



Daily The Spokesman

A Leading National Daily



فرمان رسول ﷺ
ابو سلمہ نے عبد اللہ بن عمرو بن عاص رضی اللہ عنہما سے روایت کیا کہ نبی کریم ﷺ نے مجھ سے فرمایا کہ ہر صبیحے میں قرآن کا ایک ختم کیا کرو میں نے عرض کیا مجھ کو تو زیادہ پڑھنے کی طاقت ہے۔ آپ ﷺ نے فرمایا کہ ایسا سات راٹوں میں ختم کیا کرو اس سے زیادہ مست پڑھ۔
(کنز العمال: حدیث نمبر 5054)
Barkat Rice Mills (Pvt) Limited

Thanks to Qatar for supporting Pakistan: Maryam

PML-N vice president Maryam Nawaz thanks Qatar for supporting Pakistan in difficult times. She tweets "May you be successful our Prime Minister, and Thank you Qatar for standing by Pakistan. Regarding relief given by PM Shehbaz on electricity bills, she tweets "I appreciate PM Shehbaz's initiative and I have no doubt that, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif will be able to provide relief to the masses."



Flood-hit people's rehab top priority: Ahsan

Federal Minister for Planning Ahsan Iqbal says rehabilitation of flood-hit people is top priority of the government; the government is utilising all available resources for the rehabilitation of flood-hit people in all the four provinces. Heavy rain and flood wreaked havoc in different areas of Balochistan and Sindh. This is the responsibility of every provincial representative to play effective role in rehabilitation of flood-affected people.

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No tax amnesty scheme sans NA's approval: IMF assured

Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan has to compulsorily get approval from the National Assembly before launching a Tax Amnesty Scheme, according to IMF conditions for economic bail-out to Pakistan. The tax amnesty under the International Monetary Fund (IMF) conditions could not be launched through a Presidential Ordinance. "No tax amnesty scheme, neither tax relief will be allowed without an approval from the National Assembly," according to the details in the Letter of Intent (LoI) sent back to the IMF. "Issuance of SRO for tax relief or tax amnesty will be banned".

The government will be bound to get approval from the NA for providing tax relief to an economic sector. Pakistan has assured the lender in the letter of intent for implementation of the condition.

An amnesty scheme for construction sector and declaration of secret assets will be approved from the National Assembly, according to the LoI. The government will work with the provinces for harmony in sales tax and the World Bank will cooperate for harmonious policy with provinces, according to the letter of intent. Finance Minister Miftah Ismail recently announced that Pakistan has sent back the signed letter of intent to the IMF. Speaking to media in Islamabad, Ismail said that the LoI was sent after being signed by him and acting governor of State Bank of Pakistan (SBP). On August 12, the IMF agreed to the letter of intent forwarded by Pakistan and returned it back to the country for signing it. The letter of intent was prepared by Pakistan a month back and since then IMF has been satisfied over its points and action plan.

FDI

Mr. Mansoor Mehmood, CEO of Qatar Investment Authority calls on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif in Doha on Tuesday.



Photo: PID

Relief package

Govt waives FAC for 17m consumers: PM

Seeks Qatar's investment in energy, aviation sectors

DOHA: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Tuesday announced a complete exemption to about 17.1 million electricity consumers out of 30 million in the country from paying their fuel adjustment charges (FAC) in the electricity bills. As immediate relief measures for the masses, the prime minister said that the government had also notified rescinding of levy of fixed taxes on retailers and shopkeepers. He expressed that these measures would provide immediate relief to the masses.

Accompanied by the members of his delegation during his two-day official visit to Qatar, the prime minister said that when they came into power, they had two targets to achieve. The coalition

government carried the backlog of the previous government which had left behind a trail of worst performance and economic decay and due to their pathetic policies, the country was on the

PM, Qatari counterpart to discuss bilateral matters

verge of default, he said, adding, but due to the untiring efforts of the coalition government, that danger was over.

The prime minister said the previous government's poor

performance had resulted in the price hike of commodities, but his government continued its efforts day and night. Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Tuesday invited the investors in Qatar to invest in Pakistan's energy, aviation, agriculture, livestock, maritime, tourism and hospitality sectors. In a meeting with the Qatar Investment Authority (QIA) in Doha, the prime minister highlighted Pakistan's liberal and business-friendly investment policies in this regard.

The prime minister also urged the Qatari investors to explore the opportunities presented by the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) aimed at promoting regional connectivity and mutual prosperity. Mansoor Bin Ebra-

him Al-Mahmoud, CEO of Qatar Investment Authority - one of the largest sovereign wealth funds of the world, and Sheikh Faisal Thani Al-Thani, Chief Investment Officer of Africa and Asia-Pacific Regions represented the QIA.

The meeting was attended by federal ministers Syed Naveed Qamar, Mairiyum Aurangzeb and Ayaz Sadiq, and State Minister Hina Rabbani Khar. Lauding Qatar's rapid economic development under the visionary leadership of the Qatar's Emir, the prime minister reiterated that Pakistan attached high importance to its relations with Qatar and wanted to upgrade the traditionally warm political ties between the two countries into a comprehensive economic partnership. Agencies

We are over financed: SBP chief

Says Pak to receive \$1.17b from IMF within six days after board's approval

Bureau Report

KARACHI: Pakistan is likely to receive a \$1.17 billion loan tranche from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) within six days after the Executive Board's approval, State Bank of Pakistan Acting Governor Murtaza Syed news channel. The executive board of the Washington-based lender is scheduled to meet on August 29 (Monday); accordingly, analysts expect the Fund to give its final approval as Pakistan has met all prior conditions necessary to revive the stalled loan programme.

The acting governor said that the country's forex reserves will shore up to \$16 billion by the end of the current fiscal year 2022-23 which

dropped to \$8 billion due to delay in the revival of the IMF agreement and external flows. "Pakistan has commitments of \$38 billion so we are over financed," he said, adding that approvals of bilateral help will materialise soon, amounting to \$4 billion, while the current account deficit is expected to clock in at around 3% of the gross domestic product.

Pakistan has approached China, Saudi Arabia, Qatar and UAE to meet the financing gap on the IMF's demand.

The breakdown of commitment of \$4 billion from friendly countries includes \$2 billion from Qatar, \$1 billion from Saudi Arabia (deferred oil facility), and \$1 billion from UAE (investment).

PAC summons ex-CJ Saqib Nasir

Orders to put Azam Khan's name on ECL

ISLAMABAD: The Public Accounts Committee (PAC) summoned former chief justice of Pakistan Saqib Nasir over the matter of the dam fund, while it has been ordered to put the name of former principal secretary Azam Khan in the Exit Control List (ECL). The meeting of PAC was held on Tuesday under the chairmanship of Noor Alam Khan, during which PAC member Barjees Tahir said that regarding the advertisements of dam fund, Rs14 billion have been spent, while only Rs9 billion were collected for the cause of building dam. While another PAC member, Mushahid Hussain Syed demanded to hold the inquiry over the dam fund.

On this occasion, PAC Chairman Noor Alam Khan said that former chief justice Saqib Nasir is controversial and he is also answerable over the dam funds. While urging the Chief Justice of Pakistan to review the unconstitutional stay orders over the matter on dam funding. While issuing the arrest warrants of former principal secretary Azam, the PAC also ordered the FIA and the interior ministry to not let Azam to travel abroad through any airport. Subsequently, PAC Chairman Noor also discussed the matter of Malam Jabba case, asking NAB Chairman Aftab Sultan (who was presented during the PAC meeting) to tell who closed the Malam Jabba case.

Lust for power driving 'one man' crazy: Zardari

Says institutions, govt must show their writ over Imran Khan

Bureau Report

KARACHI: Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) co-chairperson Asif Ali Zardari on Tuesday said that lust for power is driving 'one man' crazy. According to details, members of Sindh cabinet called on former President Asif Ali Zardari to discuss matters of mutual interest and flood situation in the country. On the occasion, Asif Ali Zardari said that situation is worrisome in entire country due to heavy rains and stressed that everyone needs to set aside his politics and instead help the flood affectees.

Criticizing Imran Khan, Zardari said that Pakistan Army soldiers are fighting terrorists in two provinces and this person threatens Army, Police and judiciary and then challenges government to arrest him. Judiciary should decide if this person is above the law or not, he added.

Asif Ali Zardari urged the institutions and government to establish their writ as he



took a jibe at PTI Chairman Imran Khan for criticising Pakistan's armed forces, police and judiciary. "The institutions and government will have to establish their writ or else the law, Constitution and institutions will keep falling pray to his [Imran Khan] demands," a statement issued on Twitter stated.

In a meeting with Sindh ministers, Zardari was quoted as saying by the PPP said that the flood affectees in all four provinces are looking towards the government for help while the hunger for power is driving Imran Khan crazy day by day. "This person is criticising our army every day and the same

army's officers and soldiers are fighting against terrorists and laying down their lives in two provinces. He threatens the army, police and then a female magistrate and challenges them to arrest him," he said.

Zardari said that the judiciary must decide if Imran Khan is above the law, can take extra-judicial actions against "me, Mian Nawaz Sharif, my sister and Maryam Nawaz while trampling every law himself." He also drew attention towards the flood emergency situation in all the four provinces and said that politicians should focus on the flood victims instead of engaging in politics.

Chopper crash

Key culprit behind propaganda tracked down

Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: The key person behind the Lasbela helicopter propaganda campaign on social media has been tracked down. The Joint Investigation Report stated that 178 accounts campaigning against the Pakistan Army belong to the country's largest party, adding that PTI flags were on these accounts. A total of 2,350 posts were made by 580 accounts, including 18 Indian accounts while reported 123 accounts had their profile pictures.

According to the report, cases will be registered against all the involved elements under PICA and Penal Code of Pakistan, while the involved persons will be brought to their handlers and masterminds after investigation. It should be ascertained through investigation who was issuing instructions to them.

I won't bow down to any pressure: Imran Khan

Decides not to appear before ATC

Senior Correspondent

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Chairman and former premier Imran Khan said on Tuesday that he would not come under any pressure come what may and vowed to continue his struggle for real independence. The prime minister made these remarks while chairing a meeting of the PTI parliamentary party here in Islamabad. The participants of the PTI parliamentary party session discussed the political situation and nationwide rallies of the party chief. "I will not step back from the struggle for real independence," Khan told participants of the meeting.

Sources told ARY News that the parliamentary party decided to intensify pressure on the coalition government for early general elections. The meeting also decided that Imran Khan's countrywide rallies schedule will go as planned. The parliamentary party session also briefed Imran Khan on preparations regarding upcoming by-polls on nine National Assembly seats. According to the schedule announced by PTI, the former prime minister would hold a public gathering in Haripur on August 24. Similarly, the PTI chairman will address a rally in Karachi on August 26.

