

On World Health

Day, premier lauds

services of people

affiliated with sector

ISLAMABAD: On this

year's World Health Day,

Prime Minister Shehbaz

Sharif renewed his gov-

ernment's commitment to

providing medical facilities

to the entire population of

the country. In his mes-

sage on the occasion, the

premier noted that this

year's theme, "My health,

my right," aptly encapsu-

lates every citizen's right to

By our correspondent

#### **MBS** affirms commitment to PM vows medical expedite \$5bn investment package access for all

PM Shehbaz successfully manages both "Den-o-Duniya," performs Umrah and brings \$5 billion investment package

#### News Desk

MECCA: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif met with Saudi Crown Prince and Prime Minister Muhammed Bin Salman Bin Abdulaziz Al Saud here wherein the two countries affirmed their commitment to expediting the first wave of the previously discussed investment package worth \$5 billion.

The bilateral ties and regional as well as global developments of mutual interest, including the worrying situation in Gaza were that took place at Al-Safa Palace here on Sunday during Prime Minister Shea joint statement issued on fraternal relations between enhanced collaboration across various sectors.

the Kingdom's supportive role in Pakistan's economy and the mutual desire



discussed in the meeting investment ties, the statement added. The two countries called for efforts by the tions of the Security Council international community hbaz's three-day visit to to halt Israeli military opthe Kingdom, according to erations in Gaza and mitigate humanitarian impact a just and comprehensive Monday. The discussions besides emphasizing the centered on fortifying the need to advance the peace process. Both sides underthe two brotherly nations scored the imperative for and exploring avenues for the international community to pressure Israel to cease hostilities, adhere to inter-Emphasis was laid on national law, and facilitate

unhindered humanitarian aid access to Gaza.

Two sides discussed Jammu and Kashmir disto strengthen trade and the need for advancing the pute to ensure peace and

dance with relevant resoluand the General Assembly as well as the Arab Peace Initiative aimed at finding

peace process in accor-

solution, to establish an independent Palestinian state with East Jerusalem as its capital. The two sides stressed the importance of dialogue between Pakistan and India to resolve the outstanding issues between the two countries, especially the

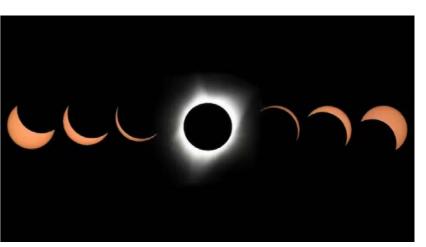
stability in the region. The Crown Prince con-

gratulated Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on assuming the office and expressed warm wishes for his tenure. Prime Minister Shehbaz also conveyed gratitude for the Kingdom's steadfast support and hospitality and reaffirmed Pakistan's commitment to bolstering bilateral ties and economic cooperation. PM Shehbaz invited the Crown Prince to undertake an official visit to Pakistan at the earliest convenience which he accepted.

quality health services. "To ensure health for all and fulfill our promise to the nation in the PML-N manifesto, our focus will remain on improving primary, secondary, and tertiary healthcare, medical education, preventive healthcare, and governance," he added. "We will collaborate with provincial governments to expand and upgrade health facilities, launch mobile health clinics for enhanced access, revitalize immunization, and improve mental health services."

> PM Shehbaz emphasized that the establishment and operationalization of Medical City, Cancer Care Hospital, as well as Pakistan Kidney and Liver Institute facilities in each province, remained the government's top priority. "We take pride in launching the Health Card during PML-N's 2013-18 tenure."

> Day, I applaud the services of our health professionals, paramedical staff, nurses, and other health workers who selflessly work day and night to provide health services to the nation. Towards our goal of a healthier nation. I reiterate the commitment



# Total solar eclipse observed in parts of world

Safety urged as hype builds up; NASA emphasizes safety, while celebs like Lance Bass and Bill Nye can't contain their excitement

gin in Mexico at 11:07 a.m.

PDT and conclude off the

Where will the eclipse

be visible? NASA outlines

North America through

Mexico, the United States,

gins on Mexico's Pacific

coast, enters Texas, and

Pakistan this month

Visit aimed to remove mistrust after two neighbors

5:16 NDT.

#### **News Desk**

NEWFOUNDLAND. MEXICO: Prepare for a dramatic event as a total solar eclipse casts its shadow across the continent. The first of its kind since 2017, this eclipse will darken skies over Mexico, the United States, and Canada, according to NASA.

NASA explains that a confirms the eclipse will betotal solar eclipse happens when the Moon aligns perfectly between the Sun and coast of Newfoundland at Earth, temporarily blocking out the Sun's light. Viewers within the eclipse's path will witness a sky that resemthat the eclipse will first bles twilight, even in the appear over the South Pamiddle of the day. While cific Ocean, then traverse eclipses occur in various forms, total solar eclipses are a rare sight in the Unitand Canada. The path beed States. After this one, you won't see another for the next 20 years! So, it's then crosses Oklahoma, crucial to be ready for this extraordinary event.

Arkansas, Missouri, Illinois, Kentucky, Indiana, Ohio, When will it happen? Pennsylvania, New York,

The celestial show is ex-Vermont, New Hampshire, pected to be visible on April and Maine. It continues northward into Canada 8, 2024. The last total solar through Southern Ontario, eclipse took place in 2017 Quebec, New Brunswick, making it a nearly seven years gap between the Prince Edward Island, and two event. What time does Nova Scotia before ending it start? The precise timing off Newfoundland's Atlantic depends on your location. coast. Refer to NASA's detailed NASA offered a resource map for accurate eclipse times in your area. NASA

page listing trusted brands for safe solar viewers and filters. When's the next one? Mark your calendars because the next total solar eclipse visible in the United States won't happen until August 23, 2044, according to NASA. The total solar eclipse will be closely followed by a rare display of the Comet 12P/ Pons-Brooks. Known for its long 71-year orbit, it will make a special appearance near Jupiter. While spotting it may require telescopes or extra effort, its presence adds a unique touch to this already rare event.

PTI condemns reference against IHC judge

#### **News Desk**

LAHORE: The Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) has strongly condemned the reference filed in the Supreme Judicial Council (SJC) against the judge of Islamabad High Court, Justice Mohsin Akhtar Kayani. The misconduct reference against Justice Kayani is part of the government's efforts to intimidate and harass judges, it said.

Following the core committee meeting on Monday,

# **'US not ready to accept Chinese imports to cost** own industries'

### Yellen refrains from threatening tariffs if Beijing continues state support for EVs, batteries, and green energy goods

tor in the past.

#### **News Desk**

BEIJING: US Treasury to complain that Beijing's that reality again." When Secretary Janet Yellen overinvestment has built the global market is flooded warned China on Monday factory capacity far ex- with artificially cheap Chithat Washington will not ceeding domestic demand, nese products, she said, accept new industries be-

Yellen used her second made it clear that President trip to China in nine months Biden and I will not accept while fast-growing exports "the viability of American

"On this World Health

transform Pakistan's

to

**Iranian President likely to visit** 

the party issued session declaration, emphasizing that the reference of misconduct against a certain judge after sending threatening letters to honorable judges, who revealed the interference of secret agencies in judicial affairs, is a sign of organized anti-judiciary plan. Taking notice of the incidents of direct and indirect harassment of the judges of the Supreme Court, the Chief Justice of Pakistan should determine the persons responsible for this organized campaign, it said.

The committee also vehemently condemned the jail administration for preventing Dr Asim from attending the medical check-up of former prime minister and PTI founder Imran Khan at Adiala Jail. It requested the court to take notice of the obstruction in the medical check-up of former premier and to grant permission to Dr Asim to conduct his medical examination.

President to address joint session on Apr 16

#### By our correspondent

ISLAMABAD: President Asif Ali Zardari is scheduled to address the joint session of the parliament on April 16, to mark the beginning of the parliamentary year, following the general elections. The joint session of the parliament will be held on Tuesday (April 16) at 1600 hours, according to a President House press release.

