

During the hearing, respondents Pemra and director general Operation Broadcast Cast Media had submitted that the petitioners were misinterpreting the order passed on May 27 by the SHC and alleged that misconstruing the court proceedings through tickers and headlines on TV channels violates the order of the SHC. They argued that the petitioners perceived that the petitioners perceived the impugned directives as suspended.

The respondents' counsel also informed the court that the petitioners were violating Rule 4 and 4 of the Electronic Media (Programmes and Advertisements) Code of Conduct, 2015.

On the other hand, the counsel for the petitioners maintained that they had neither misinterpreted the court proceedings nor violated the rules and regulations of the aforementioned law. The counsel countered that Sections 4, 5, 6, and 10 of the Pakistan Electronic Media Regulatory Authority (Complaints) Regulations, 2012, allow journalists to cover court proceedings, and that the petitioners neither violated nor intended to violate any such provisions.

Earlier, petitioner Shahid Hussain and some other journalists, including court reporters, had moved the SHC, citing the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Pemra, Pakistan Broadcasters Association and others as respondents, and challenged the May 21 notification of Pemra.

According to a notification issued by the electronic media regulator, television channels were directed to "refrain from airing tickers/headlines with regard to court proceedings and shall only report the written orders of court".

However, where court proceedings were broadcast live, the proceedings may be reported, the notification had said.

It had also said that all satellite TV channel licenses were directed to not air content, including commentary, opinions or suggestions, about the potential fate of sub-judice matters which could prejudice their determination by a court or tribunal could be aired.

## Rumpus in PA as MQM-P stages noisy protest over street crime surge

Continued from Page 13

sought the details of the police performance during past one month, criticizing the failure of the law enforcement agency which, he said, had 'minimized' the crime rate in Karachi and increased the number of arrests of the suspects.

The MQM-P legislators

in a strong resolution called for the reply "unjustifiable" and raised more questions for the minister. However, the legislators from the treasury benches came up with counter questions, apparently to put the MQM-P under pressure which allowed some political space and mileage to the ruling PPP.

First it was Sadia Javed of the PPP who asked the status of past trend when police staffed in guitars

thus called it "a tactic" from the treasury benches to "drown the real issue of street crimes in Karachi."

However, unconvinced by the opposition protest, Home Minister Junaid Mirza agreed to reply the question from demands legislators one by one.

He said that it was Karachi police which had brought the trend of violence and looting bags to an end through tireless efforts and sacrifices.

Referring to Sardar Mirza, he said the "convicted killer" had brought the trend of violence and looting bags to an end through tireless efforts and sacrifices.

He said that the Karachi police had "eliminated Balochi Dakai and Umar Balochi who evidently killed people of Karachi and extorted money from the businesses".

The minister replied that the Karachi police had "eliminated Balochi Dakai" in an encounter and Umar Balochi was also behind bars, facing several cases of serious crimes.

and got behind bars but I don't know where he is now. I even don't know if he has been released on court orders or through some executive order," he said.

On this, MQM-P MP Bilquis Mokhtar put a question from her side, seeking details of the alleged Balochi Dakai and Umar Balochi who "evidently killed people of Karachi and extorted money from the businesses".

The minister replied that the Karachi police had "eliminated Balochi Dakai" in an encounter and Umar Balochi was also behind bars, facing several cases of serious crimes.

Assistant Director (HR) 021-3205000

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FINAL NOTICE

Reference No: DSC/HD/Decphse/2024/04/135 Date: 29-May-2024

Name: Asra  
ERP NO: 65838

Designation: Junior Executive (T-1)

Office Address: NRC Sector Bazar

Present Address: House No. E-617, Gul-e-Rana Colony  
Sector Bazar No.1, Karachi

Call No: 021-3769646

Date of Absence: 4th Apr, 2024

Having failed to report for duty in time, you are hereby served upon with a Final Notice to report for duty to the undersigned office and submit your explanation regarding unauthorized absence within 14 days from the date of issuing of this notice in the newspaper, failing which, major penalty of removal from service as per prescribed under Rule 4 (1) and E & D Rules 2020 will be imposed upon you.

Assistant Director (HR) 021-3205000

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<b>Entry Test</b>	<b>Commencement of Classes</b>
Saturday, August 03, 2024	To be Announced Later

**GENERAL INFORMATION:**

- Only motivated candidates will be called for interview.
- Candidates who are government servants / serving in autonomous bodies, should apply through proper channel.
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- Details of the programme and the admission form are available at university website: [www.jsmu.edu.pk](http://www.jsmu.edu.pk).
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**DIRECTOR GENERAL  
EXCISE & TAXATION  
BALUCHISTAN**

Fax No: 021-3769646-6-2024

## Five killed as car crashes into mini-truck

By Our Correspondent

**DADU:** Five persons died and as many suffered injuries in a head-on collision between a mini-truck and a car at Daduana turning on the Indus Highway near Chauhan village in Jamshoro district on Thursday.

People from nearby villages rushed to rescue the victims. They were also helped by motorists who parked their vehicles alongside the road and volunteered in the rescue work.

They took out dead bodies and the injured from the badly mangled vehicles after cutting through their metal parts.

The deceased were identified as mini-truck driver Aqibullah, resident of Parua Angi; his co-driver Mansoor Khanbhatti, his wife Mumtaz Khanbhatti, their relatives Asma Khanbhatti, 10; and Nida Parwana, who were residents of Larkana.

The injured were identified as Abbas Khanbhatti, Sadaf Khanbhatti, Basma Khanbhatti, Amna, daughter of Mansoor, and Zeeshan of Muarwa, the mini-truck's cleaner.

Khanum Saima Sikandar Rabbani said that all the injured and the bodies were brought to Liaquat University Hospital, Jamshoro. The condition of the injured was serious, he said.

He said that the mini-truck was laden with mango boxes and the two vehicles rammed into each other when they were crossing each other at Daduana turning.

## Sindh govt says it is committed to journalists' safety

Dawn Report

**KARACHI:** The Sindh government believes in the freedom of press and due security and safety to media men, a spokesperson said on Friday.

Reacting to the contents of a report, titled "Journalism in the shadow of violence", released by the Freedom Network at the Karachi Press Club a day earlier, the spokesperson said: "While we acknowledge the concerns raised, we believe the report's findings and recommendations require a more practical approach".

It recalled the promulgation of the Sindh Protection of Journalists and Other Media Practitioners Act, 2023, which linked the protection of journalists to the constitutional right of free speech, as enshrined in Article 19 of the Constitution of Pakistan.

The spokesperson said that the report's reliance on incident numbers alone doesn't account for the province's significant strides in combating impunity, adding that it "overlooked the complex interplay of factors contributing to journalists' vulnerability".

"Instead of solely blaming the government, we must address the industry's structural issues, such as low wages and lack of digital skills, which exacerbate risks."

The spokesperson supported the report's recommendation for legal support and regional offices for the Sindh Commission for the Protection of Journalists and other Media Practitioners, and said it deserved a more comprehensive approach, involving all stakeholders, including media owners, journalists, and the government.

**NOTICE INVITING TENDER**

The Executive Engineer Public Health Engineering Division Killa Bhutto invites sealed tenders/tenders based on Competitive schedule of Rates, 2023, Government of Balochistan from interested Contractor for the works mentioned below. The Tender fee will be deposit through Green Challan in National Bank of Pakistan under the head of account C/0729-02 - Earnest Money 2% Through Cash Deposit.

No.	Name of Work	ECR No. (M)	Earnest Money	Tender Fee	Time Limit
1.	<b>CONSTRUCTION OF WISE MADRASSA SAMULLAH &amp; ALLAH HOOR KUN MONTEDZAI MUSLIM BAOSH.</b>	500/Pm. 73/2024/04/12/01	5,000/-	1,000/-	30-06-2024
2.	<b>CONSTRUCTION OF WISE KULLI CHULAM BARAT &amp; BADAR ALASAI MUSLIM BAOSH.</b>	500/Pm. 73/2024/04/12/01	4,500/-	900/-	30-06-2024
3.	<b>CONSTRUCTION OF WISE MADRASSA MOULVI ALI MUHAMMAD MUSAQAT TAQAFAT MUSLIM BAOSH.</b>	500/Pm. 73/2024/04/12/01	4,400/-	880/-	30-06-2024
4.	<b>CONSTRUCTION OF WISE KULLI DAHIL MOLVI ASLAM RAHQA RAHQA MUSLIM BAOSH.</b>	500/Pm. 73/2024/04/12/01	5,000/-	1,000/-	30-06-2024
5.	<b>CONSTRUCTION OF WISE KULLI SHINA &amp; KULLI MIR ABDAL BARAQAT SHINA KURWA MUSLIM BAOSH.</b>	500/Pm. 73/2024/04/12/01	5,000/-	1,000/-	30-06-2024
6.	<b>CONSTRUCTION OF WISE TARIKH TARIQAH MUSLIM BAOSH.</b>	500/Pm. 73/2024/04/12/01	5,000/-	1,000/-	30-06-2024
7.	<b>CONSTRUCTION OF WISE DAWANI MUHAMMAD NASEEM MUSLIM BAOSH.</b>	500/Pm. 73/2024/04/12/01	4,470/-	900/-	30-06-2024
8.	<b>CONSTRUCTION OF KULLI KHAN &amp; KULLI ALLAH DAHAD RAHQA RAHQA MUSLIM BAOSH.</b>	500/Pm. 73/2024/04/12/01	4,470/-	900/-	30-06-2024
9.	<b>CONSTRUCTION OF WISE MADRASSA QASIM YAHIA &amp; SULTAN KILLA SAIFULLAH.</b>	500/Pm. 73/2024/04/12/01	4,470/-	900/-	30-06-2024
10.	<b>CONSTRUCTION OF WISE KULLI MOULAYA YOUSUF MUSLIM BAOSH.</b>	500/Pm. 73/2024/04/12/01	4,000/-	800/-	30-06-2024
11.	<b>CONSTRUCTION OF WISE KULLI MULI AYUB DAHAD QAT MUSLIM BAOSH.</b>	500/Pm. 73/2024/04/12/01	4,000/-	800/-	30-06-2024
12.	<b>CONSTRUCTION OF WISE KULLI MULI AYUB DAHAD QAT MUSLIM BAOSH.</b>	500/Pm. 73/2024/04/12/01	4,000/-	800/-	30-06-2024
13.	<b>CONSTRUCTION OF WISE KULLI MULI AYUB DAHAD QAT MUSLIM BAOSH.</b>	500/Pm. 73/2024/04/12/01	4,000/-	800/-	30-06-2024
14.	<b>CONSTRUCTION OF WISE KULLI MULI AYUB DAHAD QAT MUSLIM BAOSH.</b>	500/Pm. 73/2024/04/12/01	4,000/-	800/-	30-06-2024
15.	<b>CONSTRUCTION OF WISE MADRASSA MOULAYA YOUSUF MUSLIM BAOSH.</b>	500/Pm. 73/2024/04/12/01	4,000/-	800/-	30-06-2024
16.	<b>CONSTRUCTION OF WISE KULLI RAHQA RAHQA MUSLIM BAOSH.</b>	500/Pm. 73/2024/04/12/01	4,000/-	800/-	30-06-2024
17.	<b>CONSTRUCTION OF WISE MADRASSA MOULAYA YOUSUF MUSLIM BAOSH.</b>	500/Pm. 73/2024/04/12/01	4,000/-	800/-	30-06-2024
18.	<b>CONSTRUCTION OF WISE KULLI RAHQA RAHQA MUSLIM BAOSH.</b>	500/Pm. 73/2024/04/12/01	4,000/-	800/-	30-06-2024
19.	<b>CONSTRUCTION OF WISE KULLI RAHQA RAHQA MUSLIM BAOSH.</b>	500/Pm. 73/2024/04/12/01	4,000/-	800/-	30-06-2024
20.	<b>CONSTRUCTION OF WISE KULLI RAHQA RAHQA MUSLIM BAOSH.</b>	500/Pm. 73/2024/04/12/01	4,000/-	800/-	30-06-2024
21.	<b>CONSTRUCTION OF WISE KULLI RAHQA RAHQA MUSLIM BAOSH.</b>	500/Pm. 73/2024/04/12/01	4,000/-	800/-	30-06-2024
22.	<b>CONSTRUCTION OF WISE KULLI RAHQA RAHQA MUSLIM BAOSH.</b>	500/Pm. 73/2024/04/12/01	4,000/-	800/-	30-06-2024
23.	<b>CONSTRUCTION OF WISE KULLI RAHQA RAHQA MUSLIM BAOSH.</b>	500/Pm. 73/2024/04/12/01	4,000/-	800/-	30-06-2024
24.	<b>CONSTRUCTION OF WISE KULLI RAHQA RAHQA MUSLIM BAOSH.</b>	500/Pm. 73/2024/04/12/01	4,000/-	800/-	30-06-2024
25.	<b>CONSTRUCTION OF WISE KULLI RAHQA RAHQA MUSLIM BAOSH.</b>	500/Pm. 73/2024/04/12/01	4,000/-	800/-	30-06-2024
26.	<b>CONSTRUCTION OF WISE KULLI RAHQA RAHQA MUSLIM BAOSH.</b>	500/Pm. 73/2024/04/12/01	4,000/-	800/-	30-06-2024
27.	<b>CONSTRUCTION OF WISE KULLI RAHQA RAHQA MUSLIM BAOSH.</b>	500/Pm. 73/2024/04/12/01	4,000/-	800/-	30-06-2024
28.	<b>CONSTRUCTION OF WISE KULLI RAHQA RAHQA MUSLIM BAOSH.</b>	500/Pm. 73/2024/04/12/01	4,000/-	800/-	30-06-2024
29.	<b>CONSTRUCTION OF WISE KULLI RAHQA RAHQA MUSLIM BAOSH.</b>	500/Pm. 73/2024/04/12/01	4,000/-	800/-	30-06-2024
30.	<b>CONSTRUCTION OF WISE KULLI RAHQA RAHQA MUSLIM BAOSH.</b>	500/Pm. 73/2024/04/12/01	4,000/-	800/-	30-06-2024

This procurement will be carried out in accordance with Balochistan Public Procurement Regulations Authority Rule 2014. **Eligibility:** The contractors must have registration with Tax authority no. 05/HD & MRA, valid registration with Pakistan Engineering Council in Category who have deposited remittance for the year 2023-24 those firms can be participated in Solar Machinery tendering bids, which are qualified from PIB Department Method of Procurement Single stage, Single envelope. **Bidding / Tender Documents:** Issuance / Tender Contractor documents will be issued from the date of advertisement published in newspaper or presentation of requisite documents i.e. Tender Fee (not refundable), Bid security/bonds money, valid Engineering Council Certificate of relevant required category, ITAC certificate (NTCA) etc. Submission Last date for submission of documents from advertisement published in newspaper up to 10-06-2024, at 12:00 AM. **Opening:** The tenders will be opened on 20-06-2024, at 1:00 PM. **Place of Issuance, submission inquiries and opening:** The terms and conditions can be seen / (Fax No.: 0323-4145133) **Email Address:** [kabul@kabulbaloch@gmail.com](mailto:kabul@kabulbaloch@gmail.com).

PWD No. 2024-06-02-2024

## Second windstorm batters Nawabshah, many other towns

Region remains without water and power for over 24 hours; Hesco says 70 feeders affected by storm

By Zulfiqar Memon

**NAWABSHAH:** Another windstorm hit Nawabshah and Sanghar on Friday evening, within 24 hours after the earlier one had passed lashed with civic infrastructure in many towns and villages of the two districts, as well as Dadu and Jamshoro districts.

Many cities, towns and villages were without power till late in the evening as high-velocity winds on Thursday had brought down seven towers and about ten poles and high-tension lines in the four districts.

The affected population is also faced with water shortage as metropolitan pumping stations and domestic pumps could not be operated in the absence of electricity.

**HESCO:** Electric Supply Company Chief Executive Officer Roshan Orlis acknowledged the massive breakdown and the trouble caused by it to consumers, and held out assurance that the supply would be restored as soon as possible. Hesco teams were at work day and night, he added.

The Friday windstorm was of lesser intensity than Thursday's though it also battered houses and other structures causing considerable damage to them.

It was followed by thunder showers. Intermittent spells of rain continued till night.

The cities and towns hit by the second windstorm included Nawabshah, Sanghar, Tariq Adam, Shikarpur Chakar, Sakrand and Quetta Ahmed. The bad weather conditions hampered efforts to bring the situation back to normal.

People of Nawabshah city, Sakrand, Dadu and their adjoining towns and villages faced great hardship due to the massive power breakdown which hit the vast area as soon as the Thursday afternoon windstorm swept through four districts.

Power supply remained suspended for more than 24 hours and could not be

restored till the last report came in at 11pm last night.

The windstorm had left a trail of destruction in many cities, towns and villages blowing away roofs off countless thatched houses, boardings and billboards, besides causing scores of electric poles and uprooting a number of trees. Incidents of wall collapse at two places in Nawabshah had left three men dead while several other people suffered injuries in windstorm-related incidents on Thursday.

A large population of these towns was badly affected by the power outage as most households do not have alternative energy sources like generator, UPS or solar panel. Water shortage appeared to be the ultimate cause as pumping machines could not be operated.

Avoid steering weather conditions persisting in the entire region for a couple of weeks, there has been a wide difference between demand and supply of ice and cold drinks. The power breakdown of over 24 hours led to closure of ice factories while refrigerators and deep freezers in homes and commercial outlets

have stopped functioning.

Meanwhile, Hesco chief Roshan Orlis shared details of the destruction and rehabilitation work with the media at the Nawabshah Press Club on Friday evening.

He said that as many as 70 feeders of seven grid stations were affected due to the falling of six towers carrying 132KV high-voltage line during the windstorm.

They included Tower No. 116 (Shahpur Chakar-Nawabshah), Tower No. 24 (Sakrand-Sakrand), Tower Nos. 236 and 237 (Khanpur-Jamshoro-Lakot) and Tower Nos. 172 and 173.

He said that power supply to 40 11KV feeders of three grid stations in Nawabshah remained suspended since the Thursday afternoon windstorm whereas seven feeders of Dadu grid, five feeders of Sakrand grid and three feeders of Khanpur grid were also affected.

The Hesco chief said that technical teams were busy rehabilitating the transmission network to restore electricity supply.

He hoped that situation would normalize by 10 pm Friday.

## Special team formed to probe land dispute in Hyderabad riverine area

Dawn Report

**HYDERABAD (SUKKUR):** The Hyderabad range's deputy inspector general of police has formed a special team to investigate ongoing land dispute in the riverine areas of Hyderabad (rural) tehsil, which has so far claimed life of a woman in an exchange of fire between rival groups a few days back.

The team comprising Sardar DSP Iqraul, Rapid Response Force (RRF) DSP Sharjeel, Inspector Tariq Adam, Head DSP Sajid, Inspector Sajid, Assistant Inspector (AI) Tariq, Head Constable (HC) Sharjeel and constable Lodhi, was formed on Thursday afternoon.

On May 27, Ms Zulqarnain was murdered in the riverine area in exchange of fire between two rival groups of Sardana community, following which police registered a murder case vide FIR No. 21/24 on a complaint lodged by her husband, who accused Marriam Samma, Masihat, Dadu, Sabir Mallah and Ghaffar of killing his wife.