According to the schedule, the PTI



will hold power shows in Sukkur on August 27, in Peshawar on August 28, in Jhelum and Attock on August 29 and on August 31 respectively. Moreover, PTI will hold massive public meetings in Sargodha and Gujrat on September 1 and September 2, respectively. Imran Khan will also address public meetings in Bahawalpur on September 3, Faisalabad on September 4, Mardan on September 6, Bahawalnagar on September 7 in Multan and Sheikhupura on September 8 and September 9, respectively.

Former prime minister and Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) chairman Imran Khan has decided not to appear before ATC for bail extension in a terrorism case. A terrorism case was registered against Imran Khan for using derog-

atory language and threatening Additional Session Judge Zeba Chaudhry in his speech in Islamabad on August 20. The sources say Khan will decide about appearing before ATC after consultation with his legal team, which is set to meet later in the day, today. It has been learnt that the former prime minister will appear before the ATC for extension in his bail after attending Haripur public gathering.

It may be noted that the Islamabad High Court (IHC) on Monday granted pre-arrest bail to former prime minister Imran Khan till August 25 in a terrorism case. According to details, the court relaxed some of the objections raised by the IHC Registrar on the bail petition as the court approved his pre-arrest bail for three days.

Solidarity

LARKANA: Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari along with Chief Minister Sindh Syed Murad Ali Shah is hearing stories of sorrow from flood affected people here on Tuesday.



Photo Radio Pakistan

EU to provide Rs76m for flood victims

Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: The European Union has approved a grant of €350,000 (nearly Rs76 million) to provide crucial humanitarian assistance to families affected by severe flooding, which has wreaked havoc across many parts of Pakistan. In a statement, the EU said the aid will focus on addressing the urgent needs of those most affected in some of the hardest-hit districts of Jhal Magsi and Lasbela in Balochistan. "The devastating floods have left a trail of destruction in Pakistan, causing many to suffer the loss of their homes, livelihoods and belongings," said Taheeni Thammannagoda, who oversees EU humanitarian programmes in Pakistan.

"The EU funding will help get vital assistance to the most vulnerable people to support them during this hard time." The grant, Thammannagoda said, will support International Rescue Committee in delivering much-needed assistance. "This includes the provision of cash transfers to help flood-stricken families to meet their immediate needs, primary healthcare services, with a focus on water-borne and communicable diseases, which are common after a flood, as well as nutrition support." The programme will also provide psychological support to vulnerable groups such as women, adolescent girls and children, the EU official said.

The EU funding is being made available via the European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO) of the European Commission, through its Small Scale Response mechanism.

Since early July, above-normal monsoon rains have caused major flash floods in over 100 districts of Pakistan.

Contempt case

IHC summons Imran Khan on Aug 31

Larger bench conducts hearing of the case

Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad High Court (IHC) on Tuesday has summoned the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Chairman Imran Khan on Aug 31 in contempt of court case. A larger bench of the IHC headed by Justice Mohsin Akhtar Kayani initiated proceedings against the PTI Chairman on his statement targeting the Additional Sessions Judge during PTI rally. The Advocate General Islamabad Jahangir Jadoon appeared before the court and argued that Imran Khan has threatened a judge with name in a public gathering.

The court termed the objectionable remarks made by the former Prime Minister as an attempt to defame the judiciary of the entire country. In this regard, Justice Mohsin Akhtar Kayani said that people have faith in the courts and it's a contempt of court case. Advocate General plead that a show cause notice should be issued to Imran Khan. It is pertinent to mention here that IHC on Monday took suo motu of former Prime Minister Imran Khan's statement against Addi-

tional Sessions Judge Zeba Chaudhry and decided to conduct contempt of court hearing.

Imran Khan while addressing the rally held in favour of Dr Shahbaz Gill at F-9 Park said that his party was going to file cases against PML-N supreme Nawaz Sharif, JUI-F chief Maulana Fazlur Rehman, Interior Minister Rana Sanaullah, IG Islamabad and female judge. The former prime minister lauded his workers, saying that people have come out in large numbers on 24 hours notice. Regarding the matter of Dr Shahbaz Gill, the PTI Chairman said that his party will go to the Supreme Court.

Comparing the current situation of the country with the era of Genghis Khan, the former prime minister said that Nawaz Sharif, Maryam Nawaz, Asif Ali Zardari, Fazlur Rehman and Khawaja Asif made stronger statements as compared to Shahbaz Gill. Imran claimed that Shahbaz Gill was captured and tortured to send a message and scare people that if he can be mentally broken then anyone can, adding that a private channel was shut down to throttle freedom of speech,

adding that by shutting down the private channel, fear has been spread among other channels.

"If we bow our heads to the idol of fear, we will be left with the sole option of slavery," the PTI chairman said. Imran further said that in his 26-year political career, he is seeing such an enlightened nation for the first time. The former prime minister said that the sleeping nation has woken up for the first time. The former prime minister said, "Although we got independence from Britain, today thieves have been imposed on us through foreign conspiracy." Imran further said that on May 25, police and rangers fired tear-gas shells during a peaceful protest.

Challenging the coalition government, Imran Khan said that whatever the government does, it will not stop the masses, because people want freedom. The former premier claimed that tactics have been used to intimidate social media activists. Imran Khan said his party will not spare Islamabad's IG and DIG, saying a vulnerable person was tortured. The former prime minister said they are reluctant to arrest JUI-F chief Fazl.

UN should help flood-hit families: Bilawal

Says govt will not leave masses alone in hard times of flooding

SHAHDADKOT: Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari on Tuesday appealed to the United Nations (UN) to help the flood-hit families. Talking to the media in Shahdadkot, he said that there is a great need for tents in the affected areas of Sindh, adding that we all have to face the difficulties together, too many houses and crops have been damaged, and the Sindh government will provide relief to the victims through Benazir income support program.

"I am appealing to UN to help us in this difficult time, please help with rations, tents. Europe tour has been cancelled due to floods," he added. Bilawal Bhutto further said that people cannot imagine being left alone, diseases are spreading in flood-affected areas, flood

victims need immediate help, and the administration is assessing the damages in flood-affected areas

Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari along with Chief Minister Sindh Syed Murad Ali Shah visited the flood affected areas in Larkana. Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari along with Chief Minister Sindh Syed Murad Ali Shah visited the flood relief camps in Ratodero, Naudaro and Ghari Khuda Bux Bhutto Larkana. Speaking to the flood affected people in the relief camps, he said we will not leave our people alone in this hard time.

The Foreign Minister directed the Chief Minister Sindh to monitor the relief work and provide every necessary item in the relief camps. He directed to establish the medical camps in every relief camp.

Govt hikes duty on luxury items' import

ISLAMABAD: The federal government on Tuesday increased regulatory duty on the import of over 600 luxury items. According to the notification issued by the federal government, regulatory duty on over 600 luxury items has increased. The duty on imported meat and fish has been double, the notification read. The government has increased the duty on imported cereal and flour from 10% to 35% while the duty on imported dry fruits has been increased from 20% to 70%. The duty on imported oranges and grapes has been increased from 10% to 49%, the notification added.

The duty on imported chocolate, cocoa powder, Jam, Jellies and bathroom fittings, jewellery boxes and crockery has been increased to 49%. While the duty on imported cars has been increased from 70% to 100%. The federal government on August 20, allowed the release of imported items that have reached the ports after 30th June with a penalty surcharge of 100 per cent of assessed value.

According to details, the federal government has allowed the release of all imported items and slapped up to 100 per cent fines on goods that had reached ports by the end of July despite restrictions. A notification in this regard has also been issued by the Ministry of Commerce after the federal cabinet's approval. The government has allowed the release of vehicles, mobile phones, home appliances and other items with a penalty surcharge of 100pc.

Prohibited funding

ECP seeks PTI's reply in seizure case

ISLAMABAD: The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) has sought reply from Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) in prohibited funding seizure case, latest by September 6. The hearing to seize prohibited funding of PTI was conducted by Chief Election Commissioner of Pakistan Sikan-dar Sultan Raja. Shah Khawar, PTI's counsel in the case skipped today's hearing in the ECP, while Anwar Mansoor Khan also remained absent due to his engagements at the Supreme Court.

The assistant of Anwar Mansoor Khan appeared before the ECP and sought four-weeks time to submit a reply and related documents. The CEC asked the counsel if all the documents have been already submitted by PTI in the case, why do you need more time? "We have sought documents from the PTI foreign chapter in the case because many things needed to be explained as per the ECP's order in the PTI prohibited funding case," he replied. Denying the four-week time period for submission of documents, CEC Sikandar Sultan Raja gave two weeks time to PTI and adjourned the hearing until September 6.

The Federal Investigation Agency yesterday formed a six-member probe team to launch an investigation into Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) prohibited funding case. A six-member probe team was formed by the intelligence agency; sources say and added that Director Amna Baig will lead the investigation team.

Not so easy to touch Imran Khan: CM Elahi

Forms ministerial committee to address natural disasters

Bureau Report

LAHORE: Punjab Chief Minister and Muslim League-Quaid (PML-Q) leader Chaudhry Pervaiz Elahi on Tuesday said that it is not easy to touch Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) chairman and former Prime Minister Imran Khan. "If anyone will try to touch him then he will not get a place in the world," he said. CM Elahi went on to say that if Imran Khan will be arrested, then all these accused are the culprits. He went on to say that the first way to solve an issue is negotiations. While he added that negotiations are underway and hoped that everything will be alright.

Punjab Chief Minister Chaudhry Pervaiz

Elahi has constituted a 24-member Disaster Management Ministerial Committee to address issues related to natural calamities. According to details, the Punjab chief minister has constituted a 24-member ministerial committee under the chairmanship of provincial minister Raja Basharat. Chief Secretary Punjab will be the vice-chairman of the committee. The ministerial committee also includes Mohsin Khan Leghari, Ali Afzal Sahi, Hussain Mansoor Ahmad Khan, Inspector-General of Police (IGP) Punjab, Senior Member Board of Revenue and Additional Chief Secretary of Home Committee.

The committee will suggest precautionary measures in case of any natural disasters like earthquake, flood or any other emergency.