President Zardari would address the joint session in pursuance of Article 56 (3) of the Constitution which says, "At the commencement of the first session after each general election to the National Assembly and at the commencement of the first session of each year the President shall address both Houses assembled together and inform the Majlis-e-Shoora (Parliament) of the causes of its summons." | due to the incompetence of

ing decimated by Chinese imports, as she wrapped up four days of meetings to press her case for Beijing to rein in excess industrial capacity.

Yellen told a press conference that US President Joe Biden would not allow a repeat of the "China shock" of the early 2000s, when a flood of Chinese imports destroyed about 2 million American manufacturing jobs. She did not, however, threaten new tariffs or other trade actions should Beijing continue its massive state support for

electric vehicles (EVs), batthe world and in the United teries, solar panels, and other green energy goods. States." Yellen added, "I've

of these products threaten and other foreign firms is companies in the US and put into question."

Yellen said her exchangother countries. She said a newly created exchange es with Chinese officials had advanced American forum to discuss the excess capacity issue would need interests and that US contime to reach solutions. cerns over excess indus-Yellen drew parallels to the trial capacity were shared pain felt in the US steel secby Washington's European allies, Japan, Mexico, "We've seen this story the Philippines, and other emerging markets. China's before," she told reporters. "Over a decade ago, masvice finance minister, Liao sive PRC (People's Repub-Min, told Chinese media lic of China) government that Beijing "has fully resupport led to below-cost sponded" to US questions Chinese steel that flooded on overcapacity and exthe global market and decpressed "grave concern" imated industries across over restrictions Washington imposes on trade and investment.

healthcare sector at all levels to ensure that each and every Pakistani has access to quality health-

care. Separately, PM Shehbaz has constituted a committee to review climate change governance and mechanisms with the purpose of accessing climate funds. The premier named Climate Change Minister Romina Khursheed Alam and Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI) Executive Director Dr. Abid Suleri as its members, alongside other

senior individuals.

### News Desk

TEHRAN: Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi is expected to undertake an official visit to Pakistan in the third week of April as part of efforts by the two neighbors to remove mistrust after the two exchanged missiles in January.

There is no official word yet from either side about the exact dates of the Iranian president's visit but sources said Raisi would be in Islamabad on April 22. This will be the first visit by any head of state to Pakistan since the new government took charge after the February 8 elections. The visit is part of ongoing efforts by the two countries to deepen their cooperation that in January was threatened by the missile exchanges. Iran launched

missile strikes in Balochistan on January 16 in an unprecedented move to violate the sovereignty of Pakistan. Iran claimed it targeted the hideouts of terrorists. Pakistan denied the claim and retaliated with its own strikes inside Iran, bringing the two neighbors on the

verge of potential war. However, tensions de-escalated quickly after

high level contacts were es- Middle East. Progress on tablished between the two countries. Within days of the missile exchanges, the Iranian president vowed to travel to Islamabad and both sides agreed to restore diplomatic ties and set new terms of engagements to avoid future escalations. Both coun-

the Iran-Pakistan gas pipeline would be discussed and options to avoid potential sanctions from the US. After years of delay, Pakistan recently agreed to begin work on its side of the border to import gas from Iran through the pipeline.



tries agreed at the time that the Iranian president would visit Pakistan after the general elections. Sources said agenda of President Raisi includes bilateral ties, security cooperation, gas pipeline and potential freed trade agreement.

Both sides during the visit of Iranian president would discuss the regional and international issues including the Afghanistan situation and conflict in the

inally complete in December 2014 and Iran said it completed work on its side. But Pakistan never initiated work on its side, fearing US sanctions. Nevertheless, Islamabad finally agreed to lay the 80 kilometers pipeline from Gwadar to the Iranian border in what is seen as effort to avoid a potential penalty Iran may seek from Pakistan for not adhering to the deal.

ery possible way to tackle

street criminals," he add-

ed. It should be noted that

The project was to orig-

Rain, thunderstorm expected in Karachi on April 13 to 14 will enter the country from ence gusty winds and dust

By our correspondent

ported.

By Nasir Dehlvi

KARACHI: The Muttahi-

da Qaumi Movement-Paki-

stan Senior Deputy Conve-

ner and MNA Syed Mustafa

Kamal on Monday demand-

ed immediate deployment

of army personnel to control

the rising street crimes in

Karachi, Metro Morning re-

Mustafa Kamal stated that

In a statement, MQM-P's

ported.

the west, with the first new KARACHI: The Pakistan series of western winds ex-Meteorological Department pected to enter the country (PMD) has indicated the on April 10, followed by the second on April 12, perpossibility of thunderstorms accompanied by rain in Kasisting until April 15. Under rachi on the 13th and 14th the influence of the second western disturbance, of April, Metro Morning reit said, thunderstorms with lightning are likely in Kara-

According to a forecast issued by PMD's Early chi on the 13th and 14th of Warning Centre, consecu-April. During this period, the tive western disturbances port city may also experi-

storms

The PMD also forecasted the possibility of heavy winds and rain in other areas of Sindh including Sukkur, Jacobabad, Kashmore, Larkana, Dadu, Qambar Shahdadkot, and Sanghar. It also suggested that most parts of Sindh province are likely to remain warm during the next two to three days, with temperatures possibly

reaching 42 degrees Celsius in some areas and 39 degrees Celsius in others.

In Karachi, temperatures could range from 36 to 38 degrees Celsius over the next three days. Sea breeze may weaken during midday while they are expected to pick up during the evening. However, due to low humidity levels, conditions conducive to a heatwave are not anticipated.

Karachi should be handed over to army to curb street crimes: MQM-P MQM-P leader Mustafa Kamal says 60 citizens lost their lives due to incompetence of Sindh govt and police the Sindh government and street criminals killed two citizens and looted Rs125 million, which is a great injus-

tice. There is no area or road in Karachi where the lives and property of citizens are safe," former Mayor Karachi said. He added that so far this year, the number of citizens killed in street crimes has reached 60, while the robbers, dacoits, and killers roaming freely, seemingly given free hand to loot and kill innocent Karachiites.

MQM-P senior leader questioned Sindh Home Minister Ziaul Hassan Lanjar, asking, "Who has tied the hands of the police and why the police is not taking action against the dacoits and murderers?" Mustafa Kamal alleged that the Sindh government is not serious about the

during the blessed month of Ramazan alone, armed individuals have killed 20 citizens in resistance to robberies, while the number of citizens killed this year has reached 58. According to provision of security to the Sindh police statistics, in people. "Karachi should be just one month, 6,780 street handed over to the military crimes were reported in varfor three months. MQM-P ious areas of the provincial is ready to cooperate in evcapital.

police, 60 citizens have been killed in the port city so far this year. To curb street crime, he demanded. Karachi to be handed over to the military for three months immediately, saying that the Sindh government and police have left Karachi at the mercy of the bandits. In such a deteriorating situation of the city, no one is listening to the pleas of the people of Karachi.

'Today, in Metroville area,

exchanged missiles in January this year

# **MetroMorning**

# 94 dead as ferry boat capsizes off **Mozambique coast**

A barge carrying 130 people capsized; so far, 94 bodies have been recovered, with 26 individuals still unaccounted for

#### **News Desk**

MAPUTO: Ninety-four lives, including those of children, have been lost, and 26 individuals remain missing following a devastating ferry boat accident off the northern coast of Mozambique, reports an official from the country's Maritime Transport Institute (INTRASMAR)

The ill-fated vessel, described as an overloaded fishing boat, was not authorized to transport passengers, stated Lourenco Machado, an administrator of INSTRASMAR, during a broadcast on state television. "On Sunday, we witnessed a maritime tragedy where a barge carrying 130 people capsized. So far, we have recovered 94 bodies, with 26 individuals still unaccounted for," he remarked.

was ferrying passengers from Lunga in Nampula Island, encountered disaster, potentially due to beaboard were reportedly

situation. This information by those seeking refuge was relayed by state broadcaster TVM, with reference to another local maritime administrator. Jaime Neto, secretary

of state for Nampula prov-Initial reports suggest ince, corroborated this that the ferry boat, which account during an interview with the international media, emphasizing that province to Mozambique the overcrowded and unsuitable vessel ultimately succumbed to sinking, ing struck by a tidal wave. leading to numerous fatali-Tragically, the passengers ties, especially among children. These heartbreaking fleeing a cholera outbreak, details shed light on the adding to the severity of the immense challenges faced

from health crises, underfied, emphasizing the need scoring the urgency for for caution in interpreting improved safety measures online content during such and support systems for sensitive times. vulnerable communities.

