



Pakistan javelin ace Arshad Nadeem wins gold at Paris Olympics 2024

Pakistan javelin ace Arshad Nadeem achieved the historic feat by winning a gold medal for Pakistan in the final quest of the Paris Olympics 2024 on Thursday besides breaking the previous Olympic record with a 92.97-metre massive throw. Arshad launched a throw of 92.97-meter in his second attempt which was enough for him to secure gold medal. This throw also set the Olympic record which was previously with Norway's Andreas Thorkildsen who registered at the 2008 Beijing Games. This is the first-ever individual gold medal in Olympics for Pakistan, maiden n athletics and first gold in any discipline in the last 40 years. Pakistan won an Olympic medal after the gap of 32 years. The last time Pakistan won an medal was in 1992 when the national hockey team clinched bronze by defeating the Netherlands 4-3.

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National Conference

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif and Chief of Army Staff General Syed Asim Munir NI(M) attending the National Ulema & Mashaikh Conference on Thursday.



Photo: PID

Unprecedented cooperation between govt, institutions to rid country of challenges: PM

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Thursday said that the coalition government and the national institutions were in an unprecedented harmony and cooperation to serve the better national interests and steer the country out of prevailing challenges.

The prime minister, addressing the Ulema-Mashaikh Conference here, said that the country never needed unity and national harmony more, and he had never seen such a level of cooperation between a political government and the institutions throughout his political career.

Appreciating the support

extended by Chief of Army Staff General Syed Asim Munir, also attending the moot, he said that such exemplary collaboration was a role model for the future.

He said that the challenges pervading the country necessitated learning lessons from past weaknesses and mistakes and making sincere efforts to develop Pakistan as a country as was dreamt by the forefathers and sacrificed hundreds of thousands of lives during the Pakistan Movement.

Prime Minister Shehbaz said the nation, which was about to celebrate its 77th Independence Day on August 14, was yet to find its destination, but the goal was achievable provided the dedicated

efforts were made and the teachings of Quran and Sunnah were followed.

He called for the efforts to wipe out Fitna al Khawarij—a term referring to Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan—which he said was involved in anti-Pakistan activities despite claiming to be a Pakistani. He also criticized the use of social media to spread lies and propaganda—particularly after 2018—instead of appreciating the government's efforts for public services.

He said even the army soldiers, who sacrificed their lives to protect millions of other children from being orphaned, were being humiliated on social media.

Calling the May 9 attacks “the

most heart-wrenching” incident in the country's history, the prime minister highlighted that the characters behind the tragedy of 1971 met their fate in Bangladesh amidst the recent developments in the country.

He urged the Ulema to play their role to do away with the division in the society and highlight the Islamic economic system, and said that no force could obstruct the country's development if the nation was determined to achieve its goal.

Prime Minister Shehbaz told the gathering that the government was making all-out efforts to address the economic challenges and expected the upcoming IMF program to be the last one. At the

same time, it had scraped Rs50 billion to support the power consumers of the protected category consuming up to 200 units. But the consumers using 200-500 units of electricity were still under the burden, he added.

However, he assured the gathering that the coalition government and the COAS were in consultation to work out a comprehensive plan to ease the inflation-stricken people and the provinces would soon announce their respective plans in this regard.

He said the IMF Program was a compulsion to bring economic about stability, productive employment and reforms in the FBR and power sector.

Those who don't recognise Sharia, Constitution aren't Pakistani: COAS

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: In his address, the Chief of the Army Staff stated, “We stand united and resolute in our commitment to eradicate terrorism from our soil. We will not tolerate extremism, violence, or fear-mongering.” He condemned “twisted ideologies that seek to divide us, senseless killings that aim to intimidate us, and inhumane tactics employed by Fitna Al Khawarij (FAK) that attempt to break our spirit.”

He emphasized, “Let us strive for a Pakistan where everyone

can thrive in peace and prosperity. We are one nation, one people, and together we can achieve greatness.”