UN takes note of terrorism case against Imran Khan

Guterres calls for calm, de-escalation of tensions, and respect for rule of law

UNITED NATIONS: Terrorism charges against former Prime Minister Imran Khan are making international waves. The United Nations (UN) has even taken notice of the terror charges against Imran Khan. According to the details, UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres has called for calm, de-escalation of tensions, and respect for rule of law. "The Secretary-General is aware of the charges brought against former Prime Minister Imran Khan and emphasizes the need for a competent, independent, and impartial legal process," his spokesperson Stephane Dujarric said in response

to a question at the regular briefing at UN Headquarters in New York.

"He (UN chief) urges calm, lowering of tensions, and respect for the rule of law, human rights, and fundamental freedoms," the spokesman added. PTI's official Twitter account also shared the news and criticized the incumbent government. "Notice of the terrorism case filed against Imran Khan by the United Nations. Due to the fascism and vindictive policies of the imported government, Pakistan is facing a backlash all over the world," PTI tweeted. The PTI chief was booked under Section 7 of the Anti-Terrorism Act (punish-

ment for acts of terrorism) regarding his comments at his Islamabad rally on Saturday. According to the First Information Report (FIR), he threatened Additional Sessions Judge Zeba Chaudhry and police officers at a rally in F-9 Park to "terrorise" police officials and the judiciary.

The former premier had also taken exception to Additional District and Sessions Judge Zeba Chaudhry, who had approved his close aide Shahbaz Gill's two-day physical remand at the request of the capital police, and said she should "prepare herself as action would be taken against her".

Terrorism case against Imran is legally worthless: Fawad

Says judiciary failed as global human rights bodies probe Gill's torture

Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: Former information minister and Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leader Fawad Chaudhry has asserted that the terrorism case registered against former premier and party chairman Imran Khan has no legal significance. In an interview with foreign media outlet, the former federal minister said that terrorism case has never been registered against political opponents in the country's history. "Such charges were not imposed on anyone that are being faced by Imran Khan," he added. In response to a question, Fawad Chaudhry said Imran Khan was booked in a case for criticising

the magistrate, Inspector-General of Police (IGP) Islamabad, Deputy Inspector General (DIG) for not notice of the torture of PTI leader Shahbaz Gill.

He further said that the magistrate handed over Imran Khan's Chief of Staff (COS) Shahbaz Gill - who according to him was abducted and tortured - to the police instead of ordering an investigation.

Fawad Chaudhry added that Imran Khan announced to file a case against the magistrate for not taking notice of torture of Shahbaz Gill. "Later, a terrorism case was registered, which has no legal significance." Speaking about Imran Khan, he noted that thousands of people took to street

when the government tried to arrest the former prime minister, terming him the most popular leader of Pakistan. The PTI leader maintained that the 'puppet' government has no legal or moral justification to continue ruling, reiterating the demand of immediate and transparent elections.

He noted that the incumbent prime minister has less majority than Imran Khan in the Parliament. "Can you imagine, a minority is ruling Pakistan currently," he said. Speaking about the inflation, Fawad Chaudhry said that the government has broken the back of the country's middle class. "Inflation is currently at the highest level as compared to the last fifty years," he claimed.

ایس ایل
پرائیویٹ سکولز ایسوسی ایشن اسلام آباد
PRIVATE SCHOOLS ASSOCIATION ISLAMABAD (PSAI)

تمام سکولوں کی انتظامیہ سے اپیل کرتی ہے کہ

سیلاب زدگان بھائیوں کی مدد کریں۔ یہ ہماری قومی ذمہ داری ہے۔ پنجاب، سندھ، کے پی اور بلوچستان ہمارے بازو ہمارے جان

پنجاب، سندھ، کے پی اور بلوچستان کے معصیت زدگان کے لئے عطیات جمع کرنے کی ہم کا آغاز کریں اور کئے آسمان تلے بیٹھے... بے بس... بے کس... سیلاب زدگان بھائیوں کی مدد کرنے میں اپنا کردار ادا کریں

براہ مہربانی بچوں اور اساتذہ سے کپڑے، جوتے، بسز، ادویات، خوراک نقد رقم اکٹھی کر کے PSAI Secretariat کو بھجوائیں تاکہ عطیات سیلاب زدگان تک پہنچائے جاسکیں

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Secretary General PSAI

Promoting Girls Education

MoFEPT's STEAM Pakistan Project inks LoU with GB Govt

To encourage science learning among girls

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: "We want our students, especially our girls to aspire for and excel in 21st-century careers," expressed Mohyuddin Ahmad Wani, Chief Secretary, Gilgit-Baltistan (GB) during the concluding ceremony of the maiden GB Career Festival 2022. This first-of-its-kind four-day national-level career festival was organized by the Government of Gilgit-Baltistan to create awareness among school, college, and university students regarding the most relevant career paths available to them. "Through this effort, we wanted to allow our students to interact with thought leaders and experts from different walks of life, learn from their experiences, and aspire to follow in

their footsteps," added Mr. Wani. More than 16,000 students, with a healthy participation from both girls' and boys' schools, from across the GB province participated in the event.

On the sidelines of the Gilgit-Baltistan Career Festival 2022, a Letter of Understanding (LoU) was also inked between the Education & Special Education Department, GB and the Ministry of Federal Education and Professional Training (MoFEPT) to promote STEAM (i.e., science, technology, engineering, arts, and maths) education at the school level. Secretary of Education, Gilgit Baltistan, Rana Muhammad Saleem Afzal signed the LoU on behalf of the Department.

In April 2022, with financial assistance from the Malala Fund, MoFEPT

initiated a five-year project, STEAM Pakistan to advance secondary school-aged girls' access to STEAM education. The signing of this LoU is in line with the project's mandate to take the modern STEAM learning model to all the 13,000 high schools across Pakistan.

As a first step, MoFEPT, through its STEAM Pakistan initiative, extended support to the GB Career Festival by arranging career talks, speed counseling sessions, and mentoring circles led by STEAM Mentors – inspiring women leaders in STEAM from different cities of Pakistan. The "STEAM Superwomen" who participated in the festival included Dr. Shahana Khurshid, environmental engineer and Professor at LUMS School

of Science and Engineering; Haya Fatima Iqbal, Academy and two-time Emmy Award-winning filmmaker and Professor at Habib University; Rishm Saifullah, principal architect and visiting faculty member at BNU Lahore; and Shamim Rajani, tech entrepreneur and Founder of Genetech and CodeGirlsPk. "The sheer presence of the STEAM Mentors at the festival opened new vistas for the young people who got an opportunity to interact with them. I am grateful to my colleagues from the STEAM Pakistan project and we welcome their contribution for the benefit of the students of Gilgit-Baltistan," commented Mr. Wani.

"Our objective was to provide young people, especially young girls with access to Pakistani role models

UAE wants to further expand cooperation with Pakistan

LAHORE: United Arab Emirates (UAE) Ambassador to Pakistan Hamad Obaid Ibrahim Saleem Al Zaabi called on Governor Punjab Muhammad Balighur Rehman and discussed measures to promote bilateral trade and enhance mutual cooperation in other fields during a meeting at the Governor's House here on Tuesday.

Speaking on the occasion, the governor said Pakistan's relations with the UAE are built on strong foundations based on mutual love and respect.

He said Pakistan values its ties with the UAE in various fields, including health and education.

He thanked the UAE ambassador for supporting Pakistan's stance on Kashmir issue. He urged the need to enhance exchange of trade delegations between the two countries.

Balighur Rehman said exchange of business delegations between the two countries would bolster trade and economic relations.

UAE Ambassador Hamad Obaid Ibrahim Saleem Al-Zaabi said Pakistani community had been playing an important role in the economy and development of the UAE for years.

He said relations between the two countries are an example for the region, adding that there is need to further promote trade with Pakistan.

The ambassador said Pakistani investors should start working on joint ventures for investment in various sectors in the UAE.

He added that the UAE wants to further expand cooperation with Pakistan in various fields, including health, education, agriculture, biotechnology and food security. APP

Pak Navy rescue, relief operation continues in flood hit areas of Sindh

Our Correspondent

KARACHI: The Pakistan Navy wide scale Humanitarian Assistance & Disaster Relief (HADR) operations continue in far-flung rural areas of Sindh including Sujawal, Jati, Said Pur, Sahto Goth, Lothio Goth, Jamali Goth, Mallah Goth, Panhwar Goth, Urki, Uthal, Lakhra, Mureed Khoso, Pir Jhalu, Keti Bandar, Shah Bandar, Chuhar Jamali, Ghotki, Pir Dino Shah, Saindad Alyani and Mir Pur Khas.

Pakistan Navy personnel rescued locals stranded inside flooded homes and shifted them to safer locations, said a news release on Tuesday.

De-flooding operations are paced up in different areas by PN rescue teams. Moreover, free medical camps have also been established at Jati and Pir Dino Shah to provide first aid and free medical facilities to the locals. Dedicated teams of doctors and paramedical staff are providing treatment and free medicines to aggrieved populace in these areas.

Pakistan Navy troops distributed ration bags, fresh drinking water and household items including medicines to affected populace.

Pakistan Navy, alongwith civil administration and various philanthropist organizations is providing continuous assistance to the flood stricken people while transitioning to rehabilitation operation in the worst affected areas. Relief operation in Sindh is a practical manifestation of PN's resolve to extend all out support to fellow countrymen in the hour of need.

Acting Governor, CM Balochistan visit PDMA

QUETTA: Acting Governor Balochistan Mir Jan Muhammad Jamali, Chief Minister Balochistan Mir Abdul Quddus Bizenjo and Commander 12 Corps Lt Gen Asif Ghafoor visited Provincial Disaster Management Authority (PDMA) on Tuesday.

Adviser to the CM for Home and Tribal Affairs, Mir Zia Langu and Chief Secretary Balochistan Abdul Aziz Uqaili were also present on this occasion.

PDMA Chief Naseer Ahmad Nasir gave a detailed briefing to all the visiting dignitaries on the latest weather situation and ongoing relief activities in different areas.

On the occasion, Acting Governor Balochistan said according to the Meteorological Department, the series of stormy rains would continue, "so we should be ready at all times to deal with any emergency situation," and the relevant institutions and departments should ensure the availability of all necessary relief equipment and machinery at various places.

He said the recent monsoon rains and floods caused massive loss of lives and property across the province, adding that in this hour of difficulty, the people and the government should play active role to help the victims.

"There is an urgent need to keep PDMA's control room and call center alert and active at all times to reduce casualties and losses", he said.

Mir Jan appreciated the tireless efforts of the Pakistan Army and the district administration in carrying out relief activities and restoring communication links.

Flood wreaks havoc

DERA ALLAH YAR: Gypsy people wade through flood water with their belongings at Rabi area near Sindh-Balochistan National Highway, in out-skirt area.