Mozambique, alongside Distressing footage cirseveral other countries in culating on social media Southern Africa, has been captures the aftermath of confronting cholera outthe tragic ferry boat acbreaks since last year, amplifying the challenges alcident off the northern coast of Mozambique. The ready faced by communities in the region. This catastrovideos depict numerous bodies scattered across a phe adds to the ongoing beach, with heart-wrenchstruggle, underscoring the ing scenes of individuals urgent need for support and carrying the lifeless forms resources to address both of children. It's important to immediate and long-term note that these videos could needs

## Hyderabad's bangles go from furnace to forearms

Over a dozen may contribute to crafting a single bangle, from factories to skilled designers decorating them by hand

#### By our correspondent

HYDERABAD: The layers of intricately decorated bangles are a staple fashion accessory for women, a carefully considered part of their Eid-ul-Fitr celebrations. More than a dozen people can be involved in the making of beauty and imperfections by women a single bangle, from sweltering factories to the homes of designers who skillfully decorate them by hand.

"Whatever the fashion trends, when we attend any event and wear added. Hyderabad is home to the any outfit it feels incomplete without delicate "churi" glass bangle, where bangles," said 42-year-old Talat Zahid, who uses beads, stitching and embroidery to embellish bangles. glass wire shaped around an iron "Even if you don't wear jewelry but wear bangles or a bracelet with your trating - laborers are exposed to op-

outfit, the outfit looks complete." In the pressive temperatures in unregulatlead-up to this week's Eid-ul-Fitr festivities that mark the end of Ramazan, market stalls are adorned with a glittering array of colorful bangles, each turned over and inspected for their who haggle for a good price.

They are often sold by the dozen, starting at around Rs150 and rising to Rs1,000 as stones and silk are a single furnace can produce up to 100 bangles an hour from molten rod. The work is arduous and frus-

ed factories prone to frequent power cuts, while the fragile glass threads can snap easily.

"The work is done without a fan. If we turn on the fan the fire is extinguished. So, the heat intensity is high As it becomes hotter our work slows down," said 24-year-old Sameer, who followed his father into the industry and earns less than the minimum wage of Rs32,000 a month. After the partition of British-ruled India in 1947, migrating Muslims who had produced bangles in the Indian city of Firozabad took their trade to Hyderabad --- where hundreds of thousands of people rely on the industry.

Amity kicks off 'Food Distribution Drive' in interior Sindh

#### By our correspondent

KARACHI: Amity Global Foundation, a Canadian organization dedicated to empowering rural communities in Pakistan, kicked-off its 'Food Distribution Drive' ahead of Eid-ul-Fitr across 25 villages in the interior Sindh District Sajawal.

Amity's Ramadan Food Distribution Drive targeted underserved villages in interior Sindh, providing much-needed food assistance to families. This intervention aims to alleviate immediate hunger concerns while working alongside local partners to establish long-term solutions for food security. Chief Operating Officer (COO) Amity Global Foundation, Saad Hasnain while expressing his views

One of the villager hailing from Bachal Khalifa Malah Goth told this scribe that across 25 villages Amity Global Foundation not only distributed the ration bags but also supported the local communities by distributing 'Eidi gifts' among the villagers. Numbers of people praised this pious initiative of Amity Global Foundation in the sacred

month of Ramadan. CO0 Amity Saad Hasnain also added that the cornerstone of our food distribution project is its scalability and adaptability.

Govt determined to support business community

#### News Desk

KARACHI: Federal Minister for Commerce Jam Kamal Khan on Monday said that the government was confident and focused to further improve all the factors linked with the

# **METRO MATTERS**

### Sindh CM announces sentence reduction for Eid celebrations

#### By our correspondent

KARACHI: In anticipation of Eid-ul-Fitr, the Chief Minister of Sindh has announced a reduction in prison sentences for eligible inmates across the province. This decision, effective immediately, will see a 120-day remission in the sentences of qualifying prisoners

According to a spokesperson from the CM's office in Karachi, the remission will not be applicable to individuals convicted of severe crimes such as murder, espionage, insurgency, and terrorism. Furthermore, offenders involved in crimes such as adultery, abduction, robbery, violation of the Foreign Act 1946, and drug trafficking will not benefit from this reduction.

Additionally, prisoners convicted of embezzlement and causing harm to the national treasury will not be eligible for sentence reduction. This initiative aims to provide some relief to non-violent offenders and their families during the festive occasion of Eid-ul-Fitr.

## **HRCP** expresses concern over street crimes in Karachi

#### By our correspondent

KARACHI: The Human Rights Commission of Pakistan (HRCP) has expressed deep concern over the law and order's situation in Karachi.

In a statement, the HRCP highlighted that the security situation in Karachi has deteriorated to a dangerous level. According to the HRCP, Karachi police reported over 90,000 street crime incidents in the year 2023. During street crime incidents in 2023, more than 100 individuals lost their lives, as per the Human Rights Commission.

Incidents of violence continue to escalate in Karachi in the first three months of the current year, reflecting governmental failure to address the rising crime issue. The HRCP emphasized the urgent need to restore peace and security in Karachi to ensure the rights to life and protection for its citizens.

Additionally, the Human Rights Commission stressed the immediate resolution of fundamental issues such as economic disillusionment and unemployment.

### Sharjeel Memon given portfolio of **Ministry of Information**

#### By our correspondent

KARACHI: In a notable development within the Sindh government, Sharjeel Inam Memon, the Senior Minister and prominent Pakistan People's Party (PPP) leader, has been appointed as the Minister for the Information Department. A formal notification has been issued regarding Memon's new role, signaling a significant reshuffle in ministerial responsibilities.

Memon's appointment to the Information Department underscores the party's confidence in his leadership and communication abilities, as well as his capacity to effectively convey government policies and initiatives to the public. As a seasoned politician with extensive experience in public service, Memon is expected to bring his insights and expertise to bear on the critical task of information dissemination and public outreach.

It is noteworthy that alongside his new role, Memon will continue to hold the portfolios of Transport and Excise Department, further consolidating his position within the Sindh government. The decision to entrust Memon with multiple portfolios reflects the government's strategy to streamline administrative functions and leverage the talents of experienced leaders in key policy areas.

As Memon assumes his new responsibilities, expectations are high for him to spearhead efforts to enhance transparency, accountability, and public engagement within the Information Department. His tenure is anticipated to be marked by initiatives aimed at promoting government transparency, fostering civic participation, and strengthening communication channels between the government and the public.

With Memon's appointment, the Sindh government signals its commitment to effective governance and proactive engagement with citizens, as it navigates the challenges and opportunities of governance in the province. As Memon takes on his expanded role, stakeholders will closely monitor the impact of his leadership on information dissemination and public perception of government policies and initiatives.

## Protection of innocent lives should be ensured: CM Sindh

#### By our correspondent

KARACHI: Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah has directed to enhance strict security and surveillance in the city today and tomorrow to ensure the protection of public lives and property in every aspect.

not independently be veri-

on the successful implementation of this drive said "we are immensely thankful to Almighty Allah that this Food Distribution Drive turned successful in all aspects and it is the need of the hour to address malnutrition issues in the rural

Pakistan.