However, the accused claimed that the FIR was fabricated

as the woman was not killed by them.

The disputed land fell within the limits of Dadu police station while Marriam's land was located in the jurisdiction of Chakgar police station, they argued.

The name of DSP Zulqarnain was also mentioned in the team although his name was not part of the order issued by DIG Tariq Adam.

On May 27, Ms Zulqarnain was murdered in the riverine area in exchange of fire between two rival groups of Sardana community, following which police registered a murder case vide FIR No. 21/24 on a complaint lodged by her husband, who accused Marriam Samma, Masihat, Dadu, Sabir Mallah and Ghaffar of killing his wife.

However, the accused claimed that the FIR was fabricated as the woman was not killed by them.

The accused claimed that the FIR was registered vide FIR No. 21/24 on a complaint lodged by Marriam Samma, rejecting

charges levelled in the first FIR (21/24) but it was registered at Dadu police station where Marriam's land was







ISLAMABAD  
Sunday 07:00am  
Saturday (Tomorrow) 04:00am  
**NEXT 24 HRS**  
Minimum 29°C  
Maximum 38°C  
Outlook Mostly Sunny

Court issues notice to AG in plea against law on election tribunal

By Malik Asad

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad High Court (IHC) on Friday issued notice to the Attorney General on the petitions of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI)-backed lawmakers for three NA seats from the federal capital against the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) presiding over transfer of their election petitions and the recently promulgated law for appointment of retired judges as presiding officer of the election tribunal.

The petitioners Mohammad Shoaib Shabir, Mohammad Ali Bakbari and Asif Maqsood contested for three National Assembly seats of Islamabad.

They challenged the vires of Section 151 of Elections Act that empowered ECP to transfer election petition from one tribunal to another, and the Ordinance V of 2024, namely, the Elections (Amendment) Ordinance, 2024, promulgated on May 27 after allowed appointment of retired judges for the election tribunals.

Court said the petitioners contended that under section 151 of the Elections Act, 2017 (the Act), the power has been granted to ECP to transfer a matter pending before the election tribunal.

In this behalf, it was contended that power is not administrative in nature but a quasi-judicial.

It was contended that disposal before election tribunal is of the nature where allegations have been leveled against ECP and in this law that no one can be a judge in his own case hence ECP ought not have the power to transfer.

It was submitted that in order to make scheme of law work, it would be appropriate that it should be read as section 151 (b) that the constitution of the chief justice of the respective High Court is mandatory before power of transfer is exercised.

It was contended that even otherwise, Election Commission of Pakistan, in its impugned order, has reappointed the record of election tribunal, which it could not have done.

Judge Farooq observed that "since vires of Federal Statute is in question", and issued notice under Order XXVII-A to the Attorney General for Pakistan.

Further hearing in this matter has been adjourned till June 11.



WORKERS build a structure to install a screen at the Rawalpindi Cricket Stadium on Friday where Pakistan-India match of the T20 World Cup will be telecast on Sunday (June 9). — Photo by Mohammad Aslam

## Commotion compels chair to adjourn Senate proceedings till Monday

**Senators reject proposal to include former husband's name in women's passports**

By Hikmat A. Khan

ISLAMABAD: Rumpur raised the Senate on Friday, with the opposition protesting against a presiding officer chairing the session in the presence of Deputy Chairman Saeed Khan Nasir. As a result, the chair abruptly adjourned the proceedings till Monday evening.

Initially Senate Chairman Yousaf Raza Gilani presided over the session, but Pervaiz Mohammad Zai Khan from the panel of presiding officers assumed the chair after Mr Gilani left the house to witness the oath-taking of four members of the National Assembly.

Soon after, PTI senator Fawzia Arshad said it was regrettable that Pervaiz Khan was presiding over the session in the presence of the deputy chairman. Ms Khan replied that it was the chairman's prerogative to make that decision, adding that the deputy chairman had arrived after she had already begun chairing the session. Against Senator Arshad's interruption, Pervaiz Khan repeatedly told the opposition benches to decide among themselves who they wanted to speak next.

Leader of the Opposition in the Senate Shabir Farooq said: "Do not make a mockery of the house and do not damage its sanctity. This is no way that you make the deputy chairman a decoration piece."

Afterwards the deputy chairman left the house, but the protest continued.

The opposition leader and Pervaiz Khan had an argument as the latter said the deputy chairman came in after her while Shabir Farooq insisted that Mr Nasir was already seated in the Senate.

Ms Khan asked the opposition leader to mind his tone to which the senator quipped the way she was speaking to him.

"I am speaking to you the same way you're speaking to me," she retorted as she turned to the treasury benches and ordered Rana Mehmoodul Haq to be given the mike. An clamouring continued from the opposition benches, the presiding officer chastised them, saying: "First, continue to create a ruckus. I choose to ignore you."

She subsequently ordered that PPP Senator Farooq Nasir be given the mike to speak, saying: "I do not tell for this segregation, and this cannot go on." As Nasir attempted to speak, Shabir Farooq interrupted and said it was "shameful" that the PML-N sent its own deputy chairman out of the house to which Pervaiz returned, retorted: "It's alright, he doesn't have an issue with this."

Acting which rule was violated by Pervaiz Khan presiding over the session, Mr Nasir said: "The Senate chairman gives a list of presiding officers, and who presides in his absence is the prerogative of the chairman. He can tell any presiding officer to preside over the session. And the way you are presiding right now, this is within the Senate rules."

He reiterated that there was no violation of any rule with her presiding over the session. Agreeing with him, Pervaiz Khan said the purpose of this uproar was just disruption.

She repeatedly asserted that no one could compel her to adjourn the session through "force and bullying". Javed Ullah-i-Islam-Puri (JUI-F) Senator Attaur Rehman noted that the presiding officers come into picture only when the chairman and deputy chairman were not available.

He said that it was inappropriate for someone to become a presiding officer while the deputy chairman was present in the house. "It would be better if you call the deputy chairman to come and sit in this seat; that will be appropriate otherwise we will walk out against this behaviour," Mr Rehman said.

Pervaiz Khan responded by saying that she had been made a presiding officer in accordance with the rules. The opposition benches began raising slogans to which

PML-N Senator Tabeel Chaudhry said: "I want to thank the opposition leader and PTI for showing so much love for the PML-N deputy chairman."

The presiding officer subsequently adjourned the meeting till 8pm on Monday.

Earlier, the session also debated the recent issue of women having to carry their ex-husband's name on passports with Senator Samina Mumtaz calling it "ridiculous".

"Instead of improving our passport rankings, we're discriminating against women," she said, adding that, "if you want women to carry the names of their ex-husbands, then make men carry the names of their wives too".

Federal Housing Minister Riaz Hussain Pervaiz pointed out that the high court had struck down the proposal in an order and that it had given women the option to add their father's name.

He suggested that the matter be referred to the standing committee if there were no consultation on it. Senator Farooq said family laws also needed to be updated since the matter posed a problem to several women and families. He also suggested referring the matter to the standing committee.

Agreeing with him, Senator Attaur Rehman said the opinion of the Council of Islamic Ideology should also be taken, however, women senators objected to his proposal.

Senate Chairman Yousaf Raza Gilani termed women and minorities his constituency and referred the matter to the standing committee.

The Senate was also informed that Sukkur-Hyderabad motorway would be built soon.

Responding to a winding-attention motion, Federal Minister Riaz Hussain Pervaiz expressed the confidence that progress on the project would become visible in the next six months.

"We want to complete the project at the earliest in partnership mode," he said, and disclosed that talks with China and other friendly countries were underway.

## Colony for IHC judges planned

By Kalbe Ali

ISLAMABAD: The ministry of law and justice has decided to establish a small housing colony in Diplomatic Enclave for the Islamabad High Court judges.

The projects in this regard have been proposed in the upcoming federal budget and Annual Plans Coordination Committee (APCC) has cleared the projects in the first phase of approval.

The APCC headed by the deputy chairman planning commission has recently approved the Public Sector Development Programme (PSDP) 2024-25, which included acquisition of land and the construction of boundary wall and residences for the chief justice and the judges of the IHC. The estimated cost of the project is around Rs115 million, and in the first phase Rs115 million will be released during the upcoming fiscal year 2024-25.

However, under the system the projects of the PSDP will be finalized by the National Economic Council, chaired by the prime minister, which usually meets a day ahead of the finalization of the federal budget.

The sanctioned strength of the IHC is 10 judges including the chief justice and the project includes construction of guest rooms too.

These are dedicated residential units for the judges of the Supreme Court near the Punjab House but the judges of the IHC are housed in the government residences spread in the federal capital.

Meanwhile, Rs100 million has been allocated for another project of the ministry of law and justice for Islamabad.

The APCC in the PSDP of next fiscal approved allocation of Rs100 million for Litigants Facilitation Centre for the litigants of district courts in G-10/I. The project has been delayed for more than year for want of funds, resulting in cost escalations too.

## Protesters block road after robbers kill boy

TAXILA: Protesters on Friday blocked Taxila-Harrar Road for hours after a 10-year-old boy was shot dead by robbers.

The protesters raised slogans against the police and local administration for their failure to control crime. They demanded removal of the police officials posted in the area.

This was the second protest staged by people in the current week against rising street crime.

According to Usama, he and his friend Saif Ali were returning home after Friday prayers when three motorcyclists intercepted them and snatched cash and a mobile phone from him. Usama said when his friend Saif tried to resist, one of the robbers shot him and fled. The injured was taken to the Taxila Headquarters Hospital from where Saif was being shifted to Rawalpindi when he died.

Following the incident, protesters gathered on an overhead bridge on Taxila-Harrar Road and blocked traffic.

James Ahmed, a relative of the victim, said the negligence of Taxila police could be judged from the fact that a few days ago a handcuffed robber fled from a private detention cell of the station house of their city and the authorities pushed the issue under the carpet.

After negotiations between protesters and leaders of different political parties and police officials, the protest was called off. Long queues of vehicles.— Correspondent



PLAYERS in action during the 12th polo-popping championship held at F-9 Park in Islamabad on Friday. — White Star



Alcaraz downs Sinner to reach first French Open final

Pg.17 SPORT

## PRAYER

Fajr	05:17
Zohar	12:11
Azr	05:09
Maghrib	07:19
Isha	09:03
Iftari time is Imsak	

## REFLECTIONS

“OFTEN CLOSE RELATIONS BEHAVE MORE DISTANTLY THAN STRANGERS AND OFTEN STRANGERS HELP YOU MORE THAN YOUR NEAREST RELATIVES.”

— HAZRAT ALI (A.S.)

TRANSLATE

## Citrus centre planned in Sargodha

By Our Correspondent

**SARGODHA:** The government has decided to build a citrus centre in Sargodha with modern facilities at a cost of Rs200 million to increase the production of citrus and introduce better quality of fruit.

This was stated by Export Development Fund Executive Director Syed Afzal Naqvi at a ceremony at the local chamber of commerce and industry.

He said the government was trying to further increase the export of citrus produced in Sargodha.

## Preparations reviewed for agricultural census

By Our Correspondent

**TAXILA:** The Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS) in collaboration with the district administration of Attock organized an awareness workshop to finalize arrangements for evidence-based planning and policy formulation for the 7th agricultural census on Friday.

The workshop presided over by Deputy Commissioner Raw Attock Hars reviewed the preparatory steps for the census. The participants were informed that the exercise would help accurately estimate the agricultural sector's contribution to the GDP.

The workshop was attended by PBS' divisional coordinator Nasimur Rehman, assistant commissioners and officials from the statistics, revenue, agriculture, livestock, education, population welfare, district census and other departments.

## Over Rs4 million looted in two robberies

**TAXILA:** Robbers looted Rs4.5 million cash in two different robberies while a man was shot and injured when he got up resistance.

In the first incident, four armed robbers came on two different motorcycles intercepted Atta Khan on CLT Road near Rohtas interchange and caught a man on motorcycle Rs2.5 million while he was on his way home after drawing the money from a local bank located at Hassanabadi town.

The armed robbers shot and injured when he got up resistance over the robbery and fled.

In the second incident, Muhibullah Ellahi was going in his car after withdrawing cash worth Rs600,000 from a local branch of a private bank when two armed robbers came on a motorcycle intercepted him and at gunpoint snatched the cash and fled.

**Man kidnapped**

A shopkeeper was abducted in the limit of Wali Cantt. Police station on Friday, police sources said.

Muhammad Zulfiqar reported to police that his 34-year-old son was abducted by their armed persons in a car from his shop.

He said that later the abductors made a telephone call to him and demanded Rs4 million ransom money for his safe release.

Wali Cantt police have registered a case and launched further investigation.

Correspondent

Speaking on the occasion, Nasimur Rehman stated that the integrated digital census will encompass agriculture, livestock and machinery, aligning with best international practices and UN FAO guidelines for the first time in the country.

She added that the census would begin by counting large agricultural households followed by coverage of all areas in subsequent stages in September and October. Training of field staff for conducting the census would commence in July.

Previously, agricultural, livestock and machinery were tallied separately in distinct censuses and said the agricultural census was a crucial initiative for the precision of comprehension understanding of the agriculture sector's strengths, weaknesses and potentials.

The deputy commissioner said the census would enable accurate planning for food needs in the country and the relevant officers should work actively in the field for the purpose.

He also asked the concerned staff to ensure digital census encompassed agriculture, livestock and machinery, aligning with the best international practices.

## NA speaker briefed about BISP initiatives

By Our Staff Reporter

**ISLAMABAD:** Senator Income Support Programme (SISP) Chairperson Robina Khalid on Friday briefed the National Assembly Speaker Sardar Ayaz Sadiq about the ongoing and recently launched initiatives of the programme.

Speaker Sardar Ayaz Sadiq congratulated Robina Khalid on assuming her new role as chairperson of Benazir Income Support Programme.

Robina Khalid said the programme played an important role in the economic empowerment of women and reiterated her commitment to serve the marginalized segments of the society through the programme.

"Benazir Income Support Programme is dedicated to provide essential support to the most vulnerable communities, particularly focusing on the economic empowerment of women."

We are committed to enhancing the programme's reach and impact to ensure that no one is left behind," said Ms Khalid.

The National Assembly

Editorial arrangements

The field operations team, sourced from provincial governments, will oversee the execution and monitoring of field operations," she added.

She also highlighted the importance of provision of accurate data in shaping the country's agricultural policies and programs and said the agricultural census was a crucial initiative for the precision of comprehension understanding of the agriculture sector's strengths, weaknesses and potentials.

The deputy commissioner said the census would enable accurate planning for food needs in the country and the relevant officers should work actively in the field for the purpose.

He also asked the concerned staff to ensure digital census encompassed agriculture, livestock and machinery, aligning with the best international practices.

## NA speaker briefed about BISP initiatives

By Our Staff Reporter

Speaker Sardar Ayaz Sadiq expressed his support for the programme and wished Ms Robina Khalid success in her endeavor.

"The Benazir Income Support Programme is vital for the socio-economic uplift of marginalized communities, and I wish for its continued success under Robina Khalid's leadership," he stated.

In a separate meeting later in the day, Central Additional Commissioner General Secretary of Pakistan Peoples Party, Engro Muhammad Hussain Khan, met Robina Khalid at the Benazir Income Support Programme headquarters.

The discussion focused on issues faced by women beneficiaries of Benazir Income Support Programme as Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, particularly concerning delayed disbursement and the provision of necessary facilities.

Robina Khalid assured the PPP general secretary that all problems faced by the beneficiaries would be promptly addressed. Our priority is to ensure that every woman in need receives the support she deserves without any delay," she added.

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CDA PARK ENCLAVE: 18.5 NEW PLOTS IN CDA DATED 10/9/1999 FROM ISLAMABAD CITY RESIDENTIAL PLOTS. 800, 1000, 1200, 1500, 2000, 2500, 3000, 3500, 4000, 4500, 5000, 5500, 6000, 6500, 7000, 7500, 8000, 8500, 9000, 9500, 10000, 10500, 11000, 11500, 12000, 12500, 13000, 13500, 14000, 14500, 15000, 15500, 16000, 16500, 17000, 17500, 18000, 18500, 19000, 19500, 20000, 20500, 21000, 21500, 22000, 22500, 23000, 23500, 24000, 24500, 25000, 25500, 26000, 26500, 27000, 27500, 28000, 28500, 29000, 29500, 30000, 30500, 31000, 31500, 32000, 32500, 33000, 33500, 34000, 34500, 35000, 35500, 36000, 36500, 37000, 37500, 38000, 38500, 39000, 39500, 40000, 40500, 41000, 41500, 42000, 42500, 43000, 43500, 44000, 44500, 45000, 45500, 46000, 46500, 47000, 47500, 48000, 48500, 49000, 49500, 50000, 50500, 51000, 51500, 52000, 52500, 53000, 53500, 54000, 54500, 55000, 55500, 56000, 56500, 57000, 57500, 58000, 58500, 59000, 59500, 60000, 60500, 61000, 61500, 62000, 62500, 63000, 63500, 64000, 64500, 65000, 65500, 66000, 66500, 67000, 67500, 68000, 68500, 69000, 69500, 70000, 70500, 71000, 71500, 72000, 72500, 73000, 73500, 74000, 74500, 75000, 75500, 76000, 76500, 77000, 77500, 78000, 78500, 79000, 79500, 80000, 80500, 81000, 81500, 82000, 82500, 83000, 83500, 84000, 84500, 85000, 85500, 86000, 86500, 87000, 87500, 88000, 88500, 89000, 89500, 90000, 90500, 91000, 91500, 92000, 92500, 93000, 93500, 94000, 94500, 95000, 95500, 96000, 96500, 97000, 97500, 98000, 98500, 99000, 99500, 100000, 100500, 101000, 101500, 102000, 102500, 103000, 103500, 104000, 104500, 105000, 105500, 106000, 106500, 107000, 107500, 108000, 108500, 109000, 109500, 110000, 110500, 111000, 111500, 112000, 112500, 113000, 113500, 114000, 114500, 115000, 115500, 116000, 116500, 117000, 117500, 118000, 118500, 119000, 119500, 120000, 120500, 121000, 121500, 122000, 122500, 123000, 123500, 124000, 124500, 125000, 125500, 126000, 126500, 127000, 127500, 128000, 128500, 129000, 129500, 130000, 130500, 131000, 131500, 132000, 132500, 133000, 133500, 134000, 134500, 135000, 135500, 136000, 136500, 137000, 137500, 138000, 138500, 139000, 139500, 140000, 140500, 141000, 141500, 142000, 142500, 143000, 143500, 144000, 144500, 145000, 145500, 146000, 146500, 147000, 147500, 148000, 148500, 149000, 149500, 150000, 150500, 151000, 151500, 152000, 152500, 153000, 153500, 154000, 154500, 155000, 155500, 156000, 156500, 157000, 157500, 158000, 158500, 159000, 159500, 160000, 160500, 161000, 161500, 162000, 162500, 163000, 163500, 164000, 164500, 165000, 165500, 166000, 166500, 167000, 167500, 168000, 168500, 169000, 169500, 170000, 170500, 171000, 171500, 172000, 172500, 173000, 173500, 174000, 174500, 175000, 175500, 176000, 176500, 177000, 177500, 178000, 178500, 179000, 179500, 180000, 180500, 181000, 181500, 182000, 182500, 183000, 183500, 184000, 184500, 185000, 185500, 186000, 186500, 187000, 187500, 188000, 188500, 189000, 189500, 190000, 190500, 191000, 191500, 192000, 192500, 193000, 193500, 194000, 194500, 195000, 195500, 196000, 196500, 197000, 197500, 198000, 198500, 199000, 199500, 200000, 200500, 201000, 201500, 202000, 202500, 203000, 203500, 204000, 204500, 205000, 205500, 206000, 206500, 207000, 207500, 208000, 208500, 209000, 209500, 210000, 210500, 211000, 211500, 212000, 212500, 213000, 213500, 214000, 214500, 215000, 215500, 216000, 216500, 217000, 217500, 218000, 218500, 219000, 219500, 220000, 220500, 221000, 221500, 222000, 222500, 223000, 223500, 224000, 224500, 225000, 225500, 226000, 226500, 227000, 227500, 228000, 228500, 229000, 229500, 230000, 230500, 231000, 231500, 232000, 232500, 233000, 233500, 234000, 234500, 235000, 235500, 236000, 236500, 237000, 237500, 238000, 238500, 239000, 239500, 240000, 240500, 241000, 241500, 242000, 242500, 243000, 243500

## Postal stamp aimed at conserving Kashmir markhor issued

By Javed Shahid

ISLAMABAD: To conserve and protect the markhor population and their habitat in the country, Pakistan Post in collaboration with WWF-Pakistan issued stamps showcasing the Kashmiri markhor.