Photo: Online

TikTok, Zindagi Trust launch digital safety workshops

Ongoing partnership aims to educate up to 3,000 students, parents and teachers on digital safety

Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: TikTok and Zindagi Trust have initiated a series of workshops across their network of government schools in Pakistan in a bid to create awareness around digital safety amongst students, teachers and parents. This initiative will see up to 3,000 students, teachers and parents attend day-long workshops to learn about safe usage of the internet, with a focus on social media. There will also be separate workshops for teachers and parents that will seek to educate them on how they can ensure the safety of youngsters on the internet.

Thousands of young internet users from grades 7-9 will be able to learn about best practices of internet usage and how they can become responsible digital citizens and cultivate a safe online community across the nation. The workshops will cover a range of topics including navigating online safety issues such as



cyber bullying, catfishing and false information. There will be detailed modules on the harmful behaviours prevalent on social media, ways to share appropriate information, identifying fake news and misinformation and reporting mechanisms to report illicit and harmful content on social media.

Content for the workshops was designed based on the findings of the

student surveys that were conducted prior to their commencement.

The surveys helped identify the major challenges students were facing on the internet, including issues like bullying and online harassment.

The workshops also aim to educate teachers and parents on how to use safety features on platforms like TikTok to ensure their children remain safe on social media.

KE removes over 5,000 Illegal Connections

Staff Reporter

KARACHI: In furtherance of its commitment to eliminate power theft, K-Electric conducted as many as 762 anti-power theft drives across the city in the first two weeks of August and removed 5,384 illegal kunda connections from its service areas. These kunda-removal drives that took place in different parts of the city, including Surjani, New Karachi, Gulistan-e-Johar, Orangi, Liaquatabad, Nazimabad, Bin Qasim, and Malir, among others, unhooked illegal wires weighing over 5,700 kilograms that were illegally connected to KE's infrastructure and were being used to steal electricity worth millions.

Director Communications and KE's Spokesperson Imran Rana commented on the matter, "K-Electric strongly condemns these miscreants who use illegal connections to energize their premises. Not only they are putting the lives and properties of the masses at peril but also trying to steal the right of our valuable consumers who access the electricity the legal way and pay for it. We continue to conduct these anti-kunda drives every day and remove thousands of illegal connections but unfortunately these are restored within a few hours of removal. However, we would like to assure that we would stop at nothing to crackdown against these culprits. It is to make it loud and clear that K-Electric is dealing such lawbreakers with an iron hand, and any act of stealing electricity can lead to the penalty of PKR 10 million and imprisonment up to 03 years." The spokesperson further stated, "Power infrastructure carries dangerously high voltage electricity and is installed by trained personnel in compliance with rigorous safety parameters. Any tampering with the network by an unauthorized person can lead up to serious consequences, including fatalities. Kundas also weigh down and damage electrical utility wires, which make them prone to short-circuiting, fire-eruption, and faults in power supply system that cause inconvenience to the consumers."

Magical voice behind 'Andher', Faraz Haider

Makes a comeback after 8 years with a new single 'Doob Gaye'

Staff Reporter

KARACHI: Pakistani singer, songwriter, and music composer, Faraz Haider, has released his new music video by the name of 'Doob Gaye' after a hiatus of 8 years. Out now on multiple music platforms, this enchanting music video with its magical melody, coupled with the thrilling presence of actress and model Sabrina Naqvi, warrants its smashing comeback into the Pakistani music scene.

Doob Gaye is a musical composition by Faraz Haider himself, who has also directed and produced the music video. The screenplay, with exceptional cinematography by Imraam Sheraz, showcases the complexities of thin lines between friendship and love in relationships. The song is a story of one-sided love between two best friends and the bond between a pet dog and his human. It beautifully portrays the deep

contrast between both the relationships, one between a man and a woman, and the other between a man and his beloved pet, and weaves a bittersweet lesson of destiny's hand, priorities, and compromises.

Faraz Haider's scintillating voice in Doob Gaye produces the sound of a unique fusion of pain and pop, and that's what sets this latest single apart from the rest in the music industry today. Talking about

his newest endeavor, Faraz Haider stated, "A lot has changed in the music industry in Pakistan in the past eight years. But our audiences are the same – music savvy, melody-seeking, and so appreciative of our local sound. The journey towards creating Doob Gaye has been inspiring and nerve-wrecking all at the same time. But now we are back, and I look forward to bringing more and more beautiful melodies for our people.

SECP organizes webinar on Stewardship Guidelines

Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: The Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan (SECP) held a webinar today on recently introduced "Stewardship Guidelines" with institutional investors and other stakeholders in the capital market.

In her opening remarks, SECP Commissioner Sadia Khan emphasized the role of institutional investors as stewards of capital and encouraged actions which promote sustainability in terms of environment, societal and governance (ESG) aspects.

The webinar discussion invited a panel of SECP officials, professionals, and industry leaders. Speakers included JS Investments Limited CEO Iffat Mankani, Jubilee Life Insurance Head of Research Sultan Mehmood, and SECP Additional

Joint Director Sabahat Ul Ain.

During the interactive session, the panelists shed light on measures being taken for improving the overall capital stewardship landscape in Pakistan and how SECP's stewardship guidelines facilitate maturity of capital markets in this regard.

During her concluding remarks, SECP Executive Director Khaliida Habib emphasized the need to promote long-term value creation and responsible engagement of institutional investors with the investee companies.

The SECP intends to conduct a post regulatory impact analysis in the future to assess implementation of Stewardship Guidelines. Attendees appreciated SECP for organizing the webinar and called for continuing such initiatives of public engagement and awareness.

NTDC Board of Directors approves increase in salaries

Staff Reporter

LAHORE: A meeting of NTDC Board of Director held on Monday at Wapda House Lahore to approve increase in salary and pensions of the employees in line with the notification issued by the Ministry of Finance.

According to the notification, increase in pay and allowances will take effect from July 1, 2022. The 15% increase has been made on the basic salary drawn by employees in

2017. Ten per cent ad hoc allowances given to the employees during 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019 and 2021 will now be merged to the basic salaries of the employees, which will form new pay scales 2022.

According to the spokesman of the NTDC, the retired employees of the company have also been allowed 10 percent increase in their pensions from April 1, 2022. The Board also approved disparity reduction allowance for employees falling in grade 20, 21 and 22.

Islamabad
23° - 38° Clear

SERVICES

Namaz Timings

Fajr	4:07 am
Zohr	12:11 pm
Asr	4:52 pm
Maghrib	6:45 pm
Isha	8:14 pm

EMERGENCY

Rescue (Police)	15
Bomb Disposal	15
Fire Services Rawalpindi/ Islamabad	1122 & 16
Emergency Ambulance	1122 & 4451122
Motorway Police	9266044
Motorway Police	9270601-20

Women Police Stations

Islamabad	9222596
Rawalpindi	9270601-20

ENQUIRY

Edhi Ambulance	115
PIA Flight Info	114
PIA Cargo	9280979
Railway Inquiry	117
Railway Exchange	9270831-5
WASA Rawalpindi	5555489
CAA	9281092

HOSPITALS

CMH	561111
MH	561116
MH	561116
Cantt Hospital	9270907-11
DHQ	5556311-4
RGH	9290301-7
Holy Family	9290322-7
PIMS	9261170-79
Polyclinic	9218300-09
Shifa International	4603666

DEPARTMENTS

CDA	9221334-43
CDA	9208301-04
Met Office	9250360-6
RDA	5555864
TMA	5770886
Cantonment Board	9270151-3
Islamabad Metropolitan Corporation	9209224
Potohar Town	9209224
Rawal Town	5773343

COMPLAINTS

Water Tanker Service	E-7, F-10 & F-11 9204654
G-5, G-6, G-7, G-8, 9203883	
G-9, G-10, G-11, G-12, H-8 9266316	
Wapda Islamabad	9217579-80
Sui Gas Complaint	119, 9272249
Wasa Water Tank	
Rawalpindi	0331-5022125

Heavy floods caused humanitarian disaster: Sherry Rehman

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Climate Change Senator Sherry Rehman, during her remarks in the briefing on current flood emergency in the country by NDMA, stressed the need for immediate humanitarian and rescue efforts to rehabilitate the aggrieved and flood-hit populations. This was an urgent meeting called to reassess damage done by recurring and unprecedented floods and to apprise development partners and donors of the criticality of the crisis.

Calling attention to the current climate crisis in the country, Minister Rehman said, "Right now we are in 7th spell of a torrential monsoon that has left thousands homeless, 830 dead and 1348 injured. From Balochistan, the monsoon system has moved to Sindh where 30 districts are under water. The magnitude of it can be assessed from the fact that it has rained more than 395% in Sindh and 379% in Balochistan above the average rainfall. It is a climate catastrophe of epic scale, bringing in its wake the humanitarian crisis that could well match the magnitude of the big flood that was witnessed in 2010. At this point both sides of the Indus are flooded in Sindh which is the current epicentre of the calamity.

World's silence over worst HR violations in IIOJK lamentable

Mushaal says denying Yasin right to appearance in court, lying on Mirwais' house arrest shameful

Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: Chairperson of Peace and Culture Organisation (PCO), Mushaal Hussein Mullick lashed out at Hindutva regime for constant denial of the fundamental right to Yasin Malik to appear physically in courts and lying on the house arrest of Mirwais Umar Farooq. Mushaal, who is wife of Yasin Malik, said in a statement on Tuesday that Narendra Modi-led fascist India was so scared of the Lion of Kashmir so much that he was denied the fundamental right to appear physically in courts. She stated that Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front Chairman, Muhammad Yasin Malik demanded physical appearance during the hearing in a case registered against him in a Jammu court about the killing four Indian Air Force (IAF) personnel in 1990.



However, she said that coward Indian kangaroo courts refused to entertain his legal, constitutional and fundamental rights, which was shameful and condemnable. Talking about Hurriyat Leader Mirwais Umer Farooq, Mushaal said that fascist Modi government just got caught lying red handed to the media that the senior

Hurriyat Leader was not house arrested and was a free man. The Chairperson said that what a nasty joke as the media exposed the dirty face of the notorious regime that kept the senior Kashmiri leader in detention. She went on to say that the Indian brutal forces used all inhuman and fascist acts to silence the dissenting voices. However, Mushaal made it clear that the Kashmir freedom movement entered into a defining moment, hence nothing could dampen the courage of brave Kashmiris. She said that they would take the freedom struggle to its logical end. However, she lamented the double-standard of the world and human rights organizations which observed criminal silence over the world's worst human rights violations in the Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir.