## **Commissioner Dera finalizes arrangements for Eid-ul-Fitr**

#### By Adam Khan Wazir

SOUTH WAZIRISTAN: Commissioner Dera Ismail Khan Division Zafar Ul Is- for Eid-ul-Fitar. lam has said on Monday for security plan and sanita-

In the meeting, Regional that all the arrangements Police Officer Dera Ismail for Eid-ul-Fitar should be Khan Nasir Mehmood Satti, finalized and the best ar- Deputy Commissioner Dera rangements should also Ismail Khan, Tank, South be ensured while adequate Waziristan (Upper), Addimeasures should be taken tional Deputy Commissioner South Waziristan (Lower),

tion. He gave these instruc- Hospital Director DHQ, MTI tions while presiding over DI Khan, Pesco, Halal Food a meeting held in his office and Food Safety Authoriregarding the arrangements ty, RTA, Rescue 1122 and other relevant departments officers and representatives participated. During the meeting, a briefing was

> given regarding the arrangements regarding Eid-ul-Fitar by various departments. Commissioner Dera while

issuing instructions on this

occasion said that all the arrangements should be finalized as well as the best management should be ensured while adequate measures should be taken for the security plan and cleanliness of the city. He said compile report and share a plan regarding security plan and traffic management, security of all Jamia mosques and places of worship should be ensured.

economy, so as to boost confidence of the business community. He said this while talking to media after a meeting at the Pakistan Business Council (PBC) here on Monday.

Minister for Commerce Jam Kamal said that Prime Minister Shahbaz Sharif also held several meetings regarding the economy of the country and business, exports, trade, and energy sectors are among our top

other police officers.

priorities. Initiatives taken to expedite govt projects:



Fayaz Abbasi

#### By Imtiaz Hussain

SUKKUR: Under the leadership of Chairman District Council Sukkur Syed Kamal Hyder Shah and Commissioner Sukkur Fayaz Hussain Abbasi, a meeting was convened to address crucial development projects aimed at enhancing infrastructure and agricultural capabilities in the region. The meeting focused on key initiatives such as the expansion of Kaital Colony, Rohri Bus Terminal, and Alipur Factory Road, as well as initiatives to provide irrigation to farmers and establish an economic zone through the allocation of 100 acres of land.

In-depth consultations were conducted, leading to decisive decisions on various pressing issues, particularly strategies to expedite

government projects for the benefit of the community. Commissioner Sukkur, Fayaz Hussain Abbasi, issued directives to enforce strict legal measures against contractors causing delays and emphasized the importance of timely project completion to ensure the efficient delivery of public services.

negligence in government projects. The meeting also discussed the allocation and consultation regarding economic zone, and an agreement was reached to

the project soon.

Commissioner Sukkur Fayaz Abbasi directed Work and Services officers to expedite all ongoing projects across the division and to take legal action against all the contractors showing

100 acres of land for the fulfill all legal requirements promptly and commence

An important meeting regarding the law and order situation was held in Karachi under the chairmanship of Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah. The meeting was attended by Additional IG Karachi Imran Yaqub, DIG Majid Hayder, SSP AVCC Zafar Siddiqui, SSP Qaiser Shah, Inspector Abid Hussain, Sub-Inspector Ghulam Rasool, Head Constable Tariq Saeed, Khawar Yousaf, Lady Police Constable Arisha Naz, and

Sindh Chief Minister commended the police for recovering two kidnapped individuals through a raid on a municipality. During the briefing, Additional IG Karachi informed the Sindh Chief Minister that the police had recovered Abdullah and Shahid through a raid on the municipality. The police arrested Sabir Anayat Rahman, Hayat Ali, and Waheedullah, who were injured during the operation.

Sindh Chief Minister Murad Ali Shah said that if the police continue to perform such excellent work, crime will be eliminated. Sindh Chief Minister directed the head of Karachi police to encourage the police on behalf of him. I will also meet the police officers soon. Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah said that Karachi police is a good force. I hope Karachi police will do the best job and eliminate crime.

### 45 Pakistani passports seized at Karachi airport

#### By our correspondent

KARACHI: In a significant operation conducted at Karachi's Jinnah Terminal, the Airport Security Force (ASF) intercepted an Iranian traveler, Muhammad Adnan, attempting to smuggle 45 Pakistani passports to Dubai. The incident unfolded during the scanning of luggage, when ASF officials detected a suspicious number of passports concealed within Adnan's belongings.

Upon manual inspection, authorities discovered 45 Pakistani passports hidden in Adnan's bag, sparking concerns about the nature of his activities and the intended use of the seized documents. The presence of passports belonging to individuals from various cities heightened suspicions surrounding Adnan's motives, prompting immediate action by security personnel.

Following the confiscation of the passports, Adnan was apprehended and the case was transferred to the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) for further investigation. The incident underscores the gravity of passport trafficking and the need for stringent measures to combat illicit activities that threaten national security and undermine immigration laws

Authorities suspect that Adnan intended to unlawfully transport the passports to Dubai, raising questions about the broader implications of such actions and the potential risks posed to individuals whose identities may have been compromised. The swift intervention by ASF and subsequent handover to FIA reflect a coordinated effort to address transnational crimes and safeguard the integrity of travel documentation processes

As investigations unfold, stakeholders are expected to closely monitor developments in the case and take appropriate measures to prevent similar incidents in the future. The incident serves as a stark reminder of the ongoing challenges faced by law enforcement agencies in combating organized crime networks involved in passport trafficking and highlights the importance of vigilance and cooperation in safeguarding national interests and citizen safety.

## Hot Eid expected in Karachi, possibility of rain from April 14

#### By our correspondent

KARACHI: Karachi, along with most parts of Sindh, is expected to experience hot weather during the days of Eid al-Fitr, with the possibility of rain from April 14.

According to meteorologist Jawad Memon, temperatures are rising across most areas of Sindh, and the province will continue to experience hot weather until April 12. He mentioned that temperatures in Karachi during the Eid days could reach between 37 to 38 degrees Celsius.

Meteorologist Jawad Memon stated that there is a possibility of a decrease in the intensity of heat after April 12, and from April 13 or 14, western winds are expected to bring rain to most parts of the country. He further added that there is also a possibility of rain in Karachi from April 14, where showers of light to moderate intensity are expected.



#### **EDITOR: Ehtasham Anwar**

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Ramazan 29, 1445 A.H.

# **Epidemic of** street crimes

he indifference exhibited by the elite of this country towards the situation in Karachi is perplexing. Karachi is an integral part of this nation, inhabited by citizens who belong to this very country. Yet, the lives of people in this city, be they children, the elderly, women, or youth, are anything but secure. While the ruling elite remain oblivious, innocent lives are being lost daily. The incident of May 9th is condemnable, and Karachi's citizens continue to suffer from various tragedies associated such incidents and have been facing May 9th scenario daily. While we are grateful that our youth and officers remained safe during the May 9th events, what about the youth of Karachi who face unexpected loss of life daily? The ruling elite of this country fails to comprehend the sacrifices the poor and middle class have to make just to ensure their survival.

It is imperative now, more than ever, to hold a social gathering akin to a prayer for rain, where all those responsible for this sudden surge of violence and plundering are prayed for, until they are brought to logical conclusions. Chief Justice of the Sindh High Court, Justice Ageel Ahmed Abbasi, has given the provincial administration a one-month deadline to curb street crimes. These directives, issued by the Chief Justice, during a meeting of the Provincial Justice Committee, highlight concerns regarding the deteriorating law and order situation. The meeting, attended by the Secretaries of Law and Justice and the Home Department, DIGs Rangers, IGs, and SPs of Larkana, Ghotki, Kandhkot, and Sukkur, underscores the severity of the situation and the need for complete authority, especially by the High Court, to take the strictest action. The session, which lasted for over four hours, concluded with orders from the Chief Justice that regardless of the perpetrators' strength, street crimes, especially dacoities, must be eradicated entirely.

During the meeting, increasing police patrols in the provincial capital were discussed. However, it is also essential that after clearing the dens of dacoits, they are not allowed to regroup elsewhere. The provincial administration should seek assistance from the Rangers, and continuous operations should be conducted until the last dacoit is captured. It must be clear that the issue of dacoits is not new; it has persisted for more than two decades. Despite numerous operations, the province has failed to eliminate them; instead, they have become even more entrenched. The main reason behind this is the support and facilitation provided to them by influential individuals. In reality, these very people are the obstacles to establishing lasting peace and security in the province. It is imperative that all measures are taken to implement the Chief Justice's directives until logical conclusions are reached. This will ensure that the entire province, especially the city of Quaid, can once again become a bastion of peace and security.