These stamps were released at a ceremony organised at the Pakistan Academy of Sciences building here on Friday. According to experts, the Kashmiri markhor in Pakistan faced numerous threats that jeopardised its survival.

The major threats to the markhor population included habitat loss, agricultural expansion, illegal hunting, climate change and infrastructure development. These threats have led to a drastic decline in markhor population across its habitat range.

Considering multiple challenges to the population, WWF called for conservation efforts to protect and preserve this iconic species.

The markhor, declared as the national animal of Pakistan, is large wild goat species native to South Asia and Central Asia, mainly existing in Pakistan, India, the Karakoram Range, parts of Afghanistan and the Hindu Kush. Since 2015, it has been classified as near threatened on the IUCN red list. Often based on their horn configuration, markhor have been divided into five subspecies: Astar markhor, Baluchistan markhor, Kabul markhor, Kashmir markhor and Sulaiman markhor.

Speaking at the launch ceremony, Hameed Naqvi Khan, Director General WWF-Pakistan, said the postage stamp not only celebrated the existence of Kashmiri markhor but also highlighted the need for concerted conservation efforts to safeguard their future. This initiative also aimed to draw attention to the species' threatened status and the growing need for habitat preservation and anti-poaching measures.

He said the issuance of the postage stamp dedicated to the Kashmiri markhor would serve as a reminder of the collective responsibility to protect and preserve our natural heritage for future generations.

"It will also provide a platform to showcase Pakistan's commitment to wildlife conservation on the global stage," he added.

Pakistan Post Additional Director General Hassan Hashmi said Pakistan was home to rich biodiversity, including Indus river dolphin, whale, common leopard, snow leopard and many resident and migratory birds. This postage stamp about Kashmiri markhor expresses the government's commitment to raising awareness and protecting this threatened species which is confronted with different challenges.

He said it was essential to promote collaborative conservation initiatives that help address the threats to wildlife and take on-ground actions. He appreciated the role of universities in the protection of the markhor species in Pakistan.

WWF said at three gates of the Himalayas, the Kashmiri markhor was the most spectacular among wild goats, distinguished by its large body, long spurring horns, thick fur and a flowing beard and neck ruff. It is widely spread from Afghanistan to Pakistan, Azad Jammu and Kashmir and Indian occupied Jammu and Kashmir.

## Seminar held to promote community policing

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad police in collaboration with Bahria University Islamabad organised a seminar to promote community policing and enhance police-public contact.

PRO for the Islamabad Traffic Police said that following the special directions of Inspector General of Police (IGP) Islamabad Syed Ali Nasir Ravi, the Islamabad police, in collaboration with Bahria University Islamabad, organised the seminar.

The seminar was attended by DIG Law & Order Shaukat Hussain Dewar, DIG Security Mohammad Jawad Tariq, and other officers of ITP.

From Bahria University, Senior Assistant Professor Khalid Munir and Senior Associate Professor Sobia Zouf participated in the seminar.

During the seminar, students asked questions on various topics, including the relationship between the police and the public, the role of the police in solving social issues, and the role of justice and facilities to the general public. The police officers promptly answered these questions.

The participants of the seminar appreciated the efforts of Islamabad police in maintaining law and order, combating crime, and ensuring smooth traffic flow on the roads. On this occasion, the police officers expressed that Islamabad police have always considered students as the torchbearers and believe that students play a significant role in the development of any country.

The purpose of this seminar was to promote community policing and foster a sense of mutual affinity.

At the end of the seminar, commemorative shields were exchanged between the police officers and university professors. — Staff Reporter

## Entertaining evening for fashion enthusiasts, music lovers

By Our Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: Seena Hotels on Friday partnered with Bahria Association to host a fundraising event under the banner of cultural diplomacy.

The event's proceeds went directly to the Bahria Maternal and Children Hospital, a vital institution providing comprehensive healthcare services to mothers and children, enhancing the quality of care within the community.

According to a statement, the evening featured an impressive fashion show featuring apparel by artisans from Bahria and a mesmerising musical performance by Sazish, blending entertainment with philanthropy to make a significant impact.

Fashion enthusiasts and music lovers were treated to a memorable experience, showcasing stunning dresses and creations of Bahria Association's skilled artisans.

This event highlighted their exceptional craftsmanship, traditional techniques and unique designs, supporting community development and empowerment.

Models on the runway helped bridge the gap between artisans and a broader audience, promoting the preservation of traditional crafts and supporting sustainable livelihoods for the workers involved.

Bahria Association President Ahsan Malik said: "Our artisans create stunning apparel that illustrates their exceptional craftsmanship and dedication to traditional techniques. These pieces are not just fashion statements but symbols of our cul-



MODELS walk on the ramp during a fashion show titled 'Embroidering Dreams' in Islamabad on Friday. — Photo by Tariq

tural heritage. With Seena's invaluable support for our fundraising efforts, we can channel proceeds towards our hospital project, providing better healthcare facilities and

supporting the overall development of our community."

The statement said Seena Hotels recognised the importance of community development and was committed

to playing its part in creating a positive change.

Supporting initiatives that uplifted and empowered communities was fundamental to its values.

## Owners of high-rise buildings told to get fire safety certificates

### DC says drive launched to check fire safety equipment in commercial buildings

By Asim Yasin

HAWALPINDI: The district administration has asked all high-rise building and commercial place owners to ensure fire safety equipment in their units and get fire safety certificates.

Deputy Commissioner Dr Hassan Waqar Chishti told Dawn that a drive had been launched to ensure fire safety equipment in the commercial buildings and high-rise places to avoid any untoward incident.

He said Revenue 1122 had been asked to launch a crackdown against commercial buildings of more than 50-foot high whose owners had not installed fire safety equipment. He said the Civil Defence Department had been asked to check all commercial buildings, LPG manufacturers and fuel filling stations.

He said Rawalpindi Municipal Corporation and Rawalpindi Development Authority as well as the district council had been asked not to approve any commercial building which failed to mention emergency exit doors in their building plans.

District Officer Emergency Sibghatullah told Dawn that a survey was conducted in the district and found more than 150 high-rise buildings with no safety equipment and emergency exits.

He said that the department had formed four teams in each tehsil. He said these teams had started the campaign in tehsils Rawalpindi, Gagan Khan and Tariq simultaneously. He said the department already issued notices to more than 150 high-rise buildings to install fire-fighting equipment.

He said according to the survey, approximately

### Seminary teacher held for 'rape' of two minor boys

MUZAFFARGARH: Police arrested on Friday a seminary teacher for allegedly raping his two minor students and threatening them with torture if they told anybody about the assault.

As per Dera Dilawar police, the complainant Jafar Dilawar, said in his application that his son and a nephew, aged between 10-12 years, had been studying at Madrasah Yesar at Chak No. 142/AJL for a couple of months.

He said the boys told him that their teacher "raped them at the seminary and threatened them with torture if they told anybody about the assault."

On the complaint, the police registered the case against the suspect under section 376-A, 377-B.

The police say they have arrested the suspect, while the boys were sent to hospital for the medical examination.

DILAWAR: A man died after being struck by lightning, while another was critically injured in the incident occurring near Adda 1-R, Sultan Colony Road, Sialkot, Keti Adda on Friday.

According to locals, 44-year-old Sajid (22) and Fazal (25) were on a motorcycle when lightning struck, leaving the former dead on the spot, while the latter was critically injured.

On being informed by the locals about the incident, a Revenue 1122 team arrived on the scene and shifted the body and the injured man to hospital where his condition was said to be critical.

The incident occurred during the rain that lashed the area for hours. — Correspondent

all commercial buildings especially in downtown Rawalpindi were not properly equipped with fire safety measures. He said under the survey, they checked whether or not the building owners had installed fire alarm system, sprinklers and interconnected fire hydrants and separate emergency stairs of 100 feet.

He said there was a problem in commercial buildings as these were not managed by one owner and multiple owners had separate shops and offices in the commercial buildings. He said that the market committee had been constituted and asked to adopt fire safety measures to avoid any untoward situation. He said more than 80 building owners had submitted applications for fire safety certificates.

District Officer Civil Defence Tafiq Hussain said the markets in Raja Bazaar, City Saddar Road, Kondomari Bazaar, Garments and adjoining main grain market and other bazaars were located in narrow streets and could be dangerous if they did not adopt fire safety measures.

He said owners whose multi-storey buildings were located in narrow bazaars had been asked to erect fire-isolated stairs and install sprinkler system in these premises.

He said that according to building bylaws, essential safety measures were basically required in commercial, industrial and public buildings to ensure the safety of occupants in the event of a fire or emergency. The layout plans of commercial buildings must have exit doors, fire hydrants, fire-isolated stairs, emergency lifts, mechanical ventilation and sprinkler systems, smoke alarms, safety management systems and fire control centre.

He said the department would check all hotels and restaurants and issue challans to those who had not installed fire-fighting systems.

About LPG, he said the Civil Defence had launched a grand operation against illegal business of decomposing Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) and sealed 126 illegal LPG agencies for not adopting fire safety measures in the last one week.

## JOB OPPORTUNITIES

The Local Government, Elections and Rural Development Department invites online applications from capable and motivated individuals having domicile of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (Merged Areas) to fill the following vacant posts, purely on contract basis. The candidates fulfilling the following qualifications and experience criteria may only apply.

Job	Post/Position	No. of Post	Minimum Qualification & Experience	Age limit as on date of closing date
1	Senior Finance Officer	01	Professional accounting qualification (CA/ACCA/ICMA) or a Master's degree in Business Administration in Finance or M. Com., or equivalent degree in Finance from HEC recognized university or institution. At least 10 years of financial management or Audit & Accounts management experience, including 05 years as Finance Specialist in a similar position.	Up to 45 years
2	Local IT Executive	01	BS (4 Years) Information Technology/Bachelor Engineering, Computer Science /Master in Computer Science from HEC recognized university/ Institute. At least 05 years working experience in the field of Information Technology and Management.	Up to 45 years
3	Human Capacity Development Officer	01	Master's Degree in Social Sciences/ Social Work/any HEC recognized university/Institution. At least 07 years' experience in planning & implementation of capacity development projects.	Up to 45 years
4	Senior M&E Officer	01	BS (4 Years) Information Technology/Bachelor Engineering, Computer Science /Master in Computer Science from HEC recognized university/ Institute.	Up to 45 years
5	Environmental & Social Specialist	01	Master's degree in Environmental Sciences/ Environmental Economics/ Bachelor of Engineering in Master's degree in Social Sciences, Public Administration, Political science, Agricultural Sciences, Anthropology and other cognate Qualification from the HEC recognized university/Institution with at least 03 years related work experience.	Up to 45 years
6	Capacity Development Officer	01	Master's Degree in Social Sciences/ Social Work from the HEC recognized university/Institution. At least 05 years' experience in planning & implementation of capacity development projects/ Training projects.	Up to 45 years
7	Chancery Officer	01	BS (4 Years) Information Technology/Bachelor Engineering, Computer Science /Master in Computer Science from HEC recognized university/ Institute with at least 03 years' experience in Planning & Management.	Up to 45 years
8	Development Officer	01	BS (4 Years) Information Technology/Bachelor Engineering, Computer Science /Master in Computer Science from HEC recognized university/ Institute with at least 03 years in Database management, Project management, programming, software and computer networks.	Up to 45 years
9	Devlopment Developer	01	BS (4 Years) Information Technology/Bachelor Engineering, Computer Science /Master in Computer Science from HEC recognized university/ Institute with at least 03 years in Database management, Project management, programming, software and computer networks.	Up to 45 years
10	Anti Officer	01	BS (4 Years) Information Technology, Software Engineering, Computer Science /Master in Computer Science from HEC recognized university/ Institute with at least 03 years in IT management, program writing, software and computer networks.	Up to 45 years

3. Candidates will be professionally interviewed to appear in the ET-1A screening test. However detailed scrutiny will be carried out by the appointing authority and any candidate is found ineligible in any respect at any stage of the recruitment process, his/her will be rejected first by the Appointing Authority.

4. All the candidates will be required to create profile on ET-1A website. After creating the profile and before applying/appointing fee for any post, each candidate will have to print ET-1A form from ET-1A website and get their CNIC/Passport from any PAKMIA (ET-1A) Bureau/Office (Kashmir). Without such application, they will not be able to apply for any post.

5. The ET-1A, qualification and experience that each post can be downloaded from the official website of Local Government, Elections & Rural Development Department, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

6. Appointment to the above posts will be made under the project policy of the Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The employees so appointed will be governed by the project policy and their tenure will be terminated upon expiry of the project/its extension/other performance in favour of another.

7. Interested applicants will be issued with detailed information letter only.

8. Candidates must be eligible in respect of the last date of receipt of the applications.

9. Unsuccessful applicants and applicants whose application date shall not be concerned.

10. The candidates working in Government/Rural Development Boards should apply through proper channels.

11. Candidates failing to supply relevant documents will be rejected immediately.

12. Experience from reputed organisations will be accepted only.

13. No stipend will be admissible for any interview.

14. In case of foreign degree, equivalent certificate from HEC will be presented.

15. Current/Contractual number of posts are subject to modification.

## HOW TO APPLY

1. Interested candidates may visit our website and apply for the posts online.

2. After successful submission of online application, a generated unique deposit slip (Bank account number, Project code & candidate's personal information) will be generated.

3. Take a printout of the generated deposit slip & deposit the prescribed test fee (non-refundable) through Cooperative Bank or Agent and Cashier at any branch of CBL Bank via USTC Counter.

4. After successful test submission, please keep the original deposit slip (candidate copy) testing bank deposit stamp with yourself and do not share it with anyone else.

5. After testing, applicants will be informed about the result on 17th June 2024.

6. Candidates will be informed through SMS by ET-1A to download and print their Roll No. Slip from [www.et1a.kpk.gov.pk](http://www.et1a.kpk.gov.pk). Candidates are directed to submit their printout/nearest testing center.

7. Test Date, Time & Venue will be mentioned on Roll No. Slip.

8. No separate Call Letter will be issued to candidates for attending test through postal/phone means.

## PROJECT DIRECTOR,

Project Implementation Unit, KP-RISP

Directorate General, LGMRD

Plot No. 20, Sector B-6, Phase-V, Hayatabad, Peshawar.

INF/PP 1218/24

**LAHORE**  
 Sunrise 07:08 AM  
 Sunrise Tomorrow 04:55 AM  
**NEXT 24 HRS**  
 Minimum 22°C  
 Maximum 43°C  
 Outdoor Partly Cloudy  
**AGT**  
 Maximum (Yesterday) 34.3



SHOPPING bags are being sold at the Circular Road wholesale market. — White Star

## Environment dept to map plastic manufacturing, recycling

Punjab biggest consumer of plastic

By Mansoor Malik

**LAHORE:** The Environment Protection and Climate Change Department (EPCCD) is preparing a digital registry to map and gauge plastic bag production and registration of all producers, distributors, collectors, and recycling units to gather data to take informed decisions to implement the Punjab government's "No to Plastic" initiative.

Punjab, being the most populous province, is currently responsible for more than half of the total plastic consumption in the country, but there had been no data on the scale of plastic bag production, a source in the department told Dawn on Friday.

The WEF Pakistan says the country consumes 22 billion plastic bags annually, with an expected annual increase of

15 percent. It says Pakistan's per capita plastic consumption is 6.1 kilograms, which is approximately equal to the average weight of all vital organs combined in human body. As a result, an average Pakistani consumes so much plastic over 50 years that its total weight would be equal to that of at least five adults.

This suggests that, in addition to over eight billion humans on the planet, these humans are contributing to a growing "plastic population" that is out numbering the human population, which may eventually also outnumber fish in the oceans," asserts the WEF-P.

An environment protection department official says that Pakistan, in 2022, imported virgin resin raw material to make plastic products worth US\$30 billion accompanied to the import of tea (one of the key imports in the country) worth US\$370 million – not even a quarter of the total plastic imports.

Recognising the growing need to control the production and use of plastic products, Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz has taken political ownership and decided to take the challenge head-on by

imposing a ban on plastic bag production and use from June 5.

The chief minister has instructed the environment department to monitor all registered premises to ensure no production unit violates the rules by producing single-use, low-density plastic bags. Additionally, the department will be required to conduct vigilante operations to ensure no plastic bag production unit is unregistered.

Recognising the risks beyond clogging of drains, Senior Minister for Environment Protection, Mian Iftikhar Awanzeb says the past failures to tackle the plastic problem have shown that elimination will not be possible with isolated interventions.

"Multi-sectoral interventions have been identified and the entire plastic elimination regime has been institutionalised within the Punjab Planning & Development Department. This time, it's not just about banning the production of plastic bags less than 75 microns thick, but also facilitating businesses towards sustainable production. The focus is on responsible consumption and produc-

tion", adds Mr Awanzeb.

Responding to a query, she says the Punjab government is not closing any industry, and instead acting as a catalyst to facilitate their transition to production of environment-friendly shopping bags.

EPOCD Secretary Raja Jahanzeb Awanzeb says the entire initiative has been supported by legislative measures and stakeholders have been taken on board to eliminate any gaps or discrepancies in implementing the plastic-free Punjab programme.

Furthermore, he says, the government has banned the entry of single-use plastic bags in its departments, schools and other public spaces. These "Safe Zones" will facilitate the transition to safer non-plastic bags use in daily life".

Mr Awanzeb says the department has also engaged national and multinationals corporations and Fast Moving Consumer Goods (FMCG) companies and encouraged them to carry out plastic audits.

"These companies have assured the government of compliance in all their productions," Mr Awanzeb adds.

## Kisan Bank, green tractor schemes for farmers

Farmers to get 70pc subsidy on small tractors, 50pc on big ones

By Our Staff Reporter

**LAHORE:** Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz announced the Punjab Kisan Bank as well as the Green Tractor Scheme for farmers to grant them soft loans and help them improve their production.