Encroachment

ISLAMABAD: Vendors displayed shops in the middle of main Aabpara Market as showing encroachment and needs the attention for concern authorities, in Federal Capital.



Photo: Online

Radio Pakistan organizes a mehfil-e-mushaira

Dosti channel is playing role of a bridge in strengthening the friendship between Pakistan and China

Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: A mehfil-e-mushaira was organized at National Broadcasting House, Islamabad in connection with Diamond Jubilee celebrations of Independence Day of Pakistan. Prominent poets from across the country attended the event and presented their love and devotion for the country in the form of their mesmerizing verses. Those who participated included Iftikhar Arif, Dr Ehsaan Aali, Yasmin Hameed, Qayyum Tahir, Anjum Salkeemi, Rakhshanda Naveed, Parveen Tahir, Ahmed Farid and Irfan Jameel. They termed the event a continuity of Radio Pakistan's noble tradition of promoting literary activities. In his address on the occasion as chief guest, Director General Radio Pakistan Sohail Ali Khan said literary activities are hallmark of Radio Pakistan. He reiterated the resolve to continue these activities in the future. Meanwhile, Director General Radio Pakistan Sohail Ali Khan also visited FM



98 Dosti channel, Islamabad studio on Tuesday. He reviewed the performance of different sections of the channel. Speaking on the occasion, the Director General said it is playing role of a bridge in strengthening the friendship between Pakistan and China. He underscored the need for extending the network of Dosti channel to other

cities of Pakistan so that the message of Pak-China friendship can be more effectively imparted at a larger scale. Sohail Ali Khan said Radio Pakistan will not only continue this journey of friendship with China Media Group but will further cement it. He said this platform should be utilized to further beef up the existing political, social and cultural traditions of both countries.

Health Corner

Poor heart health predicts premature brain aging

ISLAMABAD: By estimating people's brain age from MRI scans using machine learning, a team led by UCL researchers has identified multiple risk factors for a prematurely ageing brain. They found that worse cardiovascular health at age 36 predicted a higher brain age later in life, while men also tended to have older brains than women of the same age, as they report in The Lancet Healthy Longevity. A higher brain age was associated with slightly worse scores on cognitive tests, and also predicted increased brain shrinkage (atrophy) over the following two years, suggesting it could be an important clinical marker for people at risk of cognitive decline or other brain-related ill health. Lead author Professor Jonathan Schott (UCL Dementia Research Centre, UCL Queen Square Institute of Neurology) said: "We found that despite people in this study all being of very similar real ages, there was a very wide variation in how old the computer model predicted their brains to be. We hope this technique could one day be a useful tool for identifying people at risk of accelerated ageing, so that they may be offered early, targeted prevention strategies to improve their brain health." The researchers applied an established MRI based machine learning model to estimate the brain age of members of the Alzheimer's Research UK-funded Insight 46 study, led by Professor Schott. Insight 46 study members are drawn from the Medical Research Council National Survey of Health and Development (NSHD) 1946 British Birth Cohort. As the participants had been a part of the study throughout their lives, the researchers were able to compare their current brain ages to various factors from across the life course. The participants were all between 69 and 72 years old, but their estimated brain ages ranged from 46 to 93. The researchers were able to explain roughly one third of the variability in brain age by reviewing various factors from across the life course. People with worse cardiovascular health at age 36 or 69 had worse brain health, as did those with increased cerebrovascular disease on MRI (relating to blood flow and blood vessels in the brain). This aligns with a previous study led by Professor Schott finding that high blood pressure at age 36 predicted poorer brain health late in life. The study did not identify any associations between childhood cognitive function, education level or socioeconomic status, and a prematurely ageing brain. The researchers also found that higher brain age was associated with higher concentration of neurofilament light protein (NFL) in the blood. NFL elevation is thought to arise due to nerve cell damage and is increasingly being recognised as a useful marker of neurodegeneration. Dr Sara Iamarisio, Head of Research at Alzheimer's Research UK, said: "The Insight 46 study is helping reveal more about the complex relationship between the different factors influencing people's brain health throughout their life. Using machine learning, researchers in this study have uncovered yet more evidence that poorer heart health in midlife is linked to greater brain shrinkage in later life. We're incredibly grateful to the dedicated group of individuals who have contributed to research their entire lives making this work possible." (Courtesy: Science Daily)

Shahdat Imam Zain Ul Abideen conference held at PAC

Staff Reporter

RAWALPINDI: Hazrat Imam Zainul Abideen Martyrdom Conference was organized in Punjab Arts Council in collaboration with Central Imam Hussain Council and Daira Literary Organization. The conference was presided over by prominent religious scholar Dr. Ghazanfar Mehdi. Addressing the conference, Dr. Ghazanfar Mehdi said that the jihad of Imam Zainul Abideen is no less than the martyrs of Karbala. After the tragedy of Karbala, the grieving caravan of Ahl al-Bayt, including Masturat and small children, traveled 1605 miles from Karbala to Syria via Kufa. Senior member of the Islamic Ideological Council, Allama Mufti Kifayat Hussain Naqvi, while speaking online, said that Hazrat Zainul Abidin had to pass through 65 cities and 234 markets along with the oppressed caravan. Rashida Nabil Hussain Chairperson Baba Farid Academy said that Hazrat Syed Sajjad's sermon in Darbar Yazid became a golden chapter in the history of Islam Hazrat Imam Zainul Abidin is the biggest metaphor of right against oppression and falsehood at the global level. Ehsan Kabria, Allama Izhar Bukhari, Zildar Syed Ahsan Shah, Makhdoom Syed Zakir Hussain Shah Sajjada Nashin Bari Imam, Allama Ayaz Zaheer Hashmi, Secretary General Jamiat Al-Mashai-kh Pakistan, Allama Saleem Haider, Allama Agha Nair Abbas, Sabtain Raza Lodhi, Allama Hussain Ahmad, Pir Younis Shahzad, Muhammad Rafiq Mughal, Naem Akram Qureshi, Syed Sajjad Hussain Shamsi, Akhlaq Zaidi also pay tribute to Imam Zaib Ul Abideen.

Capt. Usman assumes charge as CDA chairman

ISLAMABAD: Captain (Retd) Muhammad Usman Younis, Grade-20 Officer of Pakistan Administrative Services on Tuesday assumed the charge as Chairman of Capital Development Authority (CDA). According to a CDA spokesman, on the very first day in office, Captain Usman inspected the under-construction Margallah Avenue and directed the formations concerned to complete the project as soon as possible. He also inaugurated Trail 7 in Margallah Hills adjoining Sector C-12. The new CDA chairman, in his remarks on the occasion, said it was his top most priority to make the capital city more beautiful and green. He directed the officials that the ongoing development projects in the capital territory should be completed timely as no delay would be tolerated in that regard. He said that his office would observe an open door policy to facilitate the general public. Capt. Muhammad Usman Younis previously served in Punjab at various important positions, including Secretary Primary Health, Director General of Punjab Food Authority and Commissioner Lahore. APP

17 teachers from Beaconhouse complete Leadership Certificate

Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: Seventeen teachers from Beaconhouse, one of the largest private educational networks in the world educating over 315,000 students, have successfully completed the inaugural International Subject Leadership Certificate by the UK-based Professional Training Institute. The 18-month accreditation is a modular course that allows participants to work with experienced practitioners to design exceptional lessons. It aims to develop subject leaders through the design and delivery of challenging Schemes of Work (SOW). Teachers enrolled in the course reflected on the current context of their subject within their school curriculum, considered what makes successful subject leadership, and explored the course success criteria during the online launch meeting. They gathered evidence to help reflect upon and illustrate the impact of their work on pupils, colleagues and

themselves. During the course, participants were assessed in peer-to-peer professional interviews during an online review meeting, to discuss and reflect upon the success and impact of their work. The Professional Training Institute is a UK education charity supporting teachers at all stages of their career to develop specialist subject knowledge. It believes that all children, regardless of their background or ability, are entitled to a rich education delivered by passionate and knowledgeable teachers. Commenting on the accomplishment, Ali Ahmed Khan, Chief Operating Officer, Beaconhouse said, "This has been a great learning experience for our hardworking teachers. At Beaconhouse, we prioritise teacher training and believe in continuous development that supports them in facilitating effective learning in the classroom. I congratulate all the Beaconhouse teachers for completing the certification and look forward to seeing them implement their learnings."

Sana Saleem Agha, Omema Hassan and Saima Nazli are among the Beaconhouse teachers who completed the certificate. Sana Saleem Agha said, "It was great to observe that my students felt more positive about their ability to read and have improved reading skills. They have shown great confidence in speaking too. It was observed that they raised and answered questions about the characters, settings, events, etc. from stories easily. Hence, the designed schemes of work had a significant impact on my students." Omema Hassan said, "I am happy to be part of this unique experience where I felt empowered to choose my own focus, design my own SOW, implement it, and plan further. Learning, unlearning and relearning has made me a reflective practitioner and a better teacher. I now keep on improving my teaching strategies." Saima Nazli said, "My students have developed a love for reading after the pandemic had drastically deteriorated their

reading skills. Furthermore, the SOW helped to develop and regain their confidence in public speaking." Chris Pope, Co-Director, Professional Training Institute said, "The Professional Training Institute is delighted to congratulate these teachers on their incredible hard work and effort to complete our International Subject Leadership Course. It takes a lot of dedication to complete this course and we couldn't be more thrilled to celebrate their incredible achievement. It is great to see that not only does this help teachers improve their confidence and skills in the classroom, but also translates to the students feeling more inspired." Beaconhouse and the Professional Training Institute aim to inspire teachers and school leaders to become more effective, enthusiastic, and influential. Their sustainable approach to professional development helps teachers become experts in their subjects and pass on a love of learning to their students.

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IS Rapists freed

This is how justice ends for Indian Muslims?

Apoorvanand

It was Independence Day for rapists and murderers. On August 15, 11 convicts serving life terms for having committed mass murder and gang-raping Muslim women in the Indian state of Gujarat in 2002 were released. The state government had ordered their remission. It is not a coincidence that their release came on a day when India marked 75 years of freedom from colonialism. The men were garlanded when they stepped out of prison. Bilkis Bano, the lone survivor among a group of Muslims who were chased and attacked with lethal weapons as part of a pogrom against the community, received the news of the release of her assailants with shock and disbelief. "How can justice for any woman end like this?" she asked in a statement.

Bilkis, who was five months pregnant at the time, was among three women who were gang-raped by the convicts now set free. Her daughter Salcha's head was smashed before her, killing her

instantly. She was three years old. In all, 14 people were murdered in the attack. From that moment, Bilkis fought against the odds and the might of the Gujarat state government then led by current Prime Minister Narendra Modi and still headed by his Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) — for justice. The local police officer, who registered her case, after she walked almost naked from the scene of the crime, distorted her account to make the case weaker, according to the Central Bureau of Investigation, India's premier investigative agency.