He acknowledged the vital role of Ulema in promoting peace, tolerance, and inclusivity, countering extremist narratives, and educating society to reject hate and violence.

The forum unanimously expressed deep anguish over the ongoing brutalities against Kashmiris in Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK) and the inhumane conflict in Gaza, terming these as crimes against humanity.

Pakistan Armed Forces pay tribute to Major Tufail Shaheed

Spokesman Report

RAWALPINDI: The Armed Forces of Pakistan, the Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee, and the Services Chiefs pay a solemn and heartfelt tribute to Major Tufail Muhammad Shaheed, recipient of the prestigious Nishan-e-Haider, on the occasion of his 66th martyrdom anniversary today.

Major Tufail Muhammad, the second recipient of the esteemed Nishan-e-Haider, valiantly laid down his life in 1958 while fearlessly engaging the enemy in the Lakshimpur sector of East Pakistan. Despite fatal injuries, he resolutely completed his mission, exemplifying unparalleled bravery, unwavering resolve, and unre-



MAJOR TUFAIL MUHAMMAD (SHAHEED) NISHAN-E-HAIDER
8 August, 1958 (Lakshimpur Sector - East Pakistan)

lenting dedication to duty.

The martyrdom anniversary of Major Tufail Muhammad Shaheed serves as a poignant reminder of the extraordinary sacrifices and selfless devotion of the Pakistan Armed Forces in defending the motherland. We honor the memory of these gallant sons of the soil who have made the ultimate sacrifice to safeguard our nation's sovereignty and territorial integrity.

President pays tribute to Major Tufail Shaheed on his 66th martyrdom anniversary

City Desk



ISLAMABAD: President Asif Ali Zardari on Thursday paid tribute to Major Tufail Muhammad Shaheed (Nishan-e-Haider) on his 66th martyrdom anniversary, lauding his valor and sacrifice while safeguarding the motherland.

The president, in a statement, said that the nation saluted the brave son of the soil who sacrificed his life for the country's security while fighting the enemy and setting an example of courage and gallantry.

“The whole nation feels proud of its martyrs. The Pakistani nation will never forget the sacrifices of its martyrs,” the president remarked and prayed to Allah Almighty to elevate the ranks of Major Tufail Shaheed in paradise.

Dar sends greetings on ASEAN Day

City Desk



ISLAMABAD: On behalf of the Government and people of Pakistan, I extend our warmest congratulations and best wishes to the governments and peoples of the ASEAN member states on ASEAN Day. I would like to take this opportunity to felicitate Secretary General Dr. Kao Kim Hour for his exemplary leadership and tireless efforts in advancing the ASEAN agenda.

This day symbolizes the enduring spirit of unity and cooperation among the Southeast Asian nations. It is a privilege to celebrate this milestone alongside our ASEAN partners.

The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) stands as a model of regional integration and collective progress, demonstrating remarkable achievements in economic development, social cohesion, and diplomatic engagement. Pakistan holds in high regard the significant role ASEAN plays in promoting peace, stability, and prosperity within the Asia-Pacific region. The celebration of ASEAN Day not only reminds us of the vital importance of regional cooperation

but also highlights the rich cultural diversity and historical heritage of the region.

Pakistan's relations with ASEAN are underpinned by a shared commitment to principles of mutual respect, non-interference, and constructive engagement. We have been an active partner in ASEAN's dialogue mechanisms and have sought to deepen our cooperation in areas such as trade, investment, education, culture, and people-to-people exchanges. Our engagement with ASEAN has been further strengthened through our active participation in the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), where we contribute to discussions on regional security and cooperation.

As we celebrate ASEAN Day, Pakistan reaffirms its desire to enhancing its partnership with ASEAN in its quest for a peaceful, stable, and prosperous region. Let us take this opportunity to reflect on our shared achievement and renew our commitment to the principles that guide ASEAN's Mission.

Pakistan remains steadfast in its support for ASEAN's vision and looks forward to contributing to its ongoing success.