#### By Ahmed Bilal Mehboob

ARDLY any election in Pakistan has been free of controversy. This includes Senate elections. The recent presidential election was a rare exception. Mahmood Khan Achakzai, the runner-up and joint candidate of the Sunni Ittehad Council (SIC) - read: PTI displayed political maturity and a democratic spirit by accepting defeat and congratulating the winner, Asif Ali Zardari of the PPP. Not just that, he went on to acknowledge that it had been a clean election in which, unlike the past, no cash for votes was involved.

Less than a month later, it was a different story in the case the election of half the Senate. Unlike in the past, there were no allegations of legislators voting for cash

- a significant improvement given the background of Pakistan's Senate polls — some serious constitutional and legal controversies arose, which continue to rage even after the winners have been notified.

The major controversy concerns the ECP's unprecedented move to postpone election in the KP provincial assembly, literally among its opponent parties.

at the eleventh hour, despite the fact that election in the three other provinces and the federal capital had been held smoothly.

KP is the only province where the PTI commands an absolute majority in the provincial assembly and has been able to elect its own chief minister, even though the ECP doesn't recognise PTI as a parliamentary party and continues to treat its legislators as independent members. The ECP refused to hold election in the KP Assembly on the same day they were held in the other legislatures because its Speaker refused to administer oath to some 25 legislators elected on seats reserved for women and non-Muslim minorities belonging to various other political parties.

These were the seats which would have been won by the PTI, or its proxy SIC, had the ECP accepted the PTI or SIC as a bona fide party in the assembly, which qualifies the allocation of reserved seats in proportion to the general seats won in the election. The PTI is somehow resigned to the fact that these seats can't be given to the party but finds it absolutely unacceptable for the seats which were its right to be distributed

these parties have bagged more seats reserved for women and minorities than they had secured in the general election. For example, the JUI-F had won seven general seats in the KP Assembly in the Feb 8 election but was able to get 10 reserved seats. The PML-N and PPP, which secured five and four general seats, were awarded eight and six reserved seats respectively.

Senate election controversy

Sadly, for the PTI, the ECP decision, no matter how unfair it might seem to the party, was unanimously endorsed by a five-member bench of the Peshawar High Court, and the Speaker was directed to administer oath to members 'elected' on the reserved seats. Since administering oath to 'elected' members can be done only in an assembly session, and the Speaker has no legal mechanism to call one on his own — he can do so only if at least 25 per cent of the members requisition a session - the assembly session could not be convened and oath to the members elected on reserved seats could not be administered.

In these circumstances, only the provincial government has 'duly constituted' in accordance for the future.

#### In an odd and rather unfair the authority to give binding adinterpretation of the law, some of vice to the governor to summon an assembly session. The governor tried to summon the assembly session on his own but both the provincial government and the assembly secretariat justifiably frustrated his effort on constitutional grounds. In fact, the high court, in its order, should have directed the provincial government, and not the Speaker, to summon the session. At stake, besides a principle,

are at least four additional Senate seats which the opposition could win if these 25 legislators took oath and voted for their party nominees. The matter is now before the Peshawar High Court for the latter to hear the Speaker's petition to review the court order endorsing the ECP notification. The court will hear the case after it has delivered its detailed judgement. The matter may ultimately be resolved by the Supreme Court. How long it will take is anybody's guess.

Will the Senate, without 11 representatives from KP, be able to function as usual and elect its chairman and deputy chairman? The key question in this respect is whether the Senate is

with Article 60 of the Constitution. There is nothing in the law or Constitution which suggests that the Senate is not duly constituted. It has full representation of the three provinces and the federal capital. The fourth province, KP, is also not without representation as the term of half its senators elected in 2021 is set to expire in March 2027.

Some analysts have suggested that the Senate in its present form can function under an 'interim presiding officer' but it can't elect its regular chair and deputy chair. Again, there is nothing in the Constitution, Elections Act, 2017, or the Senate Rules of Procedure which stops the Upper House from electing its chairman and deputy chairman. Although, legally speaking, the Senate is "duly formed", it will be rather unfortunate if half the representatives of a province remain missing from this important forum which has been specifically created to safeguard the provinces' rights.

One hopes that the Peshawar High Court and the Supreme Court (if required) will move expeditiously not only to conclusively pronounce on these contentious points but also to interpret the law

#### By Maleeha Lodhi

S IX months on, Isra-el's genocidal war on Gaza shows no sign of abating. With over 33,000 Palestinians killed and more than 75,000 injured by Israel's relentless military assaults, almost two-thirds of Gaza's infrastructure lies in ruins and 1.9 million people have been displaced. Little humanitarian assistance is reaching desperate Palestinians who face famine and catastrophic conditions amid continued bombardment by Israel. No place is safe in Gaza while raids and killings also continue in the occupied West Bank.

Israel's latest atrocity last week was an air strike on foreign aid workers of an international charity delivering food in central Gaza. Despite their clearhealth sector.

ly marked vehicles the widespread international

They have been attacked throughout the war and Palestinians innocent flocking to aid distribution venues also killed.

At the same time, chilling details have emerged about the condition of Gaza's largest hospital Al Shifa after the Israeli army pulled out following a twoweek operation. It left behind a trail of death and destruction with hundreds of dead bodies found in the hospital complex and surrounding areas, where many Palestinians had sought refuge. Eye witnesses said the hospital was left in shambles with an Al Jazeera correspondent reporting "There is no life here. The complex is in ruins and cannot be revived." All this being the result of Israel's deliberate destruction of Gaza's

By continuing its milconvoy was attacked and itary operations, Israel six humanitarian work- has defied the will of the of the Security Council". ers killed. This prompted international community reflected in the call for a

# Defiance and devastation el targeted aid workers. unanimous with 14 of 15 mean it doesn't have to be to call, for the first time, for it has little to gain from

Council members voting in favour. The US abstained but did not veto unlike the made it plain that the three previous ceasefire resolutions it had vetoed. The US stance signified a tentative policy shift. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanvahu described the US failure to cast a veto as a "clear retreat" from its previous position.

However, US opposition

to a 'permanent ceasefire'

meant the ceasefire call

was confined to just the

month of Ramazan. Mean-

while, a remark by Ameri-

ca's UN ambassador that

this resolution wasn't bind-

ing evoked widespread

resolutions in fact consti-

tute international law. All

are binding and have to

UN Security Council

criticism

"resolution must be implemented" and that "failure would be unforgivable". Israel has refused to comply with this resolution in line with its long-

standing record of defying innumerable other UNSC resolutions on Palestine over the decades. It has shown utter disregard for global opinion that has for months demanded the war be brought to an end. Arguably, the US is the only country Israel would listen to and which has leverage with Tel Aviv. But in election year, the Biden administration made little effort in the past six months to mount pres-

be implemented as encourse. joined by Article 25 of the UN Charter. This binds that this is changing. Opinmembers to "accept and carry out the decisions Chapter VII of the Char-

enforced. UN Secretary an immediate pause in the a direct conflict, which General António Guterres war. He is reported to have would also shift attention said this in a tense phone conversation with the Israeli prime minister last Thursday. He also warned

him that US support would depend on how Tel Aviv addresses humanitarian suffering in Gaza, which he called "unacceptable". Washington is now under mounting international pressure to halt lethal arms supplies to Israel. Recently the UN Human Rights Council also demanded a halt in military sales.

In Israel itself public protests against Netanyahu have been intensifying with calls for his resignation and early elections. Demonstrators have been sure on Israel to change demanding the government secure the release There are signs now of hostages in Hamas custody. They have also ion in the US has shifted demanded the war should significantly against Israel. be ended to bring hostag-The latest Gallup poll re- es home. Losing support fire and release of hostag-True, resolutions under leased last month found at home, Netanyahu's es though this has yet to the majority of Americans government ordered an air

away from Gaza. Iranian leaders know this is an Israeli trap to provoke Teheran into taking military action to draw in the US and pitch it against Iran. But this incident shows how Israel is escalating on every front as it has also launched missile strikes in eastern Lebanon.