Now, justice is being trampled upon. After one of the convicts appealed to the Supreme Court for release, the top court of the land asked the Gujarat government to act in keeping with the state's remission policy in 2002. Using holes in that policy, a Gujarat government-appointed committee loaded with BJP members recommended remission.

Never mind that Bilkis, who lives in close proximity to the homes of the released convicts, must now fear for her life, and the safety of her family, once more. Why was this done on Inde-

pendence Day? The symbolism is inescapable, especially since Modi had only hours earlier spoken about the need to respect women, in a speech to the nation. It is inconceivable that the Gujarat government could have pressed ahead with the release of the convicts without the consent of the prime minister's office and the office of the home minister, Amit Shah, who is Modi's most trusted lieutenant. Shah held the home office during Modi's time as Gujarat chief minister too.

The message to Bilkis and all those who held her hands while she fought for justice is clear: This is how battles for justice will end in Modi's India; that crimes against Muslims even mass murders and gang rapes will be treated lightly. Sadly, none of this is surprising. After all, it was under Modi's rule in Gujarat that Bilkis first had to run for her life and hide from the state machinery. It was Modi's government in the state that fought her as she battled for justice. Going back further, it is important to remember that Vinayak Damodar Savarkar, one of the ideological gurus of the ruling dispensa-

tion, had once justified rape as a legitimate weapon that could deter Muslims from doing the same to Hindu women. It is also not a coincidence that calls for the murder of Muslims and rape of Muslim women have been given by so-called Hindu religious leaders in recent months. Instead of punishing them, Indian authorities have targeted those who exposed this hate speech, such as fact-checker Mohammad Zubair, who was arrested on spurious grounds.

Equally worrying is the role of some bodies that had once stood by Bilkis like the Supreme Court. In June, activist Teesta Setalvad was arrested after the Supreme Court itself suggested that her pursuit of justice for the victims of the Gujarat pogrom was a conspiracy for which action should be taken against her. If the message to Muslims is to not expect justice, the signal to the BJP's supporters is that they are immune from punishment for any crime. That in fact, any allegations that a Hindu has committed a crime against a Muslim must be a conspiracy irrespective of the evidence available. Already, that is the claim

being peddled by some regarding the 11 men released in the Bilkis case.

The remission of their sentences has sparked outrage in Indian civil society, with most opposition parties criticising the move. Interestingly, the newest contender for power in Gujarat, the Aam Aadmi Party which rules in the national capital, Delhi, and in the state of Punjab has maintained a studied silence. Is it choosing political expedience over justice? The BJP, through decisions like this which should be abhorrent to all sensitive people is trying to make its constituents, who are mostly Hindu, partners in this perversity. They must speak up against this release. The implications for India's 200 million Muslims are even direr: Justice, even if secured as an exception, can be undone at any moment. Even on a day when they, like other Indians, are celebrating the nation they have always embraced, but that is now turning its back on them.

The writer teaches Hindi at the University of Delhi and writes literary and cultural criticism. Courtesy Al Jazeera

Floods-Natural calamity

The ongoing rains' spell in the country has played havoc in the country especially hit hard in low lying areas Sindh, Balochistan where thousands of houses and animals have been swept away by the flood-water. Moreover hundreds of people have also lost their precious lives in this natural calamity which has destroyed the national economy badly.

Chhachhro received maximum 117mm rainfall as northern and central districts of Sindh being lashed by heavy monsoon rains. According to figures shared by the Pakistan Meteorological Department (PMD), Islamkot received 53mm rain, while Shaheed Benazirabad 30mm rainfall. In a spell of above normal monsoon rains Nagarparkar in Thar received 20mm rain, Diplo 18mm, Badin 08mm and Tando Jam one mm rainfall, according to the Met Office.

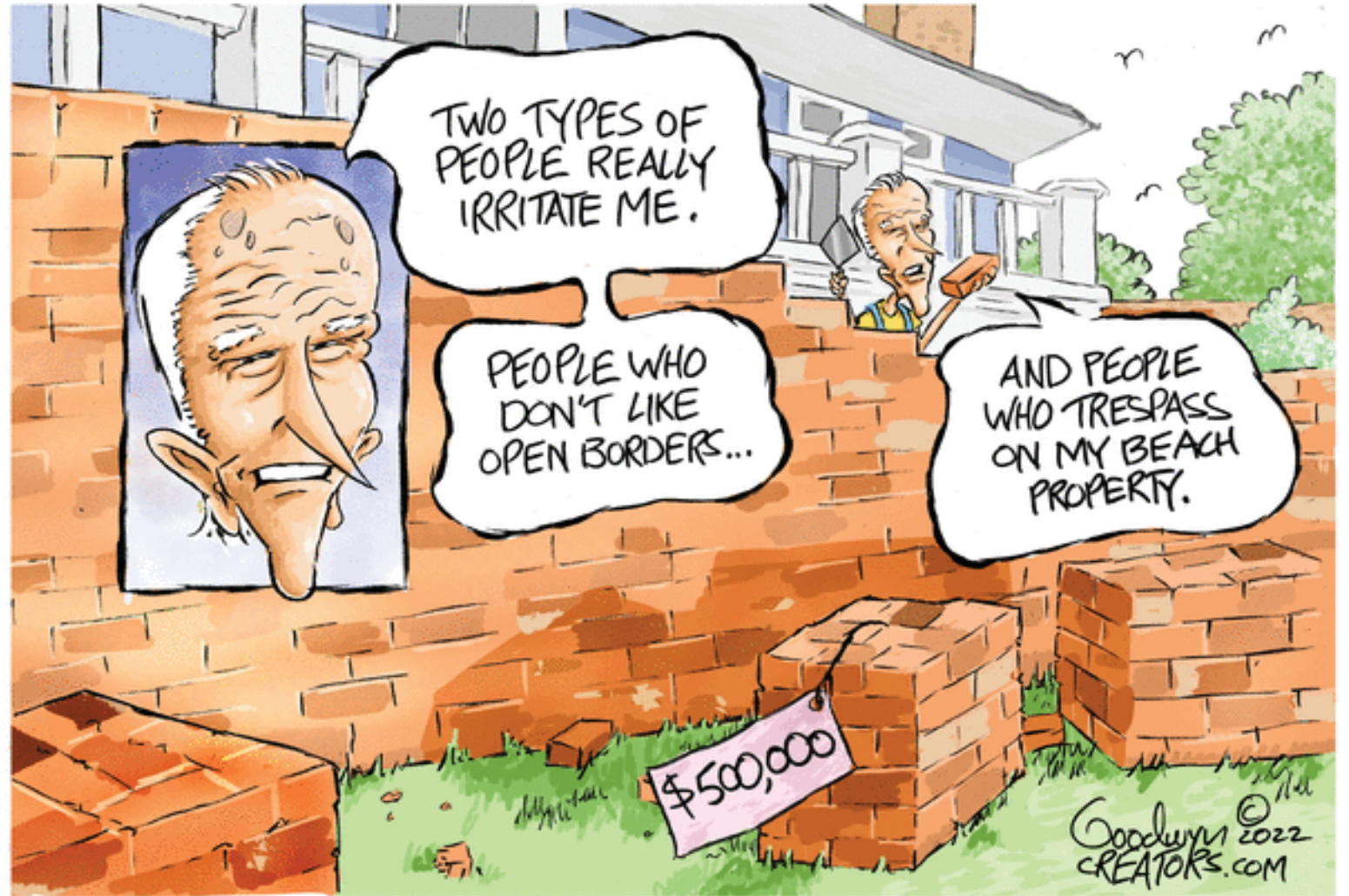
Indus River will be in high flood at Sukkur Barrage on Tuesday after the water in the river surged to high flood at Guddu barrage, citing water level recorded at various gauge stations. The water level in the river has surged by 50,000 cusecs at Guddu and Sukkur barrage during last 24 hours. Food-water is pressing barrages and protective dykes along the river.

The railway track has submerged at another spot on the Jamshoro-Manjhand-Sann railway line amid the spell of heavy rainfall in the region. Railway traffic has been suspended on the line from Kotri to Dadu and Larkana as Sindh being lashed by above normal monsoon rains. Floodwater has washed away railway track at three different spots and railway traffic has been suspended for six days now.

Floodwater entered 220KV Dera Murad Jamali grid station in Nasirabad, Balochistan. The supply of electricity to three districts of Nasirabad including, Jaffarabad, Jhal Magsi and Nasirabad has been disconnected from the last 48 hours. The problems of flood-hit people have doubled due to suspension of electricity. The power disconnection has also created shortage of potable drinking water in the area. Pakistan Army troops are carrying out rescue and relief operations in flood-hit areas of Sindh, Balochistan, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Punjab.

At least 49 people have lost their lives after torrential rains caused flash floods that wreaked havoc in Punjab, prompting authorities to declare all flooded areas of the province calamity-hit. According to details, 51 union councils and 309 villages of six districts were affected by flash floods. At least 49 people lost their lives and 606 were injured in six districts of Punjab — Rajanpur, Dera Ghazi Khan, Mianwali, Muzaffargarh, Sialkot and Layyah. The Provincial Disaster Management Authority (PDMA), in its report, stated that the flash floods affected over 0.3 million people and completely damaged 17,277 houses. The floods also damaged a total of 69 schools and seven health centres.

A total of 58 people have been reported dead and 92 injured in the Sukkur division of Sindh amid heavy rainfall and floods in the province. According to a report regarding the devastations, the incessant rainfall and floods have caused, over 5,000 houses have been damaged due to the rain. While 805 homes were completely demolished, the report said. The report added that most deaths were reported in the Khairpur district of the Sukkur division. A total of 47 people have been reported dead in Khairpur district.



Europe pays climate change price

Mohammed Almezel

Just when the world thought it was finally out of the woods from coronavirus, 'mother nature' struck again — this time in the form of drought and in the heart of Europe — probably the worst in half a millennium. These headlines are frightening, almost out of a fictional disaster movie. "Europe battles water shortages as severe drought sweeps the continent," says the Financial Times. "Europe's rivers run dry as scientists warn drought could be worst in 500 years: Crops, power plants, barge traffic, industry and fish populations devastated by parched waterways," says the Guardian. Record high temperatures and the lack of rainfall have left most European countries struggling with droughts this summer. Experts warn that the drought will have immediate and long-term devastating effects on agriculture and food security, industrial production, health and water supplies. Climate change is in play in its most destructive ways, shall we say?