She turned down a proposal for disbursement of Rs600,000 subsidy on a tractor and directed the officials to give 70pc subsidy on a small tractor and 50pc on a big tractor. On a proposal, the number of tractors under the Punjab Green Tractor Scheme has been enhanced by 10,000.

Ms Nawaz directed the officials concerned to complete the first

phase of the Punjab Green Tractor Scheme within a year. It was also decided to increase the number of tractors under this scheme every year. The farmers possessing land from six to 50 acres will be eligible to apply in the tractor scheme.

The decision was made during a meeting presided over by the CM. Ms Nawaz also approved a high-tech mechanisation programme being prepared for collaboration with international companies with the local companies to manufacture tractors and other tools in Punjab. The proposal to grant incentives to the international firms for manufacturing the latest agricultural tools was reviewed in the meeting.

Approved to launch an oil seed processing programme in Punjab was also granted under which the farmers would be guaranteed to

Continued on Page 14.

## Alarm over surveillance of girls in private spaces

By Kalbir Ali

**ISLAMABAD:** The Digital Rights Foundation (DRF) has expressed concerns over the ongoing surveillance of women and girls in private spaces through unregulated CCTV cameras in women's shelters, temples, universities, and salons, invading their right to privacy and dignity in private spaces.

According to the 2023 Gender Gap Report, Pakistan ranks 142 out of 146 countries in terms of gender parity, including economic participation and opportunity, educational attainment, health and survival, and

political empowerment.

The DRF statement said that women are already severely impacted by gender-based violence, harassment, and social surveillance by society, which in turn pushes them to seek refuge in gender-segregated private spaces such as these.

With women's participation being severely limited and restricted in the country, they are significantly more financially dependent, prompting them to look towards spaces like Darul Aman. Women residing in Darul Aman were largely vulnerable, particularly when they face little to no familial support and are seeking refuge.

The DRF has said that

women living in these shelters have also complained of gross mistreatment and abuse at the hands of those in charge at these centers.

The DRF has referred to the Rawalpindi Darul Aman incident and the Lahore women's hotel where hidden cameras were found on the premises of the building.

These reported instances of CCTV cameras being installed in private spaces under the guise of safety, and the footage being misused, serve as a direct invasion of privacy and threat to women's physical safety, creating a hostile environment of mistrust and insecurity.

Continued on Page 14.

## Punjab Assembly session turns chaotic

By Our Staff Reporter

**LAHORE:** The Punjab Assembly session of Friday turned chaotic as the treasury and opposition benches engaged in a heated debate over the removal of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) workers.

Opposition Leader Ahmed Khan Shehzad criticised the government for violating the sanctity of charter and char dars and detaining political activists despite their release on bail.

Speaking on a point of order, Mr Shehzad said the government had painted a rosy picture of law and order in the province in the previous session, which ended only two days ago. However, the situation was quite different, as political activists were seen bail from courts

of law were being detained soon after they came out of prisons.

He said the police were detaining them from every meeting, adding former opposition leader Mahmood Rasheed. He demanded that the government explain who was behind these arrests, if not the government itself.

He said Imran Khan was the leader of the single largest party in the country and could not be broken psychologically through such tactics. He added that Nawaz Sharif had termed Gen Zia his spiritual father, while the PML-N had taken oath, despite roaring black arm bands, administered by Gen Musharraf in 2008.

At this, Parliamentary Affairs Minister Muztaba Shahzad got infuriated and said that Gen Rajya was the father of the PTI, as he had secured the majority

of the PTI in the 2018 general election. He also lambasted the opposition party for its role in the May 9, 2023, attack on military installations and said that remnants of former chief justice Saqib Nisar were still supporting the party.

This led to a war of slangs between the two sides, turning the house into a flea market.

In the meantime, opposition MPAs from both sides lamented a lack of quorum in the house.

The chair directed the ringing of bells for five minutes to invoke the MPAs sitting in the lobby into the house. However, the chair had to put off the proceedings till Monday afternoon as the required minimum strength of 94 members in the house could not be ensured.

Earlier, both sides lamented the infinite delays in starting the session,

which finally began two hours and 45 minutes late. Sargodha Council's Rana Afzal urged the chair and members to take the session seriously, as prolonged delays in starting the proceedings invited ridicule from the galleries.

Parliamentary Affairs Minister Majid Shuja also regretted the situation and suggested cutting down the delay gradually.

Deputy Speaker Zahoor Iqbal Chaudhry sought assurances from both sides that they would come on time for the session on Monday, and promised to start the proceedings punctually regardless of attendance. On assurance from both sides of the aisle that they would come in time for the session on Monday, the chair said that whether members were present or not, he would begin the proceedings in time.



Alcaraz downs Sinner to reach first French Open final

Pg. 17 SPORT

## DC told to decide PTI request for Mochi Gate convention

By Our Staff Reporter

**LAHORE:** The Lahore High Court on Friday directed the deputy commissioner to decide an application of the Pakistan Tehrik-i-Insaaf (PTI) seeking permission to hold a workers' convention at Mochi Gate.

Justice Abid Hussain Chatha passed the order on a petition filed by Chaudhry Asghar Gujjar, a local leader of PTI.

The petitioner's counsel argued that a request was submitted to the DC on June 1 for permission to hold workers' convention at Mochi Gate scheduled on June 9.

He said despite several days passing, the DC had not made a decision on the request of the petitioner.

The counsel argued that the constitution guaranteed every political and religious party a complete freedom to hold meetings, processions, and rallies within the bounds of the law.

He alleged that the PTI's political activities were being hindered while other political and religious parties were given full freedom to hold meetings, processions, and rallies.

He said the DC had been delaying the decision on the request on the pretext of security reasons.

## Two cops martyred, another injured in dacoits' firing

By Our Correspondent

**RAJAH YAR KHAN:** Two police officials were martyred, while another critically injured allegedly when dacoits opened fire on a police vehicle in Khanbela town area in Sheregarh Sharif police limits, Liaquatpur tehsil, some 80kms from here on Friday night.

According to police, they were informed that dacoits were looting shops in Khanbela area.

Acting on the information, a police team reached the spot.

On seeing the police, the dacoits opened fire on their vehicle that was retaliated by policemen.

In exchange of heavy fire, driver of police vehicle, Constable Shafiq Ahmed, was hit by a bullet and died on the spot.

Another Constable Zeeshan Khurram Bohar, who was injured in the dacoits' firing, was shifted to the Sheikh Zayed Medical College Hospital (SZMCH), where he succumbed to his injuries.

Meanwhile, Constable Ishaq, who was also among the injured, is said to be in a critical condition at the hospital.

The dacoits fled away after the crossing, while police have cordoned off the area and launched a search operation to arrest them.

## LHC extends market hours

By Our Staff Reporter

**LAHORE:** The Lahore High Court on Friday extended market hours till the upcoming Eidul Azha set to be celebrated on June 17.

Justice Shahid Karim said the markets would remain open till 6am on Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays, and till 12 midnight on other days of the week.

The judge was hearing multiple petitions relating to smog and other environmental issues.

Earlier, the Punjab Food Authority (PFA) presented a report regarding action taken to curb sale of dead chicken, stating that 46,670 kilo dead chicken was disposed of in Toliyan Market.

It said 64 cases were registered against those selling dead chicken and unsafe meat besides a total fine of Rs22.5 million was imposed on those selling dead chicken meat. It said daily raids were conducted for meat inspection.

Additionally, the judge ordered the Irrigation Department to open the irrigation channel of Maigh-i-Jinnah.

A member of a judicial commission stated that despite court orders, no serious measures had been taken to curb smog, which was increasing and posed severe health risks. He requested for concrete steps to eliminate smog.

The judge sought a fresh report from the environment department on the steps being taken to curb smog by June 14.

## PRAYER

Page	3.17
Zohr	1.00
Aza	4.50
Maghrib	7.00
Isha	8.45

Meeting time in Lahore

## REFLECTIONS

“COPPER CLOSE RELATIONS BEHAVE MORE DISTANTLY THAN STRANGERS AND COPPER STRANGERS HELP YOU MORE THAN YOUR NEAREST RELATIVES.”

— HAZRAT ALI (A.S.)

## Citrus centre to be set up in Sargodha

**NARODIMIA:** The government has decided to build a citrus centre in Sargodha with modern facilities at a cost of Rs200 million to increase the production of kinnow and its introduction further rapidity of fruit.

This was stated by Export Development Board Executive Director Syed Abbas Naqvi at a ceremony at the local chamber of commerce and industry.

He said the government was trying to further increase the export of fruits produced in Sargodha.

**FIRING:** It is an open fire on their trains from Rawalpindi towards Anti-Terrorism Court, causing significant damage, and fire. — Correspondent

## Punjab to crack down on organised beggars rings

Forced begging to be categorised as non-bailable offense

By Our Staff Reporter

**LAHORE:** The Punjab Home department has decided to launch a crackdown on organised begging that is not only causing deterioration of law and order, but also a factor in the ongoing criminal activity in the province.

The home department spokesman has informed a draft bill to the chief minister's office, proposing enhancement of punishment in the Punjab Vigyan Ordinance 1958 to check the organised begging in the province.

The department is awaiting the chief minister's nod to get the draft bill through the cabinet standing committee on legislative business and subsequently the provincial assembly.

It is learnt that the amendment bill proposes up to 10-year imprisonment for the gang leaders of the beggar mafia, who are allegedly involved in rendering children disabled, exploiting the elderly.

"This legislation is a crucial step towards delivering justice to the victims and dismantling the beggar mafia," Mr Mengal asserted.

persons, including women, and forcing them to beg on city roads.

In addition to the prison term, the offenders will face a hefty fine of Rs1 million and in case of non-payment of fine, they will have to serve additional three-year imprisonment.

The home department has already arranged and identified barracks in different jails in the province for the beggars' going leaders.

A home department spokesman says the forced begging will be categorised as a non-bailable offense under the new law to ensure that the perpetrators remain in custody and face trial without the possibility of bail, reflecting the government's zero-tolerance policy on the issue.

Speaking to Dawn, home secretary Noorul Aziz Mengal said there was no specific legal framework to punish the leaders of these gangs and added that the new measures would significantly curb the exploitation of vulnerable individuals.

"This legislation is a crucial step towards delivering justice to the victims and dismantling the beggar mafia," Mr Mengal asserted.

## Process starts to appoint VC of Multan NMU

By Asif Chaudhry

**LAHORE:** The process has been initiated for appointment of the new vice-chancellor of the Nishtar Medical University (NMU), Multan, six months after its former VC Prof Dr Rame Altaf resigned over the "misattribution" of funds at the hands of the caretaker chief minister Mohsin Naqvi.

Mr Altaf was among heads of the medical institutions who faced the "wrath" of Mr Naqvi during his frequent visits to the attached hospitals.

According to a senior official, the government decided to post the VC before Eid ul-Azha following complaints of poor management of the university as well as its attached hospital.

The soon-to-be committee would start interviews of 28 candidates next week. The sources said the government might give preference to the retired

and experienced medical teachers just like the past.

About the resignation of Dr Altaf, the official said, Mr Naqvi had reprimanded him and terminated Medical University VC Prof Dr Zahid Chaudhary and Amritsar Medical College Lahore Principal Prof Al-Fareed Zafar during his "surprise visit" to the attached hospitals over unavailability of free medi-

cines.

He said the VC had argued with Mr Naqvi that they were answerable for the medical education only and had nothing to do with the patient management of the attached hospitals, which was a domain of the medical superintendents.

That justification had irked Mr Naqvi who put a ban on them to take the main stage during official meetings, events or seminars as a punishment. At this, NMU VC Rame Altaf tendered his resignation.

Following his resignation,

the institute suffered as the head initiated several important schemes, including construction of the 500-bed new Nishtar Hospital-II, the examination department, new lecture complex and launch of MEdMS programmes. The seat remained vacant and managed by Professor of Obstetrics and Gynaecology Dr Maham Khawaja.

The official source said the shortage of intervening drugs aggravated at the Nishtar Hospital Multan since the resignation of former VC.

Meanwhile, the new hospital is not partially functional as the acting VC reportedly ordered shifting the urology ward to another part of the hospital.

The ward was established by the overseas Pakistani doctors who warned that they would stop treating if the decision of closing down the urology ward was not reviewed.

## Alarm over...

Continued from Page 13

among women at large. The DRP report also referred to CCTV cameras installed in women's nations, where the footage and data have later been employed as blackmail material.

In 2019, students from the University of Balochistan protested in the wake of CCTV camera footage being used by security personnel to harass and blackmail students and women on campus.

The DHP's Cyber Harassment Helpline has so far received 16,847 complaints from across Pakistan, with 58.5 percent of them from women. The DHP added that there was a rising trend where women were captured on camera without their consent, in addition to the misuse of their intimate images through blackmail and intimidation.

The DHP has demanded transparent investigations into these violent incidents related to employing unregulated CCTV cameras that violate women's privacy by the Ministry of Human Rights and IT Ministry. They also demanded involvement of women's rights and digital rights groups in consultations around the proposed data protection bill to address the existing gaps.

## Kisan Bank...

Continued from Page 13

produce oily edibles in various parts of the province.

Speaking on the occasion, the CM said a Kishore Kisan Package was being granted and the farmers would be given other privileges and facilities through this card.

"The prosperity of every farmer along with enhancement in agricultural production is part of our foremost tasks," she declared and said that the launch of solarisation of tube wells and drip irrigation system was also expected in the meeting.

Meanwhile, the chief minister issued directions to ensure implementation of the Rada master plan and fulfilling the illegal sale and purchase of its lands.

It has been decided to collaborate with China and other international companies for the completion of Rada projects. The meeting decided to enhance the farms in the Rada area from 20 to 250. It agreed with the proposal to build an airport of international standards in the Rada river city project, clearing of the river Ravi and river expansion to more than 3,000 metres.

## Consultation seeks to strengthen Home-Based Workers Act 2023

By Our Staff Reporter

**LAHORE:** The Labour Education Foundation (LEF) organised a consultation on proposed amendments to the Home-Based Workers Act 2023 to ensure environmental health and safety for workers.

The event brought together MPAs Asma Nasir Abbasi, Qudsia Riaz, and Rukhsana Lodhi, representatives from civil society organisations, the Labour Department, home-based workers unions, and media entities to provide input on the proposed amendments.

The amendments aim to ensure that employers, contractors, and middlemen take necessary measures to guarantee the safety and health of home-based employees. This includes identifying and controlling hazards, providing training and vaccinations, and informing workers about potential hazards and protective

measures.

The proposed amendments also require workers to take certain measures for their own safety and that of others in the workplace. Violators of the Act's provisions on occupational safety and health may face fines of up to Rs20,000 and/or six months' imprisonment, in addition to compensation claims in case of injury or death.

Labour Director Muhammad Shahid said that revising the Act is crucial to meet the conditions for realising CSP Plus status for Europeans

markets. MPAs were urged to champion the cause of workers by getting the Act amended and that the government, in turn, by a women's chief minister, must address the problems faced by Punjab's 20 million home-based workers, 12 million of whom are women.

Trade union leader Nasir Khan highlighted the non-implementation of existing labour laws, while Prof Aysha Ahmed presented data on home-based workers, work-related injuries, and other relevant statistics.

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Ref: 5204/PH/CR/109/2024 Date: 25-06-2024

**TENDER NOTICE**

LEGAL PURCHASE OF MEDICINES, DISPOSABLE ITEMS, SURGICAL MATERIAL, IMPLANTS & ARTIFACTS, ETC., FOR THE YEAR 2024-2025

(DAY-TO-DAY BASIS)

1. Shaikh Zayed Hospital Lahore, a leading Government Hospital invites tenders from reputed firms for supply contract for the supply of Medicines and Disposable Items, Surgical Material & Implants/Artifacts of Shaikh Zayed Hospital, Lahore for the year 2024-2025 on a local Purchase (Day to Day) basis. The firms must be registered with Income Tax, Sales Tax Department, and be an Active Supplier list of the Federal Board of Revenue for the supply of above mentioned services.

2. Hospital Purchase (Estimated tender Cost: Rs. 150 Million) One Hundred & Fifty Million A.P.P.

3. Government Funded Patients (Estimated tender Cost: Rs. 50 Million) Fifty Million A.P.P.

The CDA amounting to Rs. 2.0 Millions shall be deposited in favor of Executive Director Shaikh Zayed Hospital, Lahore. (For Category A). The CDA amounting to Rs. 01 Millions shall be deposited in favor of Executive Director Shaikh Zayed Hospital, Lahore. (For Category B).

4. Tender documents are available with the account office of this Hospital on submission of written application along with payment of Rs. 100/- (One hundred Rupees only).

5. Tender documents will be available during working hours.

6. Tender is also available on the PPA's Website [www.ppa.gov.pk](http://www.ppa.gov.pk).

7. Last date for submission of tender is 29/06/2024 at 11:00 AM in the presence of Bidders & committee of Conference Room 1st Floor Shaikh Zayed Hospital, Lahore.

Single Stage-Two envelope bidding procedure shall be applied.

8. All tenders will be received after the due date and time.

9. All assessments and procuring procedures (i.e.) including opening & Awarding etc. shall be governed by Federal PPA rules 2004 (Amended) through T-PAQ Acquisition & Disposal System (i-PHQ).

Executive Director | Shaikh Zayed Hospital, Lahore

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PESHAWAR  
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Sunrise (Tomorrow) 04:59am  
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Maximum 38°C  
Globock Mainly Sunny



Alcaraz downs Sinner to reach first French Open final

Pg. 17 SPORT



A CAMEL dance being presented at a three-day spring festival that started in Kharashkhwa Bostkhal in Orakzai tribal district on Friday. — Dawn

## PHC rejects plea for removal of housing scheme scam suspect's name from ECL

Declares records contradicted petitioner's claim of having addressed people's grievance

### Bureau Report

PESHAWAR: The Peshawar High Court has refused to order authorities to strike the name of a private housing scheme's project director off the East Central List over an alleged fraud.

A bench consisting of Justice Sabirullah Asadiullah and Justice Waqas Ahmad dismissed the petition of Prof Abdul Haameed Jan of Professor Model Town-II Peshawar for the removal of his name from the ECL, observing that the cases of the affected people for grievance redressal are pending with the high court.

It declared that the petitioner's claim of having addressed the affected people's grievance was contradicted by the records and facts, so the petition was devoid of merit.

The National Accountability Bureau (NAB) had launched an inquiry under the National Accountability Ordinance (NAO) into allegations of corruption and corrupt practices against the petitioner and others for "cheating public

at large" in respect of the Professor Model Town-II Peshawar housing project.

It later issued a call-up notice to the petitioner on the housing scheme's project director over fraud allegations.

The NAB received 51 claims regarding the scheme and learned that the petitioner and other partners collected Rs 88.467 million in protest of providing developed plots to affitees but failed to deliver on the promise.

The claimants insisted that the petitioner and his other partners deprived several people of their hard-earned money.

In 2020, the high court ordered the placing of the name of the petitioner on the ECL at the request of a NAB deputy procurator general.

In the current petition, Prof Jan claimed that his firm had satisfied all claims by giving them plots or returning their money.

His counsel contended that after amendments made in the NAO through the National Accountability (Amendment) Act 2022, the said project did not come under the purview of NAB.

Dealing persistently of the petition, several affected persons filed applications with the court for impleading its respondents in the case. Their pleas were accepted.