PM pays tribute to Major Tufail Shaheed on his 66th martyrdom anniversary

City Desk



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Thursday paid tributes to Major Tufail Muhammad Nishan-e-Haider on his 66th day of martyrdom.

Major Tufail Muhammad Shaheed Nishan-e-Haider set a great example of courage and bravery and sacrificed his life for the security of the country, the prime minister said in a statement issued by the PM Office.

He said Major Tufail Shaheed accomplished his mission without caring about his wounds and destroyed the evil intentions of the enemy.

Major Tufail Shaheed's sense of duty, courage and bravery and adherence to the pledge to protect the country is an example for the young generation, the prime minister said.

He emphasized that the whole nation including himself was proud of the martyrs and their families.

The nation can never forget the sacrifices of the soldiers and officers of the Pakistan Army for the security of the country, he added.

CII urges SC judges to revisit Mubarak Sani case decision

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Council of Islamic Ideology urged on Thursday Supreme Court judges to review their judgement in the 'proscribed literature' case and address its concerns.

“The entire nation is in distress because of the July 24 decision,” the CII said in a statement. “It is a matter of faith and love for the Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him), rather than just a legal issue.”

Last month, the Supreme Court accepted the Punjab government's plea to revisit

its Feb 6 order in the Mubarak Ahmad Sani case and declared that the right to profess religion and religious freedom, as ensured by the Constitution, is subject to law, morality and public order.

The court issued a 27-page judgement on a set of review petitions filed by the prosecutor general of Punjab and other individuals as well as organisations against the afore-mentioned case order that led to a controversy and a malicious campaign against Chief Justice of Pakistan Qazi Faez Isa.

PM A.JK says will utilise all resources for public welfare

Bureau Report

MUZAFFARABAD: Prime Minister Chudhary Anwar ul Haq has said that all resources would be utilized to fulfill the mission of serving people and providing them basic amenities of life. The PM Haq said this while speaking to a representative delegation from Mang-Sudhnoti that called on him under the leadership of Minister for TEVTA Sardar Amir Altaf Khan, here today. The delegation was comprised of Maulana Muhammad Saeed Khan, former chairman Sardar Tanveer Khadim, district councilor Sardar Iftikhar, district councilor Sardar Shaukat Ali, Sardar Mumtaz Hussain, Sardar Zulfikar Hussain, Maulana Hafeezur Rahman, Sardar Maruf Hussain, Sardar Rashid Kabir and Maulana Masood Saeed. Speaking on the occasion the PM said that tax-money would be spent on public welfare in a transparent manner. He said that every citizen of the state has an important role and responsibility to strengthen the system of the State. He said that the government would not allow anyone to weaken the system or spread anarchy under the garb of rights. The Prime Minister said that



people need to realize that the atmosphere of chaos and anarchy in the state serves to none but those who don't want peace and stability in the liberated territory.

The visiting delegation paid tribute to the Prime Minister for his people friendly policies and his commitment

to people's welfare. Meanwhile, another delegation from Dhirkot, which was led by former advisor Raja Mubasher Ejaz called on Prime Minister Chudhary Anwar ul Haq at the Prime Minister's Secretariat. Talking to the delegation, Prime Minister Haq said that providing masses the provision of education,

health, employment and other facilities was the primary responsibility of the government, which he said would be fulfilled despite all odds. The delegation was comprised of Raja Muhammad Saud, Raja Zahoor Ahmad, Raja Abid Ali Abid, Nair Ashraf, Raja Idris and Sarim Farooq.