With UN action having failed to halt Israel's war on Gaza and Washington unable or unwilling to restrain Israel, the question is what have Muslim countries done to mount pressure on Israel to stop it from continuing ethnic cleansing and committing war crimes? Arab and OIC countries have been active at the UN to push for a ceasefire resolution. Egypt and Qatar, along with the US, are mediating talks in Cairo between Hamas and Israel for a durable ceaseyield an outcome.

## crossroads

Economy at

he uncertainty looming over gas and electricity prices, dictated by IMF conditions, has left investors wary of their businesses' future. The current economic situation in the country is nothing new for the incumbent government. With the continuation of policies from the previous regime, including that of the PTI-led government for 15 months, Prime Minister Shahbaz Sharif and his cabinet are well aware of the ground realities. Hence, they must engage with financial institutions to safeguard the interests of the nation.

Since Pakistan's inception, its economy has largely relied on loans and aid. Today, we find ourselves still dependent on external support, unable to stand on our own feet. The gap between the two classes is widening, and the responsibility for this lies not only with the ruling elite but also with international financial bodies like the IMF and World Bank. Over the past 75 years, the IMF has provided packages and budgets, shaping the economic policies of the country. Similarly, the World Bank's consultation and loans have been integral to most infrastructure projects.

If the country continues on this path, where development remains elusive and the economy falters, it's the common people who suffer. However, it's unfair to solely blame these institutions; our failures also stem from our inability to resist external pressures. We failed to make tough decisions to overcome our energy crisis, such as completing the Pakistan-Iran gas pipeline project without succumbing to American pressure.

To tackle the energy crisis, new agreements are needed with Turkey, Malaysia, and Indonesia. It's high time for the government and economic experts to devise a practical strategy to extricate Pakistan from the clutches of the IMF and other financial institutions. The stringent conditions attached to new IMF loans will only exacerbate inflation and debt burden, possibly pushing our total debt beyond Rs. 93 trillion, further fueling inflation rates. Such heavy borrowing poses a threat to Pakistan's security and stability.

Pakistan has suffered immense financial losses, around 1.5 trillion, in its fight against terrorism. The sacrifices made in this war, with millions of lives lost, should compel global powers to assist Pakistan economically.

At present, we must focus on establishing political stability, fostering cooperation between federal and provincial governments for the country's security and prosperity. All provincial governments must play their role in alleviating inflation.

The storm of inflation is raging, trapping the common man, and without fundamental reforms, the economy cannot be strengthened. Widening the tax net is imperative to reduce the burden of loans. The 22% interest rate has led people to withdraw from businesses, resulting in a decline in investment. Thus, urgent measures are needed to steer the economy towards stability and growth.

condemnation, compelceasefire by the resoluling Israel to claim it was "an unintended strike" and Security Council (UNSC) order an investigation. on March 25. It was the President Joe Biden also first time in the six-month expressed outrage over war that the Council finalthe killings saying Israel ly demanded an immehad not done enough to diate ceasefire albeit for protect civilian lives. This the remaining period of wasn't the first time Isra-

ter (threats and breaches tion adopted by the UN of peace) have an enforcement mechanism, including sanctions in the case of non-compliance. Those under Chapter VI putes) don't. Though the Gaza resolution was un-Ramazan. This was near der the latter that doesn't

disapprove of Israel's military actions in Gaza. Disapproval among Democratic voters is even higher, at 75 per cent. Domestic and global

(pacific settlement of dis- opinion as well as the dire situation on the ground ous effort to drag Iran into seems to have weighed in a regional war. While Tehwith Washington for Biden

strike on the Iranian consulate in Damascus, which killed several members of the Revolutionary Guard Corps including a commander.

Still Muslim countries have fallen way short of the expectations of Muslims across the world. Nor has their response matched the catastrophic

This marked an obvisituation on the ground. The writer is a former ambassador to the US, UK ran has vowed to retaliate and UN.

# **Human hierarchies**

By Zarrar Khuhro

have witnessed horrors over the past six months. We have seen entire families decimated at the press of a button. We have seen entire bloodlines of Palestinians erased from the earth to slake Israel's bloodlust. We have seen hungry men and women rushing for aid only to be gunned down and then blamed for their own deaths. We have seen humans crushed flat by tanks and bulldozers.

We have seen children hunted like mice through the ruins of Gaza, joyfully sniped by Israeli soldiers playing their murderous games, the same soldiers who - joyfully - pose with the lingerie of Palestinian women they have murdered or displaced. They proudly advertise atrocities, filming their TikToks where they mock their victims, eat their desecrate food. their homes, mosques and bodies. They are celebrated for it by a society suffering from a deep sickness of the soul, a country where trophies like the passport of a dead or displaced Gazan child is sold on Facebook, where IDF soldiers post pictures of themselves brutalisng Palestinians on their dating profiles and get hundreds

barbarism

with hardly a mention on Western mainstream media, and with the barest wringing of hands in Western capitals. And that's because there are hierarchies to human lives. There are some - mostly brown, mostly living in the Global South — who are born to be killed. Their lives are pointless, unworthy of comment or eulogy and in death they simply become statistics of the sort that can be easily ignored. Most of the time, they aren't even killed; they simply die in unexplained explosions apparently caused by no one. Their children's lives are cut short by bullets that seemingly travel through time and space of their own volition. They don't really matter, and

their deaths barely elicit a statement of concern from the worthies that run this world. We know this but the knowing brings us no solace, only sorrow. Proof, if we needed any, was supplied when the Israeli army 'triple-tapped'

an aid convoy of the World Central Kitchen, killing brave and selfless aid workers who hailed not from the disposable countries but from the US, UK, Canada, Australia and Poland. This was, of course, 'unacceptable' and led to relatively loud condemof matches from women excited by this display of

All this has happened has a right to defend itself' sections of the US media treating Israeli government spokespeople with the same ire they usually reserve for Palestinians who have lost their entire families

> Prominently, the hosts of America's President Joe 'more Zionist than the Zionists' Biden's favourite show, Morning Joe, tore into Israel's minister of the economy for Israel's handling of the war in Gaza. Biden finally called for a ceasefire, reportedlv threatened to condition future aid to Israel on how addresses concerns it and pressured Israel into opening the Erez crossing into Gaza, allowing a few trucks of aid in. This proved that American pressure could make Israel change course.

But don't think for a moment that this is any lasting change of heart where Biden is concerned; he's too old and too rigid in his hawkish views to ever change. It is, however, an indication of the pressure he now feels, given that Western citizens have been killed and that his chances of re-election seem dimmer. It also helps, of course, that the founder of the WCH, Jose Andre, is a well-known and well-connected figure in Washington, D.C.

Just a day after Biden nation of Israel with even called for an 'immedithe usually supine 'do you ate ceasefire', the politicondemn Hamas/ Israel cians-for-hire of America

stepped up with choreographed messages of unconditional support for Israel. Politicians like Brad Sherman, the democratic Congressman, whom many Pakistanis recently became acquainted with, tweeted not just to exonerate Israel of blame but also to indirectly place the blame on WCH itself. This isn't surprising since Sherman is one of the many hired guns of Israel in the US Congress, and has received upwards of \$700,000 over his career from pro-Israel interest groups. Other known Israeli mouthpieces like Richie Torres (over a million dollars from pro-Israel groups) also chipped in as

and many others. Speaking of AIPAC and its allies, Biden stands out as the highest recipients of funds from pro-Israel lobbies, clocking over \$11m from various Israeli lobbies over the course of his career. Increasingly, though there are voices calling out AIPAC in the US, something that was unthinkable fairly recently, and these voices will only grow in volume. Change is coming, but slowly and with a lot of pushback.

did Republican Ted Cruz

In the meantime, American citizens can take solace in the fact that if Israel were to kill them, the majority of the US political establishment would immediately rally to the defence of Israel

# The Rs400bn quandary

#### By Basit Ghauri

HE financial instability of distribution companies has led to a conundrum for decision-makers whereby the federal government, under the IMF programme, seeks to alleviate the burden of circular debt and considers shedding the Discos. On the other hand, the provinces and private sector remain cautious about assuming associated liabilities. Their fate remains unclear, as the Power Division, the Special Investment Facilitation Council, the Privatisation Commission, and the provinces fail to reach a consensus on the future of Discos.