Advocate Malik Shahbaz Khan appeared for the housing scheme's victims and said the petitioner along with other accused looted huge amounts under the garb of providing

amenities like mosque, school, hospital, community hall, and shopping mall in the private housing scheme.

He claimed that no NDC was obtained from the competent authority and instead a bogus NDC of the Peshawar Development Authority was shown to the claimants.

The lawyer contended that the petitioner was running a joint bank account with other accused, including Prof Nasirian, Mohammad Nasir and Hamid Gul, through which huge amounts had been collected from the claimants with promise of allotment of developed plots.

He added that the petitioner had also fraudulently issued provisional allotment letters and possession letters to the claimants, whereas in fact the claimants had not been handed over possession of any plot.

The bench observed that admittedly, under the 2022 amendment Act, jurisdiction of the NAB was casted in the instant matter but in light of the Supreme Court's judgement rendered in the "Imran Khan Niazi versus Federation of Pakistan" case, the matter was to be decided afresh by the competent authority.

It added that as per the stand of the NAB, all referred cases were again assigned by the competent authority and that at the moment the present case was under consideration for decision afresh in light of the high court's judgement.

## ANP for opening trade routes with Afghanistan

### Bureau Report

PESHAWAR: Azam National Party (Khyber Pakhtunkhwa) president Mian Iftikhar Hussain on Friday called for the opening of all trade and transport routes with Afghanistan, stressing it the need of the hour.

In a statement issued by the Bacha Khan Marqa here, Mr Hussain said that the federal government should review domestic and foreign policies.

He said that Pakistan needed to have good relations with

neighbours.

Mr Hussain urged the provincial government to take serious steps to counter terrorism and lawlessness.

"The government needs to take measures for ensuring provincial autonomy and improving the law and order situation in the province," he said.

The ANP leader claimed that the last Pakistani Federal-Local government in the centre released more than 200 terrorists from jails, while more than 40,000 terrorists were remitted in the country.

He said that the province sub-

ferred due to the recruitment of terrorists.

Mr Hussain said that the prevailing poor law and order situation showed parliament and other stakeholders were not taken into confidence during the government's talks with terrorists.

He said that the ANP supported the resolution of all issues through dialogue and when it ruled the province, it opted for talks to resolve the Malakand issue.

"When terrorists violated the peace agreement, the government ordered a military action

against them," he said.

The ANP leader said that at that time, the state, parliament and the provincial government were on the same page on the issue of action against terrorists.

He said that the ANP had so far been "punished" for military operations against terrorists.

Mr Hussain said that the current situation in the region was precarious and therefore, the state had to tread carefully to avoid repeating past mistakes.

He said that the ANP would continue its struggle for the rights of the province and provincial autonomy.

Continued on Page 15

## Faulty scanning machine affects trade activity at Torkham

Customs clearing agents and transporters complain NLC unresponsive despite requests

By Ibrahim Shirwani

KHYBER: Customs clearing agents and transporters have complained about the persistent technical issues with the electronic system

run by the National Logistic Cell (NLC) for imported goods at the Torkham border crossing, claiming the issue is hindering Pak-Afghan trade.

They told Dawn that despite their repeated requests for resolving the issue, the NLC was unresponsive.

Jamshed Khan, a customs clearing agent, complained that though the NLC charged vehicles taking goods in or from Afghanistan Rs 8,000 each, it had failed to ensure the smooth functioning of the scanning machine, to their satisfaction.

He said that the machine's poor

quality often led to inaccurate readings about the container's contents.

"The scanning machine's faulty readings pose a significant security risk, as it often fails to accurately detect items inside a container," he said.

He said that the faulty machine delayed scanning causing traffic congestion at the already over-crowded import and export terminals of the Torkham border crossing.

The problem also causes signifi-

cant delays in scanning export goods, as the NLC denies import vehicles to the export scanning machine, overburdening it," he insisted.

Another clearing agent, Gurbat Shirwani, called for the installation of a modern, high-tech scanning machine at the import terminal.

He said that the NLC should immediately remove all hurdles to Pak-Afghan trade via Torkham.

Mr Shirwani alleged that NLC officials often made excuses and falsely claimed to be in contact with Chinese technicians to fix the issue

"In the last one week, the machine broke down three times, troubling both travellers and transporters, who suffered financial losses over delay in the delivery of goods," he said.

The clearing agent said that the NLC's failure to ensure early completion of work on the Torkham customs terminal forced transporters to deposit parking fees without having the parking facility.

COMPENSATION: Ulhas of the Nowshera sub-division of Zakhelbach in Landi Kotal tehsil here has demanded their "due share in compensation" for their land provided

for the construction of a rest house near the Shogla Singsa.

The demand was made during a meeting that over here on Friday with Shabir Afridi in the chair.

The participants gave the administration the June 11 ultimatum for the payment of compensation and warned if the demand wasn't met, they would block work on the rest house.

The jang members insisted that their tribe had reached an agreement with the district administration over payments for the rest house land in 2018 but the money had yet to be given to them.

## PRAYER

Fajr	09:23
Zohar	12:16
Aza	05:14
Maghrib	07:24
Isha	09:07
Starting time in Pakistan	

## Uplift projects scrapped by last PTI govt to be revived: MNA

**Yusuf says Shehbaz govt believes in people's development**

By Our Correspondent

**MANSEHRA:** Pakistani Muslim League-Nawaz central senior vice-president and MNA Sardar Mohammad Yusuf on Friday said the federal government would revive all Hazara division development projects scrapped by the last Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf government.

"We're going to restore dozens of development projects launched by the PML-N in Hazara division in 2017 but abandoned by the PTI government after the 2018 elections," Mr Yusuf told a public gathering in the Puri area here.

He inaugurated the Puri bridge on Saturday Road and link roads in Siven Valley.

The PML-N leader regretted that work on airport, gas, electricity projects was suspended during the PTI government.

He said Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif's government believed in people's development through road,

health, educational and other welfare projects.

Mr Yusuf said the Sadiq Khan hydropower project launched in Kaghan Valley under China-Pakistan Economic Corridor programme during Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif's government would be completed in the current year.

"This project will help address energy shortages in the country," he said, promising that early execution of the Charsadda hydropower project on the Kosi River in Kaghan Valley.

The PML-N leader said the Sadiq Khan project, which was in its final phase, would produce 880 megawatts electricity.

He criticised the last PTI government over "failure to execute even a single energy project in the country."

**HOUSE FIRE:** A fire destroyed furniture, other goods and cash in a house in Gori-Kader area here on Friday.

However, no damage to human life was reported, according to house owner Mohammad Marles.

He said the fire was caused by an electrical short-circuit.

He said the neighbours helped put out the fire with water and sand within an hour of its eruption.

Meanwhile, traffic wardens in

Oghi rebuilt five dozen of people during a crackdown on vehicles with tinted glasses and underage driving.

They also impounded motorcycles over underage riders.

Traffic inspector Waheed Khan told reporters that the police department was committed to eliminating vehicles with tinted glasses and underage driving in Oghi and other parts of the district.

He urged people to follow traffic rules in letter and spirit for their and other road users' safety.

Meanwhile, a boy, who was bitten by a dog in Puri area here earlier this week, succumbed to injuries on Friday.

A stray dog attacked Baula Umar when he was playing outside his house in Rala Amlak area.

The people shifted him to the King Abdullah Teaching Hospital but the doctors informed him to the Ayush Medical Complex Abbottabad, where he died on Friday.

The child's father, Umar Zaki, complained about the rising dog bite incidence in the area and assured mostly, children were attacked by street dogs.

He said the people's repeated requests to the administration to check dog bite incidents fell on deaf ears.

## Concerted efforts urged to eradicate fruit fly in Chitral

**CHITRAL:** The fruit fly has been inflicting heavy losses on the fruit growers in Lower Chitral for 10 to 15 years.

Muhammad Ayoub, an agriculturist attached with extension wing of the agriculture department, told Dawn that Chitral was one of the best fruit-growing areas of the province, where indigenous variety of pear named Shabroog was known for its special features, but its production dropped due to the bug.

He said collective efforts of farmers were needed to eradicate the fly from the area.

Describing the life cycle of the fly, he said it entered its eggs inside the fruit by biting where it started ripening and

the larvae so developed ate up the pulp making it infected, so it released a larva of adult flies when the fruit fell to the ground.

He said the trapping would nearly eliminate the male flies while the female of the infected fruit under the thick layer would destroy the eggs from a geographical area.

Mr Ayoub said in the developed countries, special measures were taken while importing fruits from countries for the fly's presence in number of samples was mandatory. "The whole lot of fruits destroyed when the fly is found there, and the exporting country is blacklisted for being the source of fruit fly."

He called for a joint campaign by farmers, the agriculture department and the district administration to eradicate the fruit fly from Lower Chitral. — Correspondent

## MPA submits child marriage restraint bill in PA

**PESHAWAR:** Pakistani Muslim League-Nawaz MPA Sardar Shahid on Friday submitted "Pakistan Child Marriage Restraint Bill, 2024" to the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Assembly.

He said the bill was aimed to make child marriage a cognizable offence, adding under the bill, whoever committed the offence would be punished with rigorous imprisonment, which might extend to three years with a minimum term of two years.

Mr Shahid said according to the Bill, a person below the age of 18 years would be considered a child and marrying a child would be an offence punishable under the Code of Criminal Procedure 1973.

Shahid stressed that the purpose of the bill was to discourage child marriage in the province and make it a legally cognizable offence. "The passage of the bill will help protect children's rights and promote social justice," she added. — APP

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P-10 Old House and other Residential Houses in P-10, 40 feet front, Excellent Location, Contact Federal International 0300-5111111 (STRUCTURE)

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## P-10

## MoU signed for free treatment of TB patients

By Our Correspondent

**LAKKI MARWAT:** Barmer Medical Teaching Institution and provincial TB control programme have signed a memorandum of understanding for provision of free treatment to patients suffering from tuberculosis at Khidki-e-Nauzra (KENG) Hospital in Barmer.

A ceremony to this effect was held at the hospital on Friday. Hospital's director Prof Mohammed Akram and TB control programme project director Dr Ahmad Nasir signed the document.

Dr Nasir appreciated the initiative and said it would benefit patients suffering from Barmer and other another districts.

**GRIFFITHS:** A house and a shop were gutted in separate fire incidents in Searai Naurozi town of Laddki Marwan district on Friday.

A Rescue 1122 official said firefighters were sent to the Marwali area when the control room received information about a fire incident. He said an electricity short-circuit had caused the fire in a house. "Though no loss of life occurred, the fire destroyed several rooms and household articles," he maintained.

He said the firefighters took an hour to douse the flames and protect the nearby houses from it. In another incident, a cloth shop was gutted when fire erupted due to short-circuit in the Parade ground area of Naurozi town.

A team of firefighters along with a water barge reached the site and extinguished the blaze.

**BODY FORMED:** Laddki Marwan deputy commissioner Rahman Ali Wazir has constituted a five-member committee to probe the absenceeeism of doctors and paramedics from healthcare facilities.

An official said on Friday the committee headed by additional deputy commissioner (general) had been formed in the light of observations taken at a meeting of the district steering committee on health. He said the deputy commissioner had tasked the committee to inquire into the issue of absenteeism in various health facilities.

"The committee has been authorised to conduct the personal hearing of health staff and check the record of absences made from their stations," he said.

## Growers reject 50pc sales tax on tobacco

**MARDAN:** Growers have rejected the decision of the provincial government to impose 50 per cent sales tax on tobacco and renewed its sheer protest with farmers.

President of Anjuman-e-Kashfkaran Takhibai, walled Qasim Khan while talking to Dawn on Friday said that it was tantamount to "financial murder" of growers. He said the farmers community would never tolerate it as they were already going through a financial crisis owing to imposition of various taxes during different times.

He said that misfriendly policy of the Federal government was forcing the growers to stop cultivating tobacco.

Qasim Khan insisted that the tobacco growers had been performing vital role in the development and prosperity of country.

"By imposing Rs400 per kg tax on tobacco, the federal government was collecting Rs170 billion annually from growers of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province," he added. He alleged that the provincial government had proved itself as non-friendly towards farmers by increasing sales tax from six per cent to 50 per cent. — Correspondent

## Rain, hailstorm lash South Waziristan

**SOUTH WAZIRISTAN:** Heavy rain coupled with hailstorm lashed Wana, the district headquarters Lower South Waziristan, damaging fruit orchards and standing vegetable crops.

Farmers said the hailstorm inflicted heavy financial losses on them. They demanded that the government to compensate them for the losses.

Shah Hussain Wazir, a farmer, urged the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government to release funds for the affected farmers in Wana.

On the one hand, rain broke the heatwave and turned the weather pleasant. However, electric supply was disrupted across the district.

**JERGA:** Inspector General Frontier Corps (IGFC) South Major Gen Hamza Hamid Chaudhary held a jerga with Wazir tribal elders at Wana Sevta hall here on Friday.

The jerga was attended by tribal elders from nine tribes of Abushtal Wazir, Youdh, Uzma and traders.

Lower South Waziristan deputy commissioner Mohammad Nasir

Khan was also present. Gen Hamza appreciated Abushtal Wazir's unwavering support to the security forces for the establishment of peace in the region.

He highlighted various economic measures taken for the development of the district, restoration of CPEC Internet service, impact of smuggling at the national level, and assured to continue efforts to ensure peace and stability in the region.

On this occasion, the tribal elders called for revival of the anti-smuggling campaign and the resolution of the problems related to policing.

They said steps should be taken for implementation of the One Document Regime at the Argoor Abdal border terminal.

It is worth mentioning here that the local people have been holding protest demonstrations at Argoo Abdal border crossing for last seven months to demand visa exemption for the local tribes for Afghanistan.

— Correspondent



## Spring festival

Continued from Page 13

Ziarah, Lalibokha, Naurozi Camp, Tari Khanha waterfall, Kohi mountain and Spinjat, which had been opened to tourists.

He said the festival was meant to attract tourists and involve the local people in tourism and cultural activities to promote tourism, create employment opportunities and strengthen the local economy.

The festival features jeep, cycle and motorcycle races, contests of tug-of-war, arrow shooting, team races, truck pulling, tractor pulling, stone lifting, mud wrestling, kabaddi, paragliding, archery, local traditional games, cricket, football, volleyball and badminton, and horse and camel dances, and competitions of traditional sports.

Cultural stalls featuring all four provinces as well as Azad Jammu and Kashmir and Gilgit-Baltistan have also been set up at the festival. Cultural and music shows and traditional dance performances are also part of the gala.

## Malakand varsity urges students to end boycott, participate in exams

Officials say Adenzai jirga making efforts to resolve issue

By Our Correspondent

**LOWER DIR:** The administration of the University of Malakand on Friday urged social media activists and local politicians to stop "maligning" the varsity following the death of a student in a road accident on May 30.

Speaking at a news conference at the Chakdara Press Club, UoM spokesman Muzaffar Hamid Nasari and deputy

principal Asif Ishaq alleged that some people were blaming that the "inappropriate" behaviour of the UoM administration resulted in the death of Musa Khan, a student of journalism and mass communication department, which they said was unfounded.

The officials said Musa Khan along with his two friends, Asif Khan and Waqas Khan, was injured in a road accident on May 30. They said Musa was referred to a Peshawar hospital due to his critical condition, wherein he succumbed to injuries due to unavailability of a bed in the ICU of Hayatabad Medical Complex.

Responding to a question, Mr

Nasari said on May 29, death cause notices were issued to the three students, who spent the night in the university, and the next day they also submitted their response to the notice in the professor's office.

He clarified there was no restriction on freedom of expression and entertainment programmes in the university.

The deputy principal said the varsity had not banned Baloch and other cultural activities in the varsity. However, he said any activity was subject to permission.

The UoM officials requested the students to let the varsity complete the investigation, and also asked them to participate in the annual examinations.

They said the matter was being politicized, and unfortunately students were being misled.

They pointed out that the varsity's faculty, administration and security staff all had condemned the death of Musa Khan.

They criticized some elements propagating against the varsity on social media and said the practice would harm the process of teaching and learning at the varsity.

Meanwhile, the UoM students' jirga rejected the varsity officials' stance, and said the students would continue their protest until their demands regarding the removal of top varsity officials

was accepted.

Meanwhile, Lower Dir district commissioner Wasil Khan visited the UoM and met Vice-Chancellor Prof Raheeb Ahmad.

The VC briefed the official about the student's death, the emerging situation and the students' protest.

He said the Adenzai Qasmi jirga, a body of elders, was making efforts to resolve the issue peacefully. He said the varsity administration was cooperating with the jirga.

SC Ahmed said the varsity planned to start its annual examinations from June 10.

DC Wasil Khan told the varsity administration that he would play an active role to help resolve the issue.

## Registration of private lands begins in Bajaur

**BAJAURO:** The authorities on Friday launched the documentation process of the private lands in Bajaur tribal district.

The process of registering lands of residents was launched on the directions of deputy commissioner Mohammad Aswad Ali to purge the district of land disputes, according to a statement.

The pilot project was launched from Shishai Kalay and Bahia Chitro areas of Khar Kalay.

Besides the officials of the district administration, a team of land settlement department led by the district settlement officer was taking part in the land registration process. The statement said the measure was aimed only at properly documenting the expanse of private lands across the district to help end land disputes among local residents.

Meanwhile, sources in the district administration told Dawn that land settlement department was established in the district about two years ago with the financial support of USAID to get all the private lands registered.

**PAPERS REJECTED:** Nomination papers of 32 candidates out of total 32 were rejected by the returning officer as scrutiny process of the paper has been completed for the by-election on July 22 constituency.

Officials in the returning officer's office said the scrutiny process was completed on Thursday evening.

They said Aftab Ali and Miran Shahzad of PTI were among those candidates whose nomination papers had been rejected on different grounds.

The candidates announced to file appeals against the rejections. The last date for filing appeals against rejections or acceptance of nomination papers is June 10.

The RO office issued a list of 27 candidates whose nomination papers were accepted to contest the July 11 by-election.

PTI former lawmakers Gul Zulfi Khan and Gul Daud Khan, Abdul Khan of JI, PML-N's Malik Gul Karim Khan and Nasir Baig Khan of ANP were among those whose papers were accepted. — Correspondent

## JOB OPPORTUNITIES

The Local Government, Elections and Rural Development Department invites online applications from capable and motivated individuals having domicile of Gilgit-Baltistan/Merged Areas to fill the following vacant posts, purely on contract basis. The candidates fulfilling the following qualifications and experience criteria may apply.