Sardar Attique urges Kashmiris to raise Pakistan flag on August 14

Abdul Majeed Tahir

RAWALPINDI: President of All Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Conference and former Prime Minister of Azad Kashmir Sardar Attique Ahmed Khan has said that the state of Pakistan is the center of our hopes. A strong and stable Pakistan is the guarantor of the freedom of Kashmiris. The idea of annexation of Pakistan and Kashmir will Banega Pakistan no compromise on Pakistan is acceptable. Above any interest or greed, the flag of Pakistan will be kept high in the state of Jammu and Kashmir. He emphasised the Party workers, religious scholars traders and transporters should raise the flag of Pakistan on August 14. Pakistan's defense is in strong hands Weak economic conditions can be on tread at any time. We are disappointed with the conditions of Pakistan and we are not intimidated by the power of any country. Our forefathers set a path for the freedom of the state of Jammu and Kashmir and we will guard it with full courage.



He has expressed these views in a special message to the press released from Mujahid Manzi Rawalpindi. Sardar Attique Ahmad Khan has appealed to all the Muslim Conference workers, transporters and traders across Azad Kashmir to display the national flag of Pakistan on the roofs of their houses, shops and vehicles on August 14. He said that in the love of Pakistan. More than 600,000 Kashmiris have sacrificed their lives. Pakistan is the benefactor of Kashmiris and the only support that can bring freedom from the oppression of India. Sardar Attique said that we believe in peaceful political struggle, but if India does not stop its obstinacy, then Pakistan's national army has full capacity to respond.

Veterantana of Azad Kashmir Police to be awarded

Bureau Report



MUZAFFARABAD: Mukhtar Saeed Khan, a veteran soldier of Azad Kashmir Police Department, who saved the woman's life by risking his life. At Manik Pian, a woman slipped and fell into the river, as Mukhtar Saeed Khan, a veteran soldier of the police department, jumped into the river. Jhelum without caring for his life and brought her out from the waves. Awami Khalkoon has saluted the spirit of selfless service of the Police Department jawan and demanded the Government of Azad Kashmir to issue a certificate of appreciation for the spirit of this police veteran.

Encroachment removed

Raza Naqvi

ATTOCK: Additional Deputy Commissioner General Attock Anil Saeed has said that the encroachments are being ended in the light of the instructions of the Punjab government. He expressed these views on the occasion of a visit to the city of Attock. Visited different areas of the city and reviewed the strategy regarding encroachments. ADCG said on this occasion that the end of encroachments is necessary for public convenience and this operation will be carried out throughout the district. In this regard, instructions have been issued to the Assistant Commissioners.

Anti-polio campaign

Raza Naqvi

ATTOCK: Deputy Commissioner Attock Rao Atif Raza has said that the Punjab government is taking steps in connection with the anti-polio campaign. He expressed these views while presiding over the meeting regarding the polio campaign. Waqas Aslam Marth Additional Deputy Commissioner Finance and Planning Nosheen Asrar, Assistant Commissioner Attock Shaughta Jabin, CEO Health Dr. Asad Ismail and other relevant officers were also present. In the meeting, CEO Health Dr. Asad Ismail and other relevant persons briefed the participants.

According to the anti-polio campaign will be started in the near future and all the preparations are being completed in this regard. The anti-polio campaign will continue throughout the district. In the meeting, the assistant commissioners of the entire district briefed DC Attock regarding their tehsil.

Meeting

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Interior Mohsin Naqvi in a meeting with Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Kundi on Thursday.



Photo: PID

How did the contest reach its conclusion?

The tale of Hasina Wajid's harrowing flight from Bengal

After weeks of violent protests in the country, Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina Wajid has resigned from her post and left the country for India. 76-year-old leader Sheikh Hasina Wajid's helicopter has landed in India and thousands of protesters have thronged her official residence in Dhaka. Sheikh Hasina ruled Bangladesh for nearly two decades and was the country's longest-serving prime minister. Sheikh Hasina was often credited with developing Bangladesh's economy, but in recent years she has been accused of adopting an authoritarian style of rule.

Sheikh Hasina was born in East Bengal in 1947 and politics was in her blood.

She is the daughter of the nationalist leader Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, who is known as the 'Bangla Bandhu' meaning 'Father of the Nation' of Bangladesh. It was under his leadership that Bangladesh separated from Pakistan and he became the country's first president in 1971.