Discos are struggling, with multifaceted challenges and structural deficiencies within the broader power sector contributing to their financial instability. A uniform tariff regime equalises the tariff of all Discos based on a national average; it is subsequently reduced through government subsidies from the federal budget. Such regulatory hurdles and lack of corporatisation hold back competition for performance improvement, exacerbating financial woes

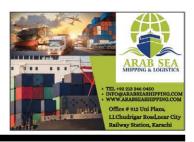
In FY2022, Discos reported a staggering net negative equity of Rs1,426 billion primarily driven by transmission and distribution losses of 16.3 per cent. Last year, low recovery rates and theft resulted in a staggering loss of Rs236bn. Abolishing this regime also risks social backlash and political repercussions, particularly in high-tariff areas.

The culmination of these challenges manifests in annual net losses of Rs400bn, begging the question of how to proceed. Multiple options are being explored, including complete or partial privatisation, management contracting, provincialisation, handing over to the army, or maintaining the status quo.

Complete privatisation: The 1990s privatisation programme succeeded in privatising 167 entities worth about Rs476bn. However, recent attempts have largely failed, with only one success in the past decade. Successful privatisation demands strong political commitment, resolution of legacy contracts, settlement of liabilities, and negotiations with a sizable workforce. For instance, pressure from 3,500 employees at the Pakistan Steel Mills thwarted multiple privatisation attempts. With Discos employing over 100,000 individuals, gaining employee buyin for any potential transaction appears highly unlikely.







# **Russia blames Ukraine for** attacking nuclear plant

IAEA says this is first direct targeting of Europe's largest nuclear plant since November 2022, endangering safety

#### News Desk

MOSCOW: Russia said Ukraine struck the Zaporizhzhia nuclear power station controlled by Russian forces three times on Sunday and demanded the West respond, though Kyiv said it had nothing to do with the attacks.

Russia's state nuclear corporation, Rosatom, said Ukraine attacked the plant three times on Sunday with drones, first injuring three near a canteen, then attacking a cargo area and then the 6. "Zaporizhzhia nuclear not changed," it said. power station has been subjected to an unprecattacks, a direct threat to on the station and sugthe safety of the plant," gested they were the work Rosatom said. "The radia- of Russians themselves. tion levels at the plant and

NIKOPOL, UKRAINE: Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant from the bank of Kakhovka Reservoir near the town of Nikopol, Ukraine June 16, 2023.—MM file photo

dome above reactor No. the surrounding area have imitation ones, on the terri-

**News Desk** 

A Ukrainian intelligence official said Kyiv had nothedented series of drone ing to do with any strikes "Russian strikes, including

tory of the Ukrainian nuclear power plant ... have long been a well-known criminal practice of the invaders." a spokesperson for Ukraine's HUR Main Intelligence Directorate. Andriv Usov. Reuters was unable to

immediately verify battlefield accounts from either side. The nuclear plant has six Soviet-designed VVER-1000 V-320 water-cooled and water-moderated reactors containing Uranium 235 and also has spent nuclear fuel at the facility.

Reactors No. 1, 2, 5 and 6 are in cold shutdown while Reactor No. 3 is shut down for repair and Reactor No. 4 is in so-called "hot shutdown", according to the plant "This is a major escala-

tion of the nuclear safety and security dangers facing the Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant. Such reckless attacks significantly increase the risk of a major nuclear accident and must cease immediately," IAEA Director General Rafael Grossi said in a statement. "Attacking a nuclear power plant is an absolute no go,"

Grossi said. "Although the damage at unit 6 has not compromised nuclear safety, this was a serious incident that had the potential to undermine the integrity of the reactor's containment system," he added.

# Pakistan, Ethiopia agree to work on climate change jointly

#### By Uzma Ehtasham

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan and Ethiopia on Monday agreed to launch the Green Legacy Initiative of Ethiopian Prime Minister Dr. Abiy Ahmed in the major cities including Lahore, Peshawar, Karachi, Quetta, Sialkot, and others.

This was agreed upon in a meeting between Coordinator to the PM on Climate Change Romina Khurshid Alam and Ethiopian Ambassador to Pakistan Jemal Beker Abdula, said a news ready to work together with release. Ambassador laud- the Pakistani government

related issues. He recalled the launch of Green Legacy Initiative in Islamabad last year in the presence of senior ministers, government officials, diplomatic corps, business community, media, and civil society.

The

Ambassador Change. stressed the need for enhanced collaboration between the two countries to address climate issues through skills, technology, information, and knowledge sharing. He said the government of Ethiopia stood

climate mitigation through technological transfer and experience sharing, the ambassador remarked. He also congratulated Romina Khurshid Alam on assuming the charge of the Coordinator to the PM on Climate

Meanwhile. Romina Khurshid Alam expressed keen interest in the launch of the Green Legacy initiative in different cities of her country. She said climate change was a global phenomenon and joint efforts against climate changes were the need of hour.



ed the role played by Romi- in addressing climate-relat- The government of Pakina Khurshid Alam in initiating ed issues such as floods, a joint collaboration between Ethiopia and Pakistan last Ethiopia would extend all-

food insecurity and others. year for addressing climate out support to Pakistan on

stan was looking forward to working with Ethiopia to deal with climate change, she added.

## Shahid Khaqan to launch new political party News Desk

#### ISLAMABAD: Shahid Khaqan Abbasi, former prime minister and a leader of the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N), on Monday approached the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) for the registration of a new political party

Abbasi arrived at the ECP office in Islamabad today where he submitted an application for the registration of the new political party

Along with the application, he also submitted the required documents. "We're registering the party as per the Election Act 2017

We will actively partic-

## **Muslims face dwindling representation** in Modi's India Muslims are a fifth of population in India, but Muslim parliament

## representation is less than 5pc

Muslims make up a little

under a fifth of its 1.4 billion RAMPUR, INDIA: More population, Muslim reprethan half the voters in the sentatives in parliament Indian city of Rampur are have almost halved to less Muslim, but its member than five percent since the of parliament is a staunch 1970s. "Everyone wants supporter of Prime Minister a connect with BJP," said Narendra Modi's muscular Ghanshyam Singh Lodhi, Hindu-first agenda. It is a who is confident of re-election as MP for Rampur in situation repeated across Uttar Pradesh state when Hindu-majority India, where the six-week-long elections many consider victory for Modi's ruling Bharatiya Jabegin on April 19. Lodhi, nata Party (BJP) in upcoma Hindu, replaced Raming general elections a near pur's Muslim MP in a 2022 by-election, jumping ship certainty -- and see Muslim from the last lawmaker's candidates as a recipe for party to become a BJP loydefeat at the ballot box. alist

While India's 220 million

GPI-ML \*

There were just 27 Muslim MPs in the 543-seat lower house in parliament -- and none of them were among the BJP's 310 lawmakers. Ziya Us Salam, author of a book on Muslims in India, says members of the faith had for decades placed their trust in secular parties, a process that created an "acute absence of Muslim leadership." Today, an overtly Muslim leader would

Muslim leaders worry at lar India as a "Hindu Rashthe lack of representation. tra", or Hindu state.

writer from the city, said the BJP's dominance means be challenged as stoking sectarian divisions, yet few that it "doesn't seem possiquestion when Modi chamble anymore" for a Muslim pions constitutionally secucandidate to win Rampur.