Sl. No.	Post Name	No. of Post	Minimum Qualification & Experience	Age Limit at the time of closing date
1.	Finance Officer	01	Postgraduate accounting qualification (CA/ACCA/CIMA) or a Master's degree in Business Administration in Finance or M. Com, or equivalent degree in Finance or accounting from HEC recognized universities or institutions. At least 05 years of financial management or Audit & Accounts management experience, including 02 years on Project Specific or in a specific position.	Up to 45 years
2.	Local IT Trainer	02	HSC (4 Years) Information Technology, Software Engineering, Computer Science / Master in Computer Science from HEC recognized university / institution. At least 05 years working experience in the field of Information Technology and Management. Experience of working with NGOs and reputed clients.	Up to 45 years
3.	Capacity Development Officer	02	Master's degree in Social Sciences / Social Work from HEC recognized university / institution. At least 05 years' experience in planning & implementation of capacity development projects / training projects.	Up to 45 years
4.	Human R&D Officer	02	HSC (4 Years) Information Technology, Software Engineering, Computer Science / Master in Computer Science from HEC recognized university / institution. At least 05 years' relevant work experience in the field of programming, analysis, database, and application development is required.	Up to 45 years
5.	Environmental & Social Specialist	02	Master's degree in Environmental Sciences, Environmental Economics/ Bachelor of Engineering in Major degree in Social Sciences, Public Administration, Political science, Agricultural Sciences, Anthropology and other relevant Qualification from HEC recognized university/ institution with at least 05 years relevant work experience.	Up to 45 years
6.	Capacity Development Officer	02	Master's degree in Social Sciences from the HEC recognized university/ institution. At least 05 years' experience in planning & implementation of capacity development projects / training projects.	Up to 45 years
7.	District Officer	02	HSC (4 Years) Information Technology, Software Engineering, Computer Science / Master in Computer Science from HEC recognized university / institution with at least 05 years' experience in relevant field.	Up to 45 years
8.	Database Developer	02	HSC (4 Years) Information Technology, Software Engineering, Computer Science / Master in Computer Science from HEC recognized university / institution with at least 05 years' experience in developing, programming software and computer networks.	Up to 45 years
9.	IT Officer	02	HSC (4 Years) Information Technology, Software Engineering, Computer Science / Master in Computer Science from HEC recognized university / institution with at least 05 years' experience in management, programming software and computer networks.	Up to 45 years

3. Candidates will be personally allowed to appear in the ET/ LS screening test. However detailed inquiry will be carried out by the appointing authority and any candidate is found ineligible in any respect of any stage of the recruitment process, his/her will be disallowed post by the Appointing Authority.

4. All the candidates will be required to submit profile on ETLS website. After creating the profile and before applying/reapplying fee for any post, each candidate will have to pay £100 deposit from ETLS website and get their OMC No. registered on ETLS/LS/LSH/LSH franchise (KPK). Without such payment, they will not be able to apply for any post.

5. The serial OMC, identification and experience for each post can be downloaded from the official website of local government, elections and rural development department.

6. Application to the above posts will be made under the project policy of the government of Gilgit-Baltistan. The employees so appointed will be governed by this project policy and their services will be terminated upon expiry of the project life or earlier if performance is found unsatisfactory.

7. Interested applicants will be required to submit relevant documents and apply for the posts online.

8. Interested applicants and application form shall be available on ETLS website.

9. The candidates working in Government/Elections/Government/Local Government offices should apply through proper channel.

10. Candidates intending to apply for more than one post shall apply separately for each post with separate application.

11. Experience of being involved in NGOs will not be accepted.

12. No MPA will be admissible for any interview.

13. In case of foreign degree, equivalent certificate from HEC will be presented.

14. Criminal/Conviction history of posts are subject to recheck.

### TERMS & CONDITIONS

1. Interested candidates may first visit website and apply for the posts online.

2. After successful submission of online application, a generated unique deposit slip (Bank account number, Project code & Candidate's personal information) will be generated.

3. Take a printout of the generated deposit slip & deposit the prescribed test fee (non-refundable) through Cooperative bank or Agent and Cashier or at any branch of PCB Bank via ATM/Cashier.

4. After successful deposit, please keep the original deposit slip (Candidate copy) (Bank deposit stamp with yourself) and do not share it with anyone else.

5. After serial audit, documents presented to ETLS office will be checked and verified.

6. Application of certain categories will be rejected on 17th June 2024.

7. Candidates will be informed through SMS by ETLS to download and Print their Roll No. Slip from [etls.gpb.gov.pk](http://etls.gpb.gov.pk). Candidates are directed to print given portal/nearest testing center.

8. Test Date, Time & Venue will be informed on Roll No. Slip.

9. No separate Call Letter will be issued to candidates for screening test through postal/courier means.

### HOW TO APPLY

1. Interested candidates may first visit website and apply for the posts online.

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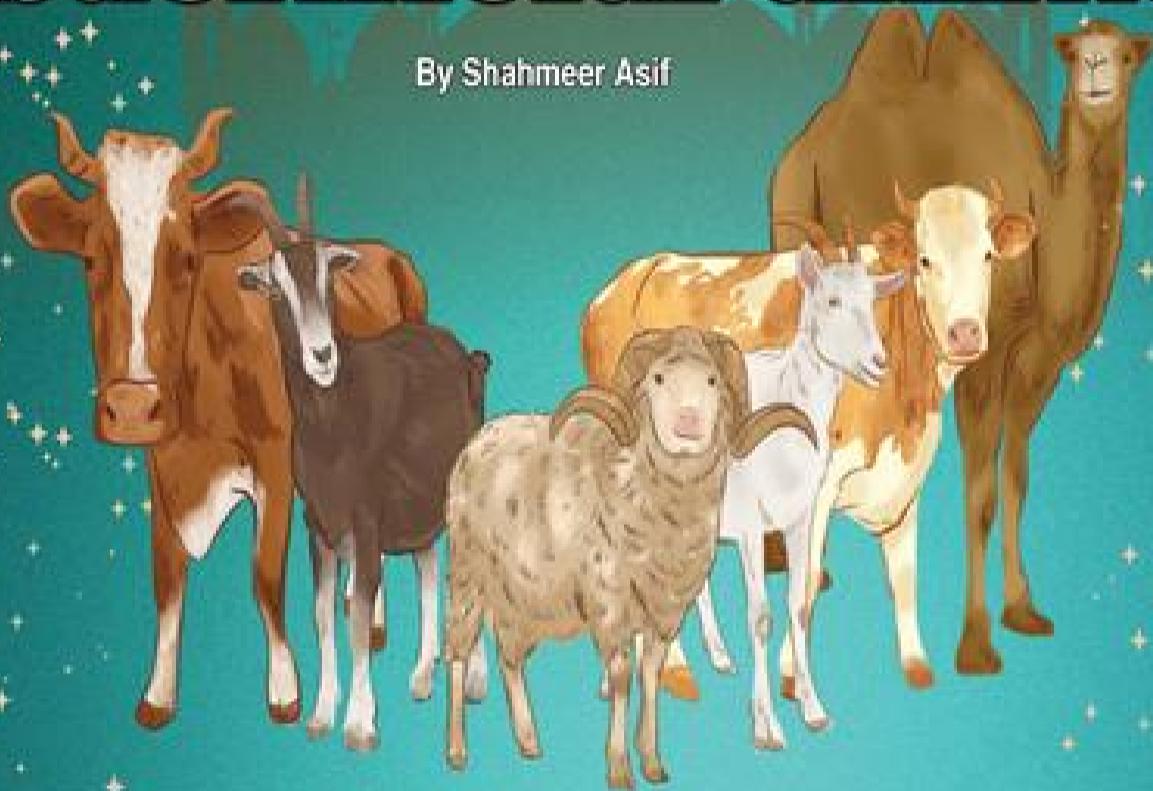
# Young World

DAWN

June  
8, 2024

## Compassion for sacrificial animals

By Shahmeer Asif



Cont.  
pg 4

Illustration by Faizan Ahmed

Dad's handy holder

This simple, yet handy, heartfelt craft for Dad is a great way to show him you care. Make it and keep it safe, and give it to him on the upcoming Father's Day.

Pg  
5



Mystery messages

Sometimes, being jealous can lead someone to do things that hurt others. Read about a girl who tried to ruin friendships, but what happened next will surprise you!

Pg  
10

*Rooh Afza*

TAAZGI  
SE BHARAA  
HAR EK GHOONT

Zindagi Mubarak

425ML 800ML 425ML

## Declutter your heart

This is concerning the article "Declutter your heart" by Ramsha Mujib (YW, April 20). I admire the writer for writing on a topic that is very important for young readers. It tells us that we should not only remove clutter from our lives, but also from our mind.

Clutter in the heart and mind means accumulation of negative feelings like hate, jealousy and gossip. If we get rid of these emotions, we'll feel refreshed and have new energy to live life and be a good example for others.

Nimra Ehsan,  
Lahore

## The plastic pandemic

This is concerning the cover article "The plastic pandemic" by Shahmeer Asif (YW, April 20). Even though we know plastic is really bad for our planet and all living things, people still use a lot of harmful plastic stuff.

The article explains how we can stop using microplastics like single-use plastic bottles and plates, synthetic fabrics and processed food, and keep ourselves healthy.

Faisal Faseeh,  
Peshawar

II

It's sad that even though we know plastic is bad for our health, we still use it a lot, like plastic bags that we use once and then discard carelessly.

The article "The plastic pandemic" by Shahmeer Asif

reminded us to stop using plastic, especially plastic bags, and suggested using fabric or paper bags instead. I believe we can all take this one small step to help save the planet.

Hafsa Tauseef,  
Hyderabad

## Hard work pays off

This is concerning the story "Hard

## Mailbox



work pays off" by Ayman Siddiqui (YW, April 20th). The writer talked about

how hard work always pays off in the end. The article also stressed the importance of studying in groups and asking teachers for help.

The story made me realise that discussing what I know with friends can help me understand better. I used to work alone and quietly, but I wasn't satisfied with the results. This story taught me and others that working with others can lead to better results.

Ameer Ghous Bux,  
Sukkur

II

The story "Hard work pays off" by Ayman Siddiqui teaches us that hard work and positive thinking lead to success. It tells us that we can solve problems by practicing them repeatedly until we understand. So if you're motivated to learn something, you can do so. With hard work, a positive mindset and a different approach, anything is possible for everyone.

Mishaal Faisal,  
Sheikhupura



Your contributions should mention your full name, age, class, school, address and telephone number/email address. If you are under 18, you need to give your parent's or guardian's name too with their CNIC number.

Young World accepts original contributions only.

# Quotes

"When the uncertain future becomes the past, the past in turn becomes uncertain."

— Mohsin Hamid  
(Novelist, writer)

**"The person who can bring the spirit of laughter into a room is indeed blessed."**

— Bennett Cerf (Writer, publisher)

"We all face death in the end. But on the way, be careful never to hurt a human heart!"

— Rumi (Poet, mystic)

"Rest but never quit. Even the sun has a sinking spell each evening, but it always rises the next morning. At sunrise, every soul is born again."

— Muhammad Ali (Professional boxer)

"Without training, they lacked knowledge. Without knowledge, they lacked confidence. Without confidence, they lacked victory."

— Julius Caesar (Roman emperor)

"Happiness doesn't depend on what we have, but it does depend on how we feel toward what we have. We can be happy with little and miserable with much."

— William D. Hoard (Politician, publisher)

## Word search



Find the names of some capitals of countries, from the list given below, hidden in this word grid:

B	M	G	D	O	S	I	R	A	P	W	O
U	X	V	E	C	V	D	O	O	X	R	T
D	E	T	E	I	S	Z	M	W	R	V	Z
A	P	R	A	G	U	E	E	H	A	K	L
P	C	O	P	E	N	H	A	G	E	N	F
E	A	Y	M	D	A	D	H	G	A	B	M
S	T	K	T	L	B	E	R	L	I	N	B
T	H	O	K	F	O	C	J	H	S	P	R
L	E	T	E	L	Z	H	P	H	Y	R	U
Z	N	X	P	C	Q	W	K	N	X	H	S
D	S	W	A	S	R	A	W	C	P	Y	S
G	N	I	J	I	E	B	N	A	O	T	E
A	H	E	L	S	I	N	K	I	F	T	L
T	X	A	N	N	E	I	V	H	X	S	S
J	M	A	D	R	I	D	D	M	T	W	Y

## Mythical creatures

So many mythical creatures roaming in the world,  
Some shine just like a pearl.  
Unicorns and their magical horns,  
They sparkle since they were born.  
Mermaids and their mesmerising tails,  
And the luscious swish of their hair.  
Fairies and their fluttery wings,  
And their dresses are all ambling.  
Dragons and their fearsome roars,  
And they definitely are not bored.  
I hope you believe in all of these,  
And don't forget to shine bright please.

Zahra Qadir,  
9 years, Karachi

## People

People change indeed,  
They use you when in need.  
They act like they care,  
I know it doesn't feel fair.  
They break our hearts,  
And throw the pieces like darts.  
You have to take a stand,  
Cause people don't understand.  
They play with your mind,  
And leave you shocked and blind.  
They steal your peace,  
And your stress level increase.  
You have to take a stand,  
'Cause people don't understand.  
But remember one thing,  
Not everyone is bad.  
But your best friends should be your Mum and Dad.

Mahnoor Faheem,  
12 years, Lahore

## Shadow

Shadows are always with us,  
That's what we are going to discuss.  
Throughout the day, their size changes.  
But are always with us from head to ankles.  
They are everywhere, also with the trees.  
Even with the small honeybee.  
Its colour is usually black,  
It's something we cannot attack.

Yasoob Ali Khan,  
13 years, Lahore

## To my teddy bear

To my smart and loyal teddy bear,  
Black and pink love, I agree.  
In class, you shine so incredibly bright.  
With you by my side, everything feels right.  
You rock my world, my partner in crime,  
Through thick and thin, we'll conquer time,  
Best friends forever and every single day!

Manha Mansoor,  
14 years, Sukkur

## Spot the difference

There are eight differences in these pictures, see if you can spot them.  
You can find the answer on Page 11



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# Compassion for sacrificial animals

**E**idul Azha holds significant religious and cultural importance for Muslims around the world. As we know that at the heart of the observance of Eidul Azha is the practice of qurbani (animal sacrifice), which involves the slaughter of specific animals to honour the supreme sacrifice made by Prophet Ibrahim and his son Ismail, as a symbol of submission and devotion to Allah's Will.

The meat from the sacrificed animals is then distributed among family, friends and the less fortunate, promoting the values of charity, compassion and sharing of blessings.

As this sacred event approaches, most Muslim households are buzzing with excitement and preparations. Discussions and plans revolve around selecting the appropriate animals for sacrifice, and considering factors like one's family size and budget. All family members eagerly share their opinions, ensuring nothing is left out from celebrating the festivity of Eidul Azha.

Besides preparing to buy sacrificial animals, ensuring the health and well-being of these animals — whether sheep, goats, cows or camels, remains our topmost responsibility until Eid. Today, I will highlight some of the main tips on taking care of these innocent sacrificial animals to maintain the sanctity of the occasion.

## How prepared are you for the animal?

While the responsibility of selection of animals is mainly of the adults in any household, children are also very interested in the discussion and participation in the deed. However, a few crucial steps should be followed to avoid any kind of nuisance.

For instance, one must carefully select animals and the suitable location in which they are supposed to be kept. Suppose you plan to keep the animal in your own house and not your locality's joined enclosure. In that case, you must remember to install and arrange necessary supplies such as feeding troughs, water containers and proper resting areas before the animals arrive. Though your parents already have these things in mind, if you want to be part of the whole process, you must help them out in

the arrangements.

### Avoid cattle markets

Most youngsters are too eager to go to cattle markets. Ideally, as the family's youngest member, you should not accompany your elders to the cattle market for two main reasons. First, the animals come from various rural areas and are often not hygienically cleaned. And the area where they are tied is typically full of fodder and dung, which is also the breeding ground for germs and infections. Elders have stronger immune

So, my dear young fellows, I know you are excited to go, but please consider these points. If you do go, always wear a mask and stay close to your parents.

### A risky animal arrival process

We have often witnessed that while unloading the animals, they sometimes get injured. Some handlers are too impolite, while others are just careless and in a hurry, so they initiate the process of unloading them quickly. The animals, already under the stress of traffic and noise, often

cannot handle the pressure, resulting in knee, ankle or toe in-

juries from falling or jumping off the trucks or loaders.

Sometimes, when kids and crowds surrounding the animals hoot, whistle and make weird sounds while the animals are still in the trucks, it can startle them and cause them to jump out, leading to potential injuries.

This is a festival that you must respect, including respecting the animals that arrive. Remember, they are brought for a noble cause, so you should prioritise their safety and health. Avoid teasing them or making loud noises to grab their attention. Keep a distance from the animals and tell your friends to stay away too, to help minimise stress and

### Ensuring animal comfort and stress reduction

I have often noticed some enclosures have large sound systems installed and, throughout day and the night, music was played at high volumes, while the enclosures were illuminated with high-watt bulbs or bright lights, making it feel like a marriage hall.

The animals at these places could neither sleep nor rest, creating a highly stressful situation for them. Make sure you or your friends are not keeping the lights on all through the night, nor playing music at high volumes the entire time. Ensure that you are taking care of the animals by providing them with a calm and stress-free environment, especially when it is time for them to sleep. The cattle need to rest both during the day and at night, so turn off or dim the lights and avoid playing music for long.

Moreover, most of you will be too eager to take your animal out for a walk. While taking them out for a walk is a good idea, you should not make them run or start running with them. Always take an elder with you, so that if the animal startles or gets out of control, an elder should be there to take things under control.

### Bathing the animal

If you have already bought your sacrificial animal(s), bathing them every other day is very important for several reasons. Firstly, bathing helps maintain their hygiene, min-

Cont.  
pg1



system and better protection awareness that makes them keep themselves somewhat safe. But those who are young, they can easily catch germs and get sick because their immune system is not strong enough to fight harmful germs that these animals and marketplaces carry.

Second, these markets are usually chaotic due to the large number of animals, buyers and also the onlookers at the same time. The noise and people teasing the animals sometimes make the animals agitated, leading them to get out of control, running and hitting people. There have been many such instances in the past.

## Wonder Craft

# Dad's handy holder

By The Crafter

imising the risk of infections that could affect their health and consequently, the quality of the meat. Clean animals are less likely to catch parasites and harmful bacteria.

As this is the peak of summer and the weather is hot everywhere, these animals can't stand the heat either and can get exhausted, suffer heat strokes or develop diarrhoea easily. Moreover, this hot and humid weather increases the risk of particular diseases and hoof-related problems. You might not notice, but if you closely inspect the animal, it may show signs of difficulty while standing in a certain position.

So ensure that you are taking good care of your cattle by providing them with ample water to drink and giving them a regular or every other day bath. This also promotes the animals' comfort and well-being, which is an essential aspect of treating them humanely. Furthermore, a clean and well-groomed animal reflects respect and consideration for the sacrifice being made, aligning with the ethical and spiritual values of Eidul Azha.

### Preparation for qurbani

Eidul Azha teaches us not only to give the most beloved things in Allah's way. It also reminds us to be merciful to animals, as they give their lives to Allah. Thus, it is important to perform the sacrifice humanely and also hygienically; ensure that the animals are treated with respect and that pain and distress levels are minimised. Moreover, in my opinion, young kids should not attend the sacrifice of the animal as this may cause them distress at a tender age.

### Post-qurbani care and responsibilities

After the sacrifice and distribution of the meat, the next step involves washing the area hygienically. Disinfecting equipment and surfaces used during sacrifice is also important to ensure safety and cleanliness. If your elders forget about this crucial step, don't forget to remind them to buy various cleaning supplies.

Dear kids, considering the above precautionary tips, I hope you will be more careful this Eid. From the arrival of the animals to the day of Eid, it requires careful planning and attention to detail. By following best practices for animal care, hygiene and ethical treatment, we can celebrate Eidul Azha in a manner that honours both tradition and the well-being of you and your animals. ■

The craft we will make today is designed with the upcoming Father's Day in mind, so you still have time to create it easily. With Eid also upon us, it's the perfect time to make something adorable that reminds your dad of your love and appreciation. This simple, yet handy, DIY mobile holder, which also functions as a notepad holder, is a great way to show him you care.