That is exactly what the European Drought Observatory says. In its latest release, it said the drought "threatens 60 per cent" of Europe, including the UK, "exacerbated by climate-change driven record heat across Europe this summer." There is also an "increased fire danger due to the lack of rain and the resulting dry vegetation, combined with high temperatures," the European Union's Copernicus Climate Change Service says, noting that wildfires continue to burn across Europe. In England, the past July was the driest since 1935. A picture in the Daily Telegraph told the story: it is of a sign outside a popular supermarket that says

customers cannot buy more than three 500ml bottles of water for the sake of other customers! Municipalities across the land banned outdoor hoses.

The French government set up a crisis team to tackle what it described as a "historic drought" that has left more than 100 municipalities short of drinking water. French Prime Minister Elizabeth Borne has issued an official stark warning: "This drought is the most severe recorded in our country." In France and other parts of Europe, famed rivers, where people tend to spend nice quality times in the summer and move goods via freight ships, are being reduced to trickles.

The Drought Climate Services in Italy said that last month was "the driest July in the country since 1800." And things will only get worse as "the drought persists and months pass without rain." In the Netherlands, Minister of Infrastructure and Water Management Mark Harbers called on everyone to "shower quicker and not to wash their cars or water the garden," as the country declared last Wednesday "an official water shortage." And in far away Mexico, the drought's impact is being felt by many vulnerable communities. Water has become a rare commodity in the north of the country. Millions of people in the city of Monterrey today lack drinking water. The authorities designated the water shortage as a matter of national security.

We cannot say that Europe had it coming. But the rise of the right in most European countries with conspicuous anti-climate agendas, similar to those of Donald Trump or may have been inspired by him, has left the continent vulnerable to the impact of the global warming that disrupted weather patterns and led to extreme weather conditions such as

floods and drought. These weather conditions, brought out by climate change, "are projected to affect availability and distribution of rainfall, snowmelt, river flows and groundwater, and further deteriorate water quality," a report by the United Nations warned exactly a year ago.

It said that more floods and severe droughts are predicted. And the changes in water availability will certainly impact health and food security and "have already proven to trigger refugee dynamics and political instability." Another UN report said that "around 74 per cent of natural disasters between 2001 and 2018 were water-related, including droughts and floods." The frequency and intensity of such disasters are only expected to increase with climate change.

Today, it is Europe that suffers from water shortage — with all its advanced system and innovative technology. Just let us imagine the devastating results of such a calamity on less developed countries.

When the Covid-19 hit China in late 2019 and became a global pandemic by the first two months of 2020, the world came together in its efforts to defeat the pathogen. Urgent measures and rich-to-poor aid helped humanity overcome the deadliest virus in recent times. The virus has so far killed 6.5 million people worldwide. Climate change is definitely a bigger threat. It has the ability, through its multifaceted impacts, to wipe life out on this planet. History says mother nature had done that before. We are literally killing the planet. And, through its complex mechanism and absolute power, it is killing us back. The key word is climate change.

The writer is senior analyst and Editor at Large. Courtesy Gulf News

Sugary drinks sweet poison

Obesity has emerged as a global health problem. According to WHO estimates, 1.6 billion adults worldwide are overweight and at least 400 million are obese. According to health experts, overweight and obesity are associated with heart and related diseases, high blood pressure, type 2 diabetes and is a major cause of some types of cancer. The situation in Pakistan is even worse. 41.3% of adults in Pakistan are obese or overweight and 37% suffer from high blood pressure. Overweight and obesity among women of reproductive age increased from 28 percent to 38 percent from 2011 to 2018. In this period, the prevalence of obesity in children under 5 years of age has doubled, which is a major cause of many diseases besides type 2 diabetes. The report of International Diabetes Federation for 2021 alarming data shows that Pakistan is the third largest country of type 2 diabetes worldwide with more than 3.3 million cases and this number has increased from 19.2 million to 33.3 million in just two years.

Pakistan is number 1 in the world with fastest increase in diabetes. According to WHO, non-communicable diseases (NCDs) caused more than 800,000 deaths in Pakistan in 2016, and more than 400,000 deaths were due to diabetes and its complications. 1100 lives are lost every day due to diabetes. If the costs of these diseases are estimated, the cost of obesity in 2015 was estimated at 428 billion Pakistani rupees and the cost of diabetes in 2021 was more than 2640 million US dollars. We need to understand how sugary drinks are a sweet poison. According to health experts, one of the main causes of obesity, diabetes, heart disease and many types of cancer is excessive consumption of sugar, and the most consumption of sugar is in the form of sweet drinks, because one serving of 250 ml of sweet drinks contains 7 to 9 teaspoons of sugar.

These sugary drinks provide the body with 150 calories but contain no nutrients. One does not feel full after consuming them like you feel after a solid meal. This increases the risk of weight gain as well as type II of diabetes, heart disease, high blood pressure and others. Additionally, high consumption of sugary drinks increases the risk of premature death. Household consumption of sugary drinks has increased dramatically in Pakistan over the past 15 years. These eye-opening alarming facts and figures show that we are facing a very serious crisis and we have to go on a war

footing to deal with these situations or else our public health system will collapse. We have to see how the world has faced this threat and how we can save our country from this crisis situation by benefiting from the experiences of the world.

Among the ways that the world has reduced the consumption of these drinks to reduce diseases in its country, the first and most effective weapon among the few tested methods is the increase in taxes on them. Along with this, marketing restrictions, school food policy and front of pack labeling are proven strategies. If we only talk about taxes, more than 50 countries in the world have increased taxes on sugary drinks and reduced their consumption, which not only reduced these diseases there, but also increased their revenue from additional taxes. Saudi Arabia was the first country in the Gulf to increase taxes on sugary drinks by 50% and energy drinks by 100% in 2017 and impose a 5% value-added tax on them in 2018. There was a drastic decrease in sales of Sodas to 41% and energy drinks to 58% in 2018 as compared to 2016.

The Philippines raised a tax on sugary drinks to generate \$40 million in additional revenue that was spent on public health programs. Tax on these drinks in Pakistan is very less than other countries in the region. In India they are taxed at 40%. In Maldives, the health levy on a liter of drink is \$2.18, which equates to Rs 335 in Pakistani rupees. Similarly, Qatar and Bahrain increased the tax on energy drinks by 100% and on soda by 50%, which significantly reduced their consumption, while Pakistan has only 13% Federal Excise Duty (FED) and 17% sales tax on carbonated water. There is no FED on juices at all. By taxing these harmful substances, Pakistan can significantly reduce the number of diseases caused by them and also get additional revenue per year which can be spent on public health programs. Thus, it is a win-win situation i.e. reduction in diseases and increase in government revenue. It is requested from the government that instead of taxing the necessities of life, tax should be increased on these harmful things and not compromise on the health of the people for the interests of the beverages industry.

The writer is Secretary General Pakistan National Heart Association (PANAH)

Zelenskiy vows tough response to any Russian attack on I-Day

Wednesday marks six months since Russian invasion

KYIV: As Ukraine prepared to mark both its independence from Soviet-rule in 1991 and the six months since Russian troops invaded, President Volodymyr Zelenskiy pledged that any Russian attacks in or around the date would provoke a powerful response.



Zelenskiy, who has led his country's resistance since Russian troops poured over the border on Feb. 24, also said Ukraine would restore its rule over the Crimea region-annexed by Russia in 2014 in a precursor to this year's invasion.

Despite his defiance, there was concern among Ukrainian and allied Western officials that Russia was preparing to attack the capital Kyiv once again.

The United States said it believed Russia would target civilian and government infrastructure in the next few days. U.S. citizens should leave Ukraine "now" by their own means if it was safe to do so, the U.S. Embassy said.

On the battlefields, Russian fore-

es carried out artillery and rocket strikes in the Zaporizhzhia region in southeastern Ukraine, where fighting has taken place near Europe's largest nuclear power plant, Ukraine's military said. Russia and Ukraine have blamed each other for strikes on the plant.

Meanwhile leaders of dozens of countries and international organisations were taking part in the so-called Crimea Platform—most of them by video—in solidarity with Ukraine on the six-month anniversary of the invasion. Opening the forum, Zelenskiy, dressed in his customary military gear, told delegates: "To overcome terror, it is necessary to gain victory in the

fight against Russian aggression." "It is necessary to liberate Crimea. This will be the resuscitation of world law and order," he said.

Italy's acting Prime Minister Mario Draghi told the summit Rome would continue to support Ukraine. "We are with you in your fight to resist Russia's invasion, restore Ukraine's territorial integrity, protect your democracy and independence," he said.

Earlier, Zelenskiy had warned that Moscow might try "something particularly ugly" in the run-up to Wednesday's Independence Day. Asked at a news conference with visiting Polish President Andrzej Duda about the possibility of a Russian missile strike on Kyiv, Zelenskiy said there was a daily threat of attacks although the number of them could increase.

Ukraine's response would be the same for any city that comes under attack from Russia, he said. "They will receive a response, a powerful response," Zelenskiy said. "I want to say that each day ... this response will grow, it will get stronger and stronger."

Fears of intensified Russian attacks followed the killing of Darya Dugina, the daughter of a prominent Russian ultra-nationalist, in a car bombing near Moscow on Saturday. Moscow blamed the killing on Ukrainian agents, a charge Kyiv denies.

Kyiv has only rarely been hit by Russian missiles since Ukraine repelled a ground offensive to seize the capital in March.

The mood in Kyiv was calm on Tuesday, with many people still walking the streets, but signs of increased threat could be felt. An adviser to Zelenskiy told the BBC many civilians were trying to leave Kyiv for fear of a sudden Russian attack.

Authorities told Ukrainians to work from home where possible from Tuesday to Thursday, also urging people to take air raid warnings seriously and seek shelter when sirens sound. The Kyiv city administration banned large public gatherings until Thursday, fearing that a crowd of celebrating residents could become a target for a Russian missile strike.

Indian troops martyr two youth in Rajouri



JAMMU: In Indian illegally occupied Jammu and Kashmir, Indian troops in their fresh act of state terrorism martyred two Kashmiri youth in Rajouri district, on Tuesday.

The troops during their continued violent military operations martyred the youth in Pukharni in Nowshera area of the district.

An official told media men that the troops deployed near the Line of Control killed two persons and their bodies are lying near the fence, while attempts are being made to recover them.

Earlier on Sunday, during operation the troops shot and injured a youth and arrested him while he was looking after his cattle near the Line of Control near the fence.