Centre, provinces

**Irregularities found** at Kidney Centre Peshawar Chemicals used at the institute were also bought at high prices, the audit



APHC condemns recent arrest spree in IIOJK

#### News Desk

ISLAMABAD: The All Parties Hurriyat Conference (APHC) has strongly condemned the fresh spree of raids, crackdowns and arrest unleashed by the Indian forces in every nook and corner of Indian illegally occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK) ahead of Indian Lok

being the leader of only Hindus," Salam said. He also argues that successive gerrymandering policies since independence in 1947 have redrawn electoral boundaries to split areas with substantial Muslim populations. Rampur has elected Muslim MPs 15 out of 18 times since 1952. But Kanwal Bharti, a 71-year-old activist and

"Nobody talks of (Modi)

ipate under the banner of this party in the next elections," he concluded. He further said that the name of the party has not been finalized yet.

Abbasi had frequently alluded to the creation of a new party due to his disagreements with the top leadership of the PML-N. and he had also suggested that a new party would emerge following the nationwide polls on February 8th.

In December last year, the former premier announced that he will not participate in the upcoming general elections.



NEW DEHLI: The demonstrators during a protest to condemn hate speech against Muslims by Hindu leaders, here on December 27, 2021.—MM file photo

## Natural disasters cause average cost of Rs136bn per annum

#### By our correspondent

ISLAMABAD: The Speakers at a validation session on financial flow and gap analysis of public finance for disaster preparedness and response by FAO Pakistan, a news said Pakistan faced an annual average cost of Rs136 billion due to natural disas- facilitate specific advocaters, necessitating a strategic shift towards anticipating their impacts rather than merely responding.

This imperative emerged shop organized by the Food focus on both national and and Agriculture Organiza- sub-national levels, particu- Financing Strategy and Nattion (FAO) of the United larly in Sindh province, the

workshop aimed to dissem- ment climate and disaster inate the Initial Findings of risk financing mechanisms, the Financial Flow and Gap tools, and flows. Analysis of Public Finance Janek Toepper, Climate for Disaster Preparedness Change and DRF Specialist, FAORAP, along with and Response conducted

Syed Aftab Raza, Public Finance Management release said. The analysis seeks to Consultant, presented key findings from the research cy and capacity-building analysis, shedding light on the Disaster Risk Finance steps essential for enabling national, provincial, and for anticipatory action. Foldistrict-level systems to lowing this, Mubushar Husfinance and support Anticisain, Manager of Disaster from a participatory work- patory Actions (AA). With a Risk Reduction at NDRMF, discussed the Disaster Risk

By our correspondent Nations in Islamabad. The study looked into govern-KARACHI: A rare blue

whale has been sighted at Gadani beach, the local fishermen and residents of the area reported on Monday

Today was the second time the creature was spotted on the sea surface. One of the fishermen recorded the whale's movements.

Rare giant blue whale

sighted at Gadani beach

should jointly end terrorism: Bilawal

#### By our correspondent

ISLAMABAD: Expressing his sorrow over the martyrdom of policemen in Lakki Marwat area of Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa on late Friday night, PPP Chairman Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari on Sunday said the federal and provincial governments should work together to eliminate the bane of terrorism from the country. "The complete elimina-

tion of terrorists and destruction of their nurseries is our national duty. We should all come together [for this purpose]," he added. The former foreign minister expressed his grief over the martyrdom of DSP Gul Muhammad Khan as well as his two guards Naseem Gul and Salamat Khan in the Lakki Marwat attack.

"The nation is proud of the bravery of DSP Gul Muhammad and other martyrs. Those who sacrifice their lives to eradicate terrorists are our national heroes, he added."

The commission delved

Centre as police sealed the health facility on Jhelum Road.—MM photo By Adam Khan Wazir PFSHAWAR Widespread irregularities in procurement of equipment and awards of construction contracts at the Institute of Kidney Diseases, Peshawar have surfaced in an

PESHAWAR: A woman takes a patient from Kidney

audit report released here on Sunday. According to the report, the purchase of various types of equipment for the Kidney Centre at expensive market rate prices and awards of construction contracts to companies without approval had inflicted millions of rupees in losses.

In the report on the Institute of Kidney Diseases, Peshawar, objections have been raised on medical devices and other items. Medical equipment and other items were purchased at prices higher than the market rates due to which the exchequer suffered a loss of Rs9.7 million. Surgical gloves were purchased for

Rs112 instead of Rs71 which resulted in a loss of Rs2.5 million in their purchase, according to the audit report. Plastic bags were bought at Rs230 instead of Rs197 which meant that they were bought for Rs5,160 more than the market rate. Chemicals used at the

institute were also bought at high prices, the audit report revealed. The contract for the beautification and construction work of the hospital was also awarded against the rules. The contract worth Rs88.7 million was given to

a private company. According to the audit report, a 10 per cent performance security of Rs8.8 million had not been taken from the company and the contract had been unjustifiably extended until the year 2022-23. An unauthorised payment of Rs90 million had also been made for construction work, the audit report said.

Sabha election.

APHC spokesman Advocate Abdul Rashid Minhas termed the house raids and arrest of dozens of activists by Indian forces' personnel in different parts of valley as the worst form of political vengeance to punish the Kashmiris for challenging India's illegal occupation of their motherland. He expressed serious concern over the victimization of common people by the Indian forces' personnel as well as sleuths of dreaded National Investigation Agency (NIA) and State Investigation Agency (SIA) during cordon and search operations and house raids in Srinagar, Baramulla, Kupwara, Kulgam, Shopian, Pulwama, Bandipora, Islamabad, Poonch, Rajouri, Kishtwar and other districts.

The statement said the Indian brutalities cannot intimidate the Kashmiri people into submission and they will continue their freedom struggle till it reaches its logical conclusion. The APHC demanded the release of all illegally detained Kashmiri political prisoners languishing in different jails of India and the occupied territory.

# SHRC escalates action on prisoner rights

#### By our correspondent

SUKKUR: The Sindh Human Rights Commission (SHRC) has intensified its efforts to safeguard the rights of the prisoners are awaiting sentences and to address the case of a missing person, Priya Kumari. Led by Chairperson Iqbal Ahmed Detho and Member Ayub Khoso, along with a legal team, the SHRC conducted a thorough inspection of Central Jail Sukkur, focusing on the conditions of 22 death cells hosting 162 inmates awaiting their sentences

into the status of pending appeals in higher courts and mercy petitions before the President of Pakistan, underlining the need for expedited legal processes. Furthermore, the SHRC advocated for enhanced legal aid provisions, directing the Sindh Human Rights Department to ensure comprehensive support and linkage with relevant legal aid mechanisms for the inmates' pending cases.

The commission also addressed a case involving an Afghan refugee, advo-



cating for consular access for swift action. During their and repatriation, empha- visit, the SHRC emphasizing communication be- sized skill development and tween relevant authorities education within the prison

system, advocating for vocational training programs and non-formal education initiatives to promote rehabilitation and responsible citizenship among inmates.

In a parallel pursuit of justice, the SHRC scrutinized the case of Priya Kumari, who went missing in 2021. Having taken suo-motu notice of the case, the commission has been actively monitoring the investigation's progress. In a recent hearing, Inspector Javed Memon provided insights into the challenges encountered during the investigation.

## IHC directs PTI counsel to file contempt plea

#### **News Desk**

ISLAMABAD: The Is-Imran Khan and his wife Bushra Bibi

The latter remains incarcerated in the couple's Bani Gala residence after it was lamabad High Court (IHC) declared a sub-jail. Justice expressed displeasure on Miangul Hasan Aurganzeb, Monday over the jail author- presiding over the plea, inities' failure to comply with structed the PTI counsel Uscourt orders regarding ar- man Gul to file a contempt ranging a meeting between of court petition. The judge incarcerated PTI founder inquired why the court order was not complied with. At the outset of the hearing,

#### Justice Aurangzeb stated that the court had already disposed of the matter with directions. The petitioner's counsel told the court that today they were seeking the execution of the same order. The failure to comply with the court order irked the judge, who then directed the petitioner's counsel to file a contempt petition.

Cat Model

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