### Things you need:

1. Foam sheet: 1 black
2. Pieces of foam sheet: red and blue (you can change the colours).
3. Scissors
4. Hot glue
5. Ruler
6. Marker (black or blue)

### Directions:

1. Keep the length of the A4-sized foam sheet the same and mark the width at 6 inches, see picture 2.
2. Cut straight across the A4-sized sheet, as shown in picture 3.
3. Leaving four or five inches from the top, fold the sheet upwards from the bottom edge; see picture 4.
4. Leaving the centre of the fold, secure the sides of the fold with hot glue.
5. Cut a strip from the blue foam sheet, measuring 6 inches in length and 1 cm in width, as shown in picture 5.
6. Place the strip in the middle of the fold and fold it inward diagonally from both sides, forming a collar shape. Secure it with hot glue; see picture 6.
7. Cut a tie from the red foam sheet. If needed, ask for help from a family member. Then, paste it in the middle of the collars, as depicted in picture 7.
8. Cut a small pocket from the blue foam sheet, sized according to the shirt, and paste it on the right side. This pocket serves as a penholder, so secure three sides with hot glue, leaving the centre open, picture 8.
9. To create the handle of the holder, cut an arch from any hard paper and paste black foam of the same shape on it; picture 9.
10. Paste the handle behind the holder using hot glue, as shown in picture 10.

Your heartfelt craft for Dad is all set. Keep it safe and present it to him on the upcoming Father's Day!

The writer can be contacted at [ihecraftman@gmail.com](mailto:ihecraftman@gmail.com)



**"Mummy," said the baby polar bear, "Am I one hundred percent pure polar bear?"**

**"Of course, you are, son," said his mummy. "Why do you ask?"**  
**"Because, I am freezing!"**

**Two fleas were walking out of a cinema when they discovered it was raining hard.**

**"Shall we walk?" said one flea.**  
**"No," said the other, "let's take a dog."**

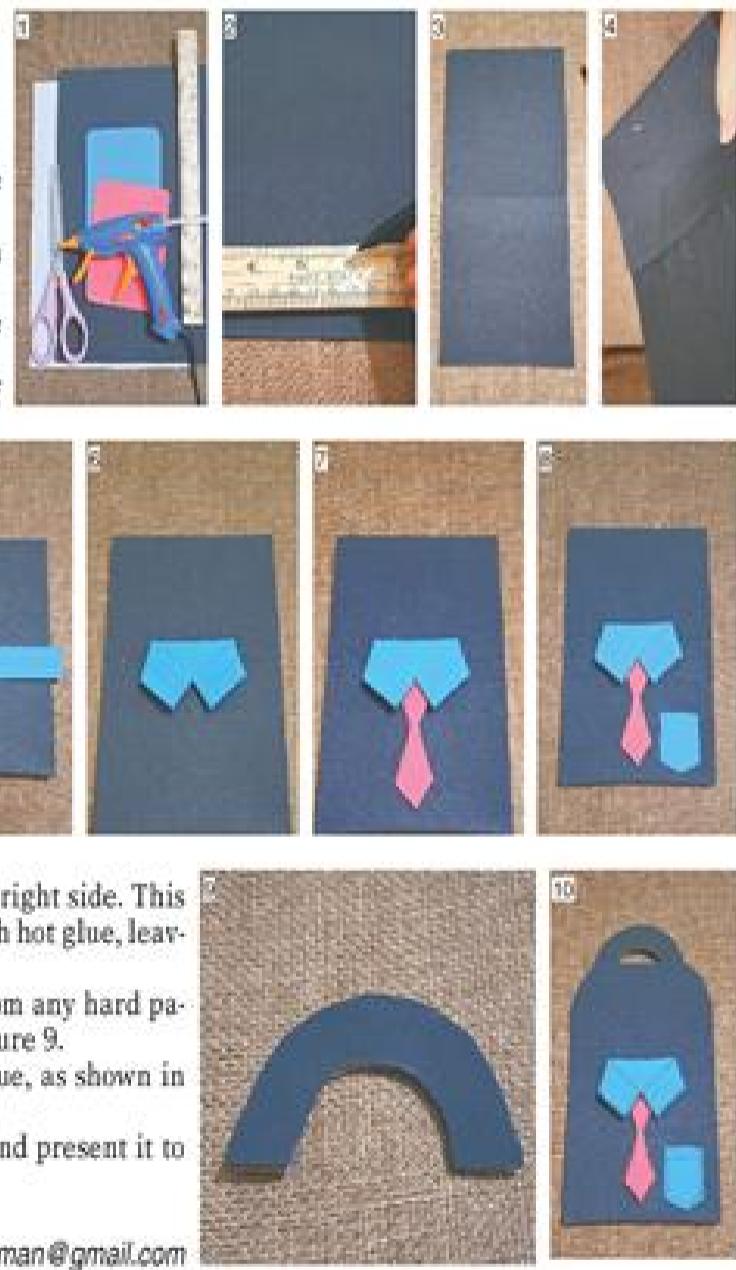


Photo by the writer

## Story time

By Rabia Hamid



# Of sacrifice and mercy

**A**s my two cousins, Hassan and Zaid, my elder brother, Sameer, and I were returning home from the mosque after offering Maghrib prayer, on the way we discussed if the Zilhaj moon which would be sighted that day, Sameer and Hassan were excited to go to the cattle market to buy sacrificial animals.

Just when we reached home, my uncle greeted all of us with the news that the new moon had been sighted. As we hugged and wished each other, dad said, "We will be going to buy animals for sacrifice after dinner."

We were very excited as it meant a lot to us kids, not just as a religious deed, but also because of the love and fun part of having the sacrificial animal with us for the next 10 days. After dinner, I, along with my dad, uncle, my brother and my two



cousins, left for the animal market, or *bakra mandi* as it is called. We got stuck in the traffic for an hour because, like us, many people were heading to buy the animals, thus causing a traffic jam.

Despite the crowd, there was excitement in the air and happiness was evident on everyone's face.

Eventually, when we reached *bakra mandi*, like others, we also rushed in, eager to get the best sacrificial animal. However, the rates of the animals were very high. After a lot of searching and bargaining, we bought two goats, a black and a brown one, and we also bought a white cow. We didn't waste time in looking around, so as soon as we were done buying, we immediately returned home.

In our neighbourhood, we had a dedicated enclosure where families kept their sacrificial animals during the Eid festivities. This communal space allowed for easier care and supervision of the livestock, while it also made animals comfortable to be closer to their kind.

Once our animals were settled in the enclosure, we spent all our days there and sat till late in the night until mum would call us in. Among us, my cousin Hassan became very attached with the goats. He always took care of them and even took them for rounds of our street in the evening. He always got emotional

when we talked about the day of Eid when our animals would be sacrificed.

During this time, we noticed that our neighbours were not taking care of their cow and would even be unaware that their cow's food had finished. We didn't wait for them to provide her food, and so we always filled her pots as it was our duty to treat all sacrificial animals with care.

Now, only one day was left until Eid. We gave our animals a shower, cleaned them and took them for a walk. Everyone's joy was now replaced by a little sadness because we knew that tomorrow they would not be here and would be slaughtered.

Finally, it was Eidul Azha. I woke up early and dressed up in new clothes. After offering the Eid prayer at the mosque, we hugged each other and exchanged warm wishes. Then we rushed home and got together at the animal enclosure of our society where there were arrangements to perform the ritual of sacrifice. I hugged my goats and patted the cow one last time.

Then, my father recited the Kalma and performed the sacrifice. My little cousin Hassan had tears in his eyes, but my grandfather told us that the real meaning of sacrifice is to give up precious things and have mercy on all creatures, as Islam teaches us. ■

## Story time

By Marziya Abbas



# The whispering stone

**I**n a tiny town tucked between towering mountains and winding rivers, lived a young girl named Sarah. She had a bright smile and a deep love for exploring things around her.

One sunny day, while walking through the woods, Sarah stumbled upon a strange stone shining from between the exposed roots of an old tree. It was unlike any stone she had seen before, shining with an extra-terrestrial kind of light.

Interested, Sarah touched the stone and to her surprise, it started talking to her. The stone had feelings, emotions and memories, which it shared with Sarah. Sarah didn't feel scared at all, instead, she felt friendly vibes towards the stone. Sarah started visiting the whispering stone daily and, each day, the stone told her a new tale full of adventures.



As days turned into weeks, Sarah kept going back to the whispering stone, wanting to know all its stories.

With each visit, she heard more about places far from her village that the stone had visited — faraway lands, magical creatures and bold heroes.

"It was a new city where the boy dropped me. I was abandoned and became utterly hopeless, crying for weeks and weeks," the stone narrated one afternoon, "until one day, I saw a girl. She passed by merrily whistling a song and it changed my perspective."

"Oh, how so?" Sarah asked curiously.

"She was a sweet soul, cute, lovely and lonely, yet enjoying her own company," the stone continued, "I got so fascinated by her joy and contentment that I could not be sad anymore. She taught me how

to be happy even if no one is there to accompany you."

"Then how did you come back

home?" asked Sarah.

"I never did!" the stone whispered gently, "I'm still here in the same city, which I was once unfamiliar with, feeling blessed to be finally found by the girl I was inspired by, to be finally able to talk to her."

Sarah's eyes widened in disbelief. "You mean ... that girl ... that cute and lovely girl ... is me?" she asked softly, her cheeks turning red as she pondered over its words.

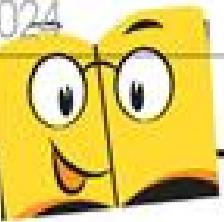
"Of course that's you!" the stone replied, "I am telling this to you so that you can recognise the beauty within you."

That was when Sarah found out that the real magic of the whispering stone wasn't just the tales it told, but how its stories gave lessons to those who listened. It showed her that even a smile can make someone's day, can cheer someone's heart and can kick out the negativity from someone's life.

So, dear reader, hold onto the story of Sarah and the whispering stone. Let it tell you that no matter how small you feel, you can flip the world for the good. If you think someone is lonely or silent, spread joy, pass a smile and be caring just like Sarah and make someone's day. ■

## Story time

By Hafsa Shaikh



# An important life lesson

**H**er heart was beating really fast, but she managed to control her nerves and spelled the word correctly. The children applauded and her heart relaxed as she had qualified for the second round of the Spelling Bee.

Abeer was an intelligent girl studying in seventh grade, her only dream was to win the spelling contest and defeat the old champion. The list was a bit difficult and she found it hard to remember all the spellings. Despite all the difficulties she faced, and the tough competition with her fellow mates, Abeer had defeated the old champion and also qualified for the second round too. But she had to compete with tough opponents and defeating them wasn't an easy task.

She was glad and proud of what



she had done. She practiced for hours locked in her room preparing for this event, the day when her dream could come true.

During the break she revised the list for the last time, got supporting comments from her friends and prepared herself for the last and most important round of the Spelling Bee competition. The students gathered again at the auditorium where the competition was to be held and after a short while it began. As Abeer's turn was coming closer, she could feel her nerves getting the better of her. So when the mike was handed to Abeer, she started to tremble. Abeer was able to spell the first word correctly, but sadly she couldn't spell the second word.

The rest of the competi-

tion went terrible for Abeer and her dreams crumbled the moment she heard the results. It was devastating to lose at the last stage. After a long crying session, Abeer suddenly felt encouraged when she remembered her teacher had enrolled her in another spelling competition.

Abeer had a renewed hope to win that competition, although it was not the one she wanted to win. So she started preparing for it and, this time, she got its reward too in the form of the first position. She was delighted when she received the shield and was requested to deliver some words to the audience.

"I'd like to tell you all that if you still have the words winner and loser in your dictionary, then remove them. In every competition, there are only participants. I came here as a participant and I'll remain a participant, whether I won or lost. If you give your best and don't win, don't get disappointed. As it is said, learn from your mistakes and move on, then you'll never be bothered by the results. Thank you," Abeer spoke with confidence.

With her small speech, Abeer inspired all the students and impressed all the teachers. Everyone cheered for her. Abeer had learnt an important life lesson through her experience of losing. ■

## Story time

By Marium M. Arif



# Laiba, the lolly maker

**I**t was a scorching day, when Laiba accompanied her mother to the lace shop to procure laces for her aunt's clothes. Living abroad, her aunt was to receive the clothes through a relative who would soon be traveling.

The urgency was palpable as they raced against time to have a number of clothes tailored for her aunt in just a few days. Shopping in extreme weather conditions is always challenging, and the relentless heat caused Laiba's blood pressure to drop suddenly, leading her to faint.

While her mother was engrossed in the shopping, Laiba collapsed, prompting her mother to swiftly attend to her and seat her in a chair provided by the shopkeeper. A compassionate salesman promptly

fetched a bottle of cold juice and a pack of biscuits for her, aiding her recovery.

Upon regaining consciousness, Laiba felt immense gratitude for the kind-hearted man who provided the cold juice that helped alleviate the effects of the heat. Later that evening, she shared her reflection with her mother, expressing her belief that those selling cold treats in such weather are deserving of great reward, as they are essentially aiding people in enduring harsh conditions, irrespective of their profit motives.

Laiba, a sensitive yet practical in-

dividual, aspired to make a positive impact on the world and contribute



meaningfully to society. This incident proved a big lesson for her, she recognised her intolerance to heat

and took measures to ensure her own comfort, such as wearing breathable fabrics and sneakers to protect herself from the scorching sun.

Additionally, she attempted to extend this comfort to others by preparing homemade ice lollies for her family upon their return home during the summer. This thoughtful gesture earned her the affection and heartfelt blessings of her family, who affectionately referred to her as 'Laiba — the lolly maker.'

Laiba soon got the idea of distributing her homemade ice lollies to passers-by during hot weather. Laiba entrusted an icebox filled with her ice lollies to the watchman, requesting that he distribute them to anyone passing by.

This act of kindness benefited numerous individuals, bringing her a sense of purpose and fulfilment.

Laiba fulfilled her role and encouraged others to reflect upon the purpose of their lives and consider how they can enrich the lives of others through their acts. ■

## Advice

By Mahnoor Rehan

**A**fter a couple of months filled to the brim with assignments, work and exams; you might have no motivation or energy to do anything. And the long summer vacation ahead gives you a lot of time on your hands which you might not know how to spend.

That's where a reset routine comes in. A reset routine gives you a comfortable place to land, recover and regain your rhythms quickly, whatever life throws your way. It essentially consists of productive activities for you to recharge and set you up for the next few days or weeks. It can be a monthly reset or a weekly, according to whatever suits you best and gears you up in a more productive way.

### Monthly resets

The end of any month is an ideal time to reflect on the past few weeks and make plans for the weeks ahead. It's a time for reflection, growth and setting new goals. You can not only set up new goals for the month, but also reflect upon the previous goals or any yearly resolutions that you've made and tweak them.

This is an opportunity to clear your mind and your space, and get organised for the month ahead.

### Weekly resets

Like me, if you also need weekly resets to ensure maximum productivity, then you should also list your priorities by planning out

# Reset your routine

how your week is going to look like; what are you going to spend the most time and energy on, etc.

I like having Sunday as my reset day. I'm able to not only unwind, but



also freshen up for the next week or so. Here are some activities I like to do to help me stay organised and productive.

### Things that might help

A reset routine will look different for everyone. Some of you might need a relaxing, self-care day to recharge, and others might need to deep-clean their space to de-stress.

First things first, de-clutter your surroundings. "Clean space, clean mind," is not just a common, but also a very accurate phrase at that. A clean environment can lead to an improved mood and a subconsciously relaxed mind.

**Deep breathing:** you might not know that deep breathing helps us reduce stress and anxiety that we might be building up throughout the day. So deep breathing gives out signals to our brains to calm down and relax.

**Organise:** Organising your life can help you feel more focused and productive; so start with organising your calendar and making a to-do list, where you plan your deadlines, activities and goals for the week/month.

Lastly, I would like to mention that each goal or aim that you make should be attainable and realistic. Set realistic expectations for yourself to enjoy your life while also working hard. It is important if you want to keep things organised, and everything in your life to be meaningful and purposeful. ■

**1** Sri Lanka currently holds the record for the highest score set by a team in T20 World Cup history. What is the score?

**2** T20 World Cup this year is seeing a record number of teams taking part in the tournament. How many teams are there?

**3** Which team won the T20 World Cup in 2021?

**4** Who captained the West Indies to their



two T20 World Cup victories?

**5** Who was the player of the tournament in the

2021 T20 World Cup?

**6** Not counting the current tournament, which player has hit the

most sixes in T20 World Cup history?

**7** Who holds the record for the highest individual score in a T20 World Cup match?



—Quiz Master

T20 World Cup

McClurkin scored 123 runs

New Zealand's Brendon

# Spotlight

## The Hunt for Gollum to arrive in 2026

Warner Bros. will release the first of its new *Lord of the Rings* films, *Lord of the Rings: The Hunt for Gollum*, in 2026.

The movie will be directed by star Andy Serkis, who portrayed Gollum via motion capture technology in the original *Lord of the Rings* trilogy. It's in the early stages of script development, with Fran Walsh and Philippa Boyens to write the screenplay alongside Phoebe Gittins and Arty Papageorgiou.

Peter Jackson, who directed the original *Lord of the Rings* trilogy and *The Hobbit* movies, will produce the film with Walsh and Boyens. Warner Bros. confirmed in February 2023 that it is developing 'multiple' films, based on *Lord of the Rings* fantasy book series by J.R.R. Tolkien. ■



## Nintendo to announce Switch successor

Japanese video-game maker Nintendo will make an announcement about a successor to its Switch home console sometime before March 2025.

In reporting its financial results, Nintendo gave no details about the announcement, whether it would launch that successor product during this fiscal year or just announce its plans for it.

Nintendo is also planning a new film for worldwide release in April 2026. It's counting on the openings of *Donkey Kong Country* in Universal Studios Japan, as well as a museum on Nintendo in Kyoto, both scheduled for later this year, to woo more fans to its franchise. ■



## Cage to play Noir in live-action series

Nicolas Cage will play Spider-Man Noir in a new Prime Video and MGM+ series. Noir is a live-action series based on the Marvel Comics character Spider-Man Noir, an alternate version of Spider-Man living during the Great Depression.

The show "tells the story of an aging and down-on-his-luck private investigator (Cage) in 1930s New York, who is forced to grapple with his past life as the city's one and only superhero," according to a press release.

Cage previously voiced Spider-Man Noir in the animated film *Spider-Man: Into the Spider-Verse* (2018) and its sequel, *Spider-Man: Across the Spider-Verse* (2023). Noir is produced by Sony Pictures Television and Amazon MGM Studios. ■



# The weekly weird

## New York and Dublin connect via live stream

The Portal, an installation designed by artist Benediktas Gylys, live streams silent video between New York's Flatiron South Public Plaza and North Earl Street in Dublin. The installation, sponsored by the Flatiron NoMad Partnership, the New York City Department of Transportation's Art Programme and the Simons Foundation, allows people in the two cities to look at each other in real-time across the 3,000-mile distance.