Meanwhile, one more Indian army man succumbed to his injuries at a Indian military hospital in Udhampur. The Indian trooper was injured in an attack on an army camp in Rajouri on August 11, in which four troops were killed.

The Indian army's Havaldar Satyapal Singh succumbed to his injuries and with him, the death toll has gone up to five, an Indian officer said. Officials said that the injured trooper was undergoing treatment at the northern command based military hospital.

Angolans prepare for elections amid calls for poll sit-in



LUANDA: As Angola — one of Africa's largest oil producers — prepares for a general election Wednesday, voters are debating whether they should vote and sit at the polling stations to monitor the process or cast their ballots and go home.

The call to vote and stay is coming from the longtime opposition party, the Union for the Total Independence of Angola, known as UNITA, which says a large presence of people at polling places is needed to keep the elections accurate.

President Joao Lourenco is running for a second five-year term while his party, the Peoples' Movement for the Liberation of Angola, known by its Portuguese acronym MPLA, is campaigning to extend its 47-year run as the country's ruling party.

Leading the competition is the United Patriotic Front coalition, which includes UNITA and its presidential candidate, Adalberto Costa Junior. UNITA is showing considerable momentum and has succeeded in getting backing from several major opposition figures, including leading intellectuals.

In the 1992 elections, UNITA angrily disputed its loss and plunged the country back into civil war, which lasted for nearly 10 years. This election campaign has been notably peaceful, with few incidents of violence. Both Lourenco and Costa Junior concentrated on speaking about issues, not on attacking the other parties.

"There were a lot of provocations during the campaign, but we decided to not fight back. Instead, we will present our complaints to the courts," said Costa Junior in a well-attended rally in Cazenga, a neighborhood on the outskirts of Luanda.

Over the weekend, at Camama, another Luanda suburb, Lourenco avoided attacking UNITA directly and instead focused on describing the achievements of his government, including an agreement with IMF to support the Angolan economy.

Five other parties and one coalition are contesting the elections, a far cry from the years that the MPLA ruled over the country as a one-party state. This will be the country's fifth multi-party election since 1992. More than 14.3 million people have registered to vote in these elections, of Angola's overall population of 33 million. In the previous general elections in 2017, voter turnout was 57% of those who registered.

Finnish Prime Minister apologizes for party picture



HELSINKI: Finnish Prime Minister Sanna Marin on Tuesday apologized for a picture that emerged from a private party she had thrown at her official residence in July, following a public stir over her partying in the past week.

On Monday, a drug test taken by the prime minister, one of the youngest world leaders, came back negative. It was taken to assuage concerns after video footage was published last week showing her singing and dancing with Finnish celebrities at another party.

This week, another image began circulating in social media, showing two well-known female influencers kissing each other, covering their bare breasts with a "Finland" sign from the Prime Minister's official residence in Helsinki.

"In my opinion, the picture is not appropriate. I apologize for it. That kind of a picture should not have been taken but otherwise, nothing extraordinary happened at the get-together," Marin told reporters, confirming the photo was from her residence.

Marin, 36, who has made no secret of her enjoyment of her leisure time, said the picture was taken during a private party with her friends after a music festival in July.

"We had sauna, swam and spent time together," she said, describing the party at her seaside residence.

Finns have been divided over the premier's behavior, with some voicing support for the young leader for combining a private life with her high-profile career, while others have raised questions about whether her judgment would be impaired by her leisure activities.

Social Democrat leader Marin, who became the world's youngest serving government leader in December 2019, agreed on Friday to take the drug test, saying she had never taken drugs and that she had not seen anyone doing so at the party she attended.

Marin said in January that she and her fellow young female ministers have been targeted with extensive hate speech for their gender and appearance while in office.

Rohingya crisis fund is 'well short of needs': UN

GENEVA: An appeal to help Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh is "well short of needs," the United Nations refugee agency (UNHCR) said on Tuesday, as refugees called on donors not to forget the crisis ahead of the fifth anniversary of their exodus from Myanmar.



More than a million Rohingya are living in squalid camps in southern Bangladesh comprising the world's largest refugee settlement, with little prospect of returning to Myanmar, where they are mostly denied citizenship and other rights.

"For the almost 1 million stateless Rohingya refugees, conditions in Bangladesh are extremely overcrowded, and they remain fully reliant on humanitarian assistance for their survival, UNHCR said. "The most commonly unmet needs include prop-

er nutrition, shelter materials, sanitation facilities and livelihood opportunities," a UNHCR statement said.

It said its 2022 response plan sought over \$881 million for more than 1.4 million people, including Rohingya refugees and more than half a million most affected host communities. So far, it was funded at only 49 percent, with \$426.2 million received. "The support from the inter-

national community has been and is crucial in delivering lifesaving protection and assistance services for Rohingya refugees but funding is well short of needs."

Refugees said it was crucial the world did not forget the plight of the Rohingya, who are unable to return to Myanmar, but have little future in Bangladesh, with no access to work.

"The global community should not forget our plight.

They should help us as much as they can," Mohammed Taher, a Rohingya refugee in Bangladesh, said. "We are not allowed to work here. We must depend on aid agencies for food," he added.

The Rohingya say they want guarantees of their safety and to be recognized as citizens before returning. The United Nations says conditions are not yet right for return. The vast majority fled to neighboring Bangladesh during a military crackdown in 2017 that the United Nations has said was carried out with genocidal intent.

Myanmar denies genocide, saying it was waging a legitimate campaign against insurgents who attacked police posts. Myanmar is facing charges of genocide at the International Court of Justice in the Hague over the violence.

Record number of migrants arrive in Britain

LONDON: The number of migrants arriving in Britain in small boats hit a record for a single day on Monday, as the rise in dangerous crossings over the English Channel continues despite the government's plans to deport those arriving illegally to Rwanda.

Britain's Ministry of Defense said 1,295 people in 27 boats were intercepted after making the crossing from the European mainland on Monday. The figure surpasses the previous daily record of 1,185 set last November.

The outgoing Prime Minister Boris Johnson had hoped that the threat of deporting people to Rwanda announced in April alongside other efforts, such as handing the navy the responsibility for intercepting migrants, would act as a deterrent to those arriving in dinghies and small boats.

Under an agreement struck in April, Britain will send tens of thousands of migrants who arrive on its shores illegally more than 6,400km to the East African country.

The policy will be the subject of a legal challenge in London's High Court in early September when a coalition of human rights groups and a trade union will argue that the Rwanda policy is unworkable and unethical.

The first planned deportation flight in June was blocked by a last-minute injunction from the European Court of Human Rights.

"The rise in dangerous Channel crossings is unacceptable," a government spokesperson said. "Not only are they an overt abuse of our immigration laws but they risk the lives of vulnerable people, who are being exploited by ruthless criminal gangs."

In 2021, 28,526 people were detected arriving on small boats — with the highest number from Iran followed by Iraq, Eritrea, and Syria. So far this year, more than 22,000 migrants have come to Britain, with government officials warning 60,000 could arrive by the end of the year.

Both candidates vying to replace Johnson as prime minister, Liz Truss and Rishi Sunak, have promised to push ahead with the Rwanda plan.

Anti-mandate protesters converge on New Zealand Parliament

WELLINGTON: About 2,000 protesters upset with the government's pandemic response converged Tuesday on New Zealand's Parliament — but there was no repeat of the occupation six months ago in which protesters camped on Parliament grounds for more than three weeks.

Many of the protesters said they had no intention of trying to stay. And police ensured a repeat was unlikely by closing streets, erecting barricades and banning protesters from bringing structures onto Parliament's grounds.

The previous protest created significant disruption

in the capital and ended in chaos as retreating protesters set fire to tents and hurled rocks at police.

This time there was also a counter-protest, with several hundred people gathering in front of Parliament as the main march entered the grounds. The two sides shouted insults but a line of police officers kept them physically separated.

The earlier protest had been more sharply focused on opposition to COVID-19 vaccination mandates.

New Zealand's government initially required that health workers, teachers, police, firefighters and soldiers get vaccinated. But

it has since removed most of those mandates, with the exception of health workers and some others. It has also removed requirements that people be vaccinated to visit stores and bars.

Tuesday's protest was as much about lingering discontentment over the government's handling of the crisis as it was about current rules, including a requirement that people wear masks in stores.

Protester Carmen Page said people who hadn't been vaccinated face ongoing discrimination and people lost their jobs and homes as a result of the mandates, which she said amounted to govern-

ment overreach. "We're not here to be controlled," Page said. "We just want to live our lives freely. We want to work where we want to work, without discrimination."

At the counter-protest, Lynne Maugham said she and her husband had extended a stay in the capital to attend. "I've got nothing but respect for the mandates, for the vaccinations, for the way the health providers have handled the whole thing," she said. Maugham said the government hadn't done everything perfectly but had done a good job overall. "There's no blueprint for handling a pandemic," she said.

Bangkok braces for protests over Thai PM's term limit

BANGKOK: Thai authorities ramped up security in the capital on Tuesday ahead of protests calling on the prime minister to resign, as a court considers whether to take up a petition to rule on when his constitutionally stipulated eight-year term is up.

The main opposition party, and nearly two-thirds of Thais questioned in an opinion poll, believe Prime Minister Prayuth Chan-ocha, who took power in a 2014 coup, should step down by Aug. 24 because his time as junta chief counts toward his term.

Prayuth, 68, was army chief when he mounted a coup in 2014 to overthrow an elected government. He became a civilian prime minister in 2019 after an election held under a military-drafted constitution.

Police cordoned off areas around the prime minister's offices, known as Government House, in central Bangkok, setting up barricades, including shipping containers, and diverting traffic. Prayuth arrived for a weekly cabinet and is expected to address media later in the day.



Thailand has seen intermittent political turmoil for nearly two decades, including two coups and violent

protests, broadly because of opposition to the military's involvement in politics and demands by increasingly political-

ly aware sections of society for greater representation.

But protests have petered out over the past couple of years with the imposition of COVID-19 bans on gatherings. The main opposition Pheu Thai Party has petitioned the Constitutional Court to rule on how long Prayuth can stay in office. The court could decide to hear or dismiss the case on Wednesday.

If the case is accepted, it is unclear if Prayuth would stay on as leader or be suspended from duty while a caretaker government takes over. It is not clear when the court would rule on the term limit.

The opposition says Prayuth's tenure as prime minister began in August 2014, a few months after the coup, and should therefore end this month.

But some supporters argue his premiership started in 2017, when a new constitution came into force, or after the 2019 election — meaning he should be allowed to stay on until 2025 or 2027, provided he retains the necessary backing in parliament. A general election is due by May next year.