The interactions range from rude to polite. The Portal forms an unprecedented visual bridge between New York and Dublin and will continue to connect the two cities 24 hours a day for the next six months. ■



## Tokyo battles crop-destroying raccoon invasion

North American raccoons, a wily invasive species, is causing problems in Tokyo. The number of raccoons living in the wild in Tokyo and its surrounding areas has sky-rocketed in recent years, with 1,282 trapped in fiscal 2022, a sharp increase from 259 caught in fiscal 2012.

Raccoons became popular pets in Japan after animated TV series *Rascal the Raccoon* in the 1970s. The animals have established a population in the wild after being bought as pets and either escaping or being abandoned. They caused severe crop damage in recent years in the hills to the west of Tokyo, with an estimated \$2.8 million in crop damage in fiscal 2022.

The highly-adaptive animals seem difficult to deal with, and have started destroying traps set out by officials. ■



## Five-foot iguana found wandering loose

The Raleigh Police Department, North Carolina, said animal control officers were dispatched on a report of a large lizard on the loose and they arrived to find a five-foot iguana.

Iguanas, native to Central America, South America and some Caribbean islands, established a breeding population in the wild in Florida after being brought over from Cuba in the 1960s, but do not have a wild population in North Carolina.

"The weather may be warm and humid, but this is not Florida," police said on social media.

The iguana was the second to be found wandering loose in Raleigh so far this year. ■

## A 10-foot-wide house with a hefty price tag

A tiny 1,547-square-foot home in Florida has caused a stir. Standing at just 10-feet-wide, it's listed for \$619,000, surprising many with its hefty price tag. Built on a narrow, but deep, lot in South Jacksonville Beach, the property offers unique features and energy efficiency.

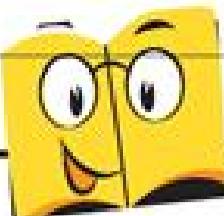


However, its construction was not without controversy. A neighbour, who previously used the lot as a garden, objected to the home's construction. This led to restrictions on the home's size.

The home, although narrow, has two bedrooms, 2.5 bathrooms, and a garage large enough for one car. Built-in furniture adds convenience, and there's even potential for a backyard pool. ■

## Story time

By Ayman Siddiqui



# Mystery messages

**“**Pass me the chips,” Sara, the stalker, said. The three of us were at Sara’s house for a sleepover and everyone had brought something to eat. I brought chips, Amna brought candies and Sara made pasta. We watched a horror movie and then went to sleep.

“Get up, you lazy bones, we are late for school!” Amna shouted, waking us up. As soon as we heard her, an electric current seemed to pass through our spines. We jumped up and got ready while our ‘OCD’ queen Amna, already prepared, was almost running to school.

Finally, we arrived at school. All three of us were very tired, but at least we made it. It was a regular day at school and we had fun together. Little did we know that someone’s jealousy could soon tear our friendship apart.

After attending all our classes, we went home. I was about to take

a nap when I got a text message from an unknown number. Although the number was unknown, the text seemed to be from Amna.

The message said, “You are my bestie. I feel better being with you than with Sara. I want us to sit on



the same bench while she sits somewhere else.” I was confused because Sara and Amna were childhood friends and we wouldn’t talk about close friends like that. I ignored the message and went to sleep as I was exhausted.

The next day, I got another message from another unknown number. I opened it and saw it was from Sara, saying the same thing as Amna had said the day before.

“What’s going on?” I thought, and decided to talk to them.

When I saw Sara in school, I called her name, but she ignored me and went inside the classroom. Then I saw Amna and thought I should talk to her. As I tried to approach Amna, she got up and changed her seat. I was dumbstruck. Before I could ask her anything, the teacher arrived in the classroom.

Throughout the classes, both Sara and Amna completely ignored me. Even at home time, they left early. Feeling sad, I took my bag and went home.

The thought of losing both my best friends was upsetting, so I decided to find out what happened. I opened my phone and checked their numbers and our previous chats.

Then I noticed something unusual: both messages ended with a “\*” sign instead of a period or no punctuation. This was the habit of my classmate Ayesha, who had often been told by teachers to stop using a star at the end of her sentences, but she never listened.

The revelation was shocking, yet painful. It was Ayesha who had texted me. So I decided to confront her and learn the truth. I also wanted to clear it up with Sara and Amna that it wasn’t me, but someone we never imagined.

I went to Sara, who lived nearby. She didn’t want to meet me, but I insisted. She came but remained cross with me until I revealed the truth. Sara was astonished and told me she also got the same messages. Then we called Amna and told her; she was shocked and said she had also received similar messages.

The next day, we confronted Ayesha. At first, Ayesha denied everything. After our constant requests to reveal the truth, she said, “I always wanted to have friends, but I was never lucky in this regard. So whenever I saw you three together all the time, it hurt me. Then this jealousy pushed me to try and break your friendship. I am sorry, girls.”

It was an honest reply, so after much thought, all three of us decided to include Ayesha in our group. From a trio to a quartet, we all became the best buddies for life. ■

## Story time

By Mehab ul Haq



# The joys of Eidul Azha

**A** few days before the last Eidul Azha, my father, uncle, cousins and I went to the cattle market to buy a cow for sacrifice. After spending a few hours there and inspecting many animals, we finally bought a cow and brought it home in a truck.

When we arrived home with the cow, not only my family members, but also many people from the neighbourhood came out to see it. The cow was big and somewhat dangerous, and it wouldn’t get down from the truck. When it finally did, it immediately ran away. We, along with many other people, ran after it and, with great difficulty, managed to catch it and bring it home.



Once we had secured the cow inside the house, we provided it with water and food. My cousins and I took care of the cow, protecting it from the sun by installing a temporary shade and playing with it in the afternoon. In the evening, we would take it out for a stroll. We stayed up all night playing games like Ludo and Carrom in our front

yard so that we could keep an eye on the cow. We went to sleep after praying Fajr.

A day before Eid, we noticed that our cow was dirty, so we gave it a bath. We also bought garlands and special jewellery designed for cattle, such as anklets and a beautiful crown, which we tied on our cow’s forehead.

That day, Dad said we must book a butcher for the first day of Eid. So we went out and after much

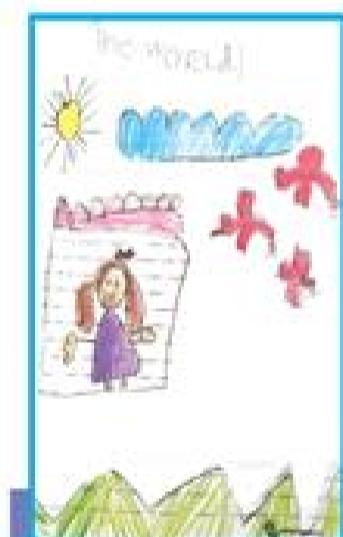
difficulty, found one and booked him immediately. That was our last night with the cow. We were all very sad because our beloved cow was going to be slaughtered. So, we took our cow for a final stroll. There were many other people out with their cows and goats, sharing the same emotions. When we returned, we fed it by our hands and let it rest. We were all crying and petting our cow, treasuring our final moments together.

The next morning, we went to offer the Eidul Azha prayer. On our return, the animals started being slaughtered in the special enclosure set up for this purpose in our street. Finally, when it was our cow’s turn, my eyes were wet because I had become attached to it. Similarly, my younger brother was crying a lot because he loved our cow even more than I did. After the meat was cut and divided into seven equal portions, we shared it with our relatives, neighbours and the needy.

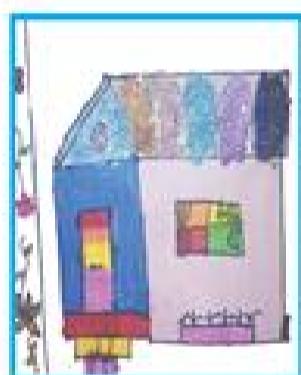
Despite our sadness, we took comfort in knowing that our sacrifice would bring joy to others and fulfil a sacred tradition. ■



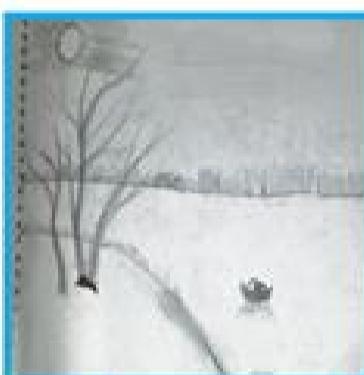
How can I get  
more people to  
see my work?



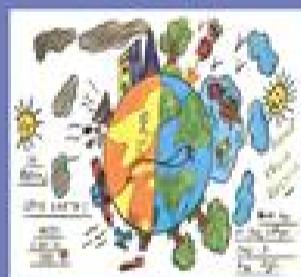
Fatima Zahra  
5 years, Karachi



Hadia Hassan  
4 years, Karachi



Kumail Hyder  
12 years, Khairpur Mirs



M. Faiq Siddiqui  
8 years, Karachi

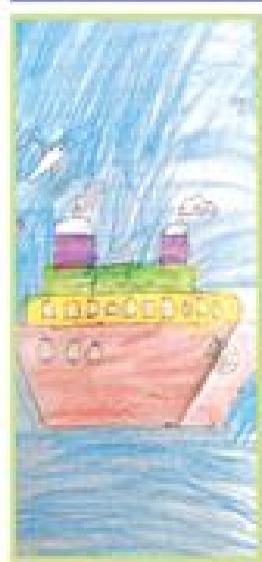


Sajjad Abdul Qadir  
9 years, Hopela

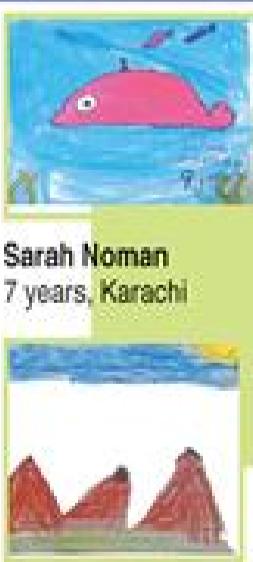


Maryam Khan  
9 years, Karachi

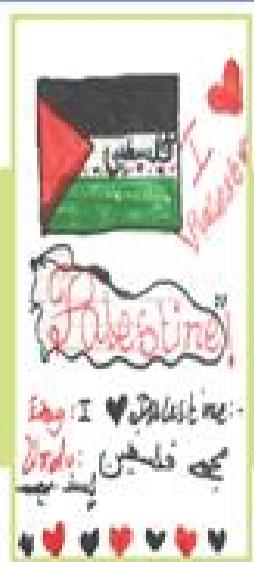
Zari Gul  
10 years, Karachi



S. M. Zain Zaidi  
8 years, Karachi



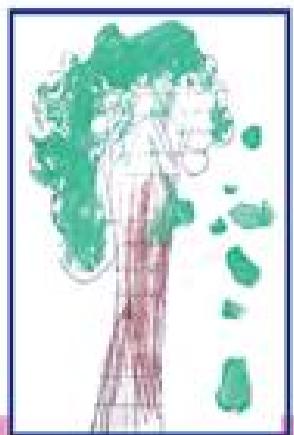
A. Hadi Bin Noman  
8 years, Karachi



Rida Fatima  
11 years, Karachi



Noor Muhammad  
9 years, Karachi



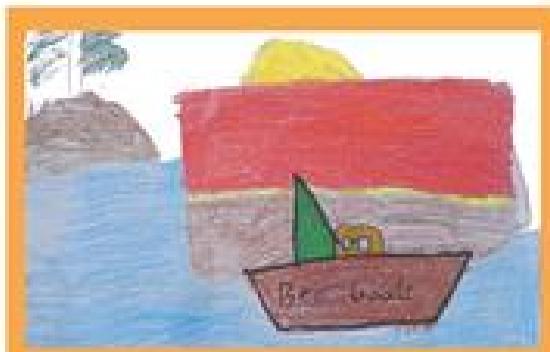
Fatima Fara Latif  
5 years, Karachi



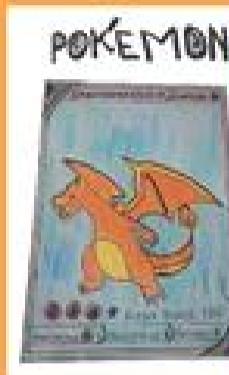
Hasnain Fawwad  
5 years, Hyderabad



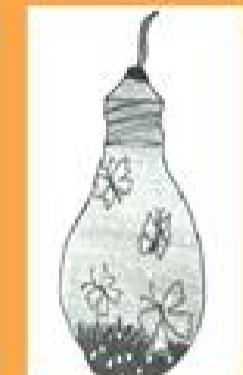
Misbah Raza  
8 years, Karachi



Zunairah Salman  
6 years, Karachi



M. Aryan  
8 years, Karachi



Ajwa  
10 years, Quetta



Zareef  
8 years, Hopela



Abdulrehman Ahmed  
8 years, Karachi

## Spot the difference

Answers of the pictures  
on Page 3



When sending your drawings, poems and contributions to us, write your full name, age, class, school, address and telephone number/email address. If you are sending your drawings by post, please write your details on the back side of the drawing.

Email: youngworld.dawn@gmail.com or youngworld@dawn.com  
Postal address: Young World, Haroon House, Dr. Ziauddin Ahmed Road, Karachi, Postal Code 74200. Telephone: +92-21-35613338, +92-21-35613014

Please note that we don't accept drawings that have been traced or made by children over 12 years of age.

# Movie

**review**

We all love Willy Wonka; we have seen the movies and heard about the classics from our elders. The new Wonka movie is a musical comedy and is the prequel to Roald Dahl's classic novel *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*.

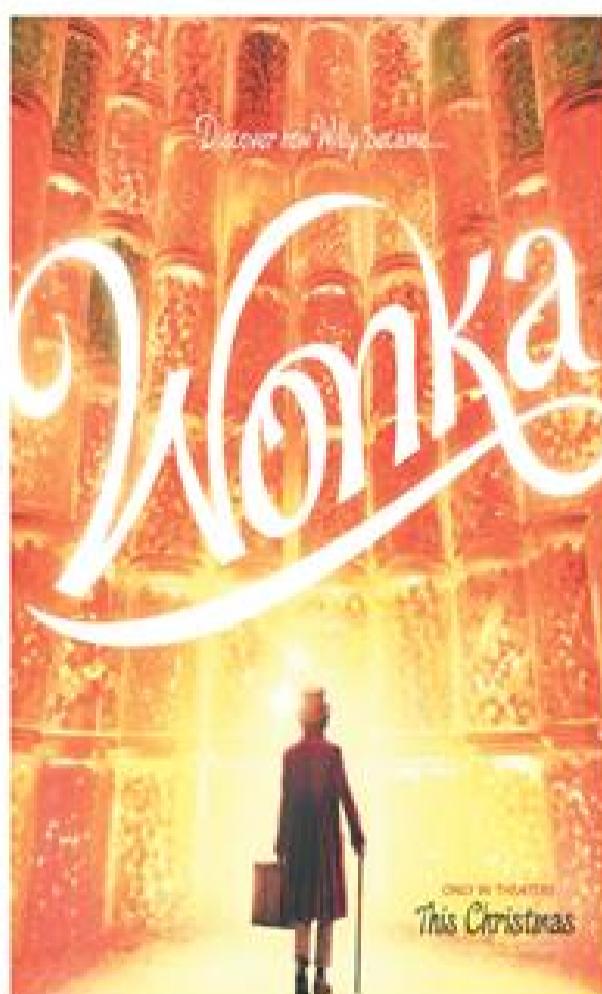
This time, we have the up-and-coming superstar Timothée Chalamet as Willy Wonka, who sang and danced into our hearts. Unlike the previous characters, he is not a maniac but loved by all.

The movie is a prequel to whatever Willy Wonka films we have seen or heard. In the fantasy musical, a young Willy Wonka moves to the big city to open his chocolate shop and become successful. For two hours, he is either smiling, dancing, or singing. He is, in his own words, a magician who loves to make chocolates. Wonka is tricked into trading his dreams and is trapped in a laundry, a place he escapes from by using skills that make him successful.

One can find similar characteristics between oneself and Wonka when the 'will' to rule the world faces hindrance from the already established 'rulers'. With catchy music and elaborate

# Wonka

By Muhammad Suhayb



sets, the movie is bound to hold your attention, especially with lyrics like "Put your hand inside your pocket, get yourself some Wonka chocolate!".

There is also the presence of Rowan Atkinson, known for his portrayal of Mr Bean. We meet a short green-haired orange man, Oompa Loompa, played by Hugh Grant. The end marks the beginning of Oompa Loompa and Wonka's collaboration, which we see in future movies.

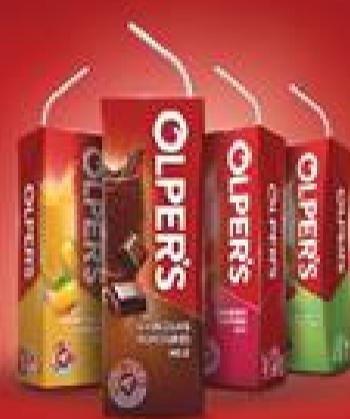
Chocolate rules everything in the town and is used metaphorically as a currency. Wonka, who has been around the world, prepares chocolates that are loved by all. The Chocolate Cartel wants him out of the way by any means. They have the police in their control and can do whatever they want. Willy Wonka is just the one person they don't need in the city. There are moments of delight when Wonka eventually defeats the bad guys.

Paul King directs the film, who had previously given us films like *Paddington*. The two-hour movie has the vibes of *Mary Poppins* and the performances, songs, costumes, and choreography are impressive too. The main theme of the movie is that friendship makes you learn everything. One has to take the route as advised by parents, rather than trying to get somewhere on one's own. ■



## OLPER'S FLAVOURED MILK

Performance Mein Break Na Ho



### WORD HUNT

Can you find 10 hidden words in 10 minutes?  
You can go up, across or diagonally to find them!

G	D	A	I	R	T	L	U	N	Q	D	B	A	X
N	U	T	R	I	T	I	O	N	M	F	U	O	C
F	R	O	S	H	P	R	O	T	E	I	N	Z	A
E	D	E	X	E	R	C	I	S	E	T	H	Y	R
C	E	A	C	E	Y	O	N	H	U	T	Y	R	F
S	V	I	L	C	V	G	R	W	O	T	H	J	O
G	E	C	I	E	I	S	L	B	I	V	X	H	H
Q	L	I	S	N	C	O	T	M	T	D	J	E	Y
P	O	U	R	E	S	K	X	R	I	H	E	A	D
D	P	M	L	R	O	E	K	F	O	I	I	L	R
W	M	S	L	G	T	Z	F	J	H	H	F	T	A
R	E	W	M	T	X	I	J	D	U	Y	G	H	T
B	H	R	O	A	T	B	A	S	L	I	O	T	E
Q	T	M	Y	I	T	A	M	I	N	S	O	X	S

Word List: Dairy, Development, Protein, Growth, Exercise, Health, Energy, Nutrition, Vitamins, Carbohydrates

### RIDDLE CHALLENGE

Solve the following riddles:  
Ask your family and friends if they can solve them!

What kind of room has no doors or windows?

Which word becomes shorter when you add 2 letters to it?

What has many rings but no fingers?

I'm tall when I'm young, and I'm short when I'm old. What am I?

**Did you know?**  
Nutrition in milk helps us perform better in physical activities like sports.