Since then, Sheikh Hasina had established herself as a student leader at Dhaka University.

Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and several members of his family were killed in a military coup in 1975. Only Sheikh Hasina and her younger sister survived the attack as she was not in the country at the time.

She went into exile in India during this time and returned to Bangladesh in 1981 and was appointed as the head of his father's party, Awami League.

During the military regime of General Hussain Muhammad Ershad, she held protests in support of democracy along with other political parties.

This movement catapulted Sheikh Hasina to the heights of popularity and she emerged as a national leader.

She became the first Prime Minister of the country in 1996. During this time, she negotiated a water-sharing deal with India and signed a peace accord with militants fighting in the country's southeastern region.

But at the same time, her government was not only accused of corruption but also criticized for being too close to India.

In 2001, she lost the election to her former ally Bangladesh Nationalist Party leader Begum Khaleda Zia and had to resign as Prime Minister.

These two women have dominated the politics of Bangladesh for the last three decades and have come to be known as 'Warrior Begums' in the country. Political observers say that due to the fight between these two leaders, not only bomb blasts occurred in the country, people went missing and extrajudicial killings became a norm in the country. In 2009, an interim government held elections in the country and Sheikh Hasina was once again elected as the Prime Minister of the country.

During her political journey as an opposition leader, Sheikh Hasina was arrested and attacked several times. In 2004, due to a similar attack, her speech was affected.

Attempts were also made to deport her several times and court cases were instituted against her due to alleged corruption.

Bangladesh used to be one of the poorest countries in the world, but after 2009, under the leadership of Sheikh Hasina, the country's

economy was improving.

It is now one of the fastest growing economic powers in the region, growing faster than India. According to the World Bank, in the last decade, about two and a half million people have come out of the poverty line. Most of the growth in the country was seen in the garment sector, and the clothes made in Bangladesh found their way to Europe, North America and Asia.

Using the country's own wealth, loans and assistance from foreign institutions, Sheikh Hasina launched major development projects, including the \$2.9 billion Padma Bridge.

The recent violent protests in the country were perhaps the biggest challenge of Sheikh Hasina's political career and the previous elections in the country were also mired in controversy. As a result of these elections, Sheikh Hasina's party came to power for the fourth time in a row. Demands for her resignation continued but Sheikh Hasina continued to resist. She not only termed the protestors as 'terrorists' but appealed to 'deal with these terrorists with iron hands.'

Government jobs in Bangladesh are highly valued for their good pay, but about half of the jobs, numbering in the millions, are reserved for certain groups. One-third of government jobs are reserved for the families of people who are considered 'heroes of the freedom struggle' in Bangladesh. However, students and other protestors in the country said that this system is biased and government jobs should be given only on the basis of merit.

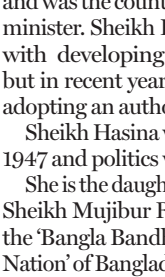
This student protest turned into a nationwide anti-government movement. After the outbreak of the Corona virus in the world, inflation in Bangladesh increased, foreign exchange reserves decreased and external debt almost doubled.

Critics say that the main cause of rising inflation and poverty in the country is the mismanagement of Sheikh Hasina's government. They claim that the country's economic success in the past has benefited only those who were part of the Awami League. They also say that during this time, human rights violations continued in the country and the quality of democracy declined. They accuse Sheikh Hasina of adopting an authoritarian style of governance and say that the former Bangladeshi prime minister imposed restrictions on her political opponents and the media. Sheikh Hasina and her government deny the allegations. In recent months, senior leaders of the Bangladesh Nationalist Party and thousands of political activists have been arrested amid anti-government protests.

Organizations working for human rights say that extrajudicial killings and enforced disappearances by the security forces in the country increased after 2009. Sheikh Hasina's government has vehemently denied the allegations, but at the same time, her government continued to prevent foreign journalists from investigating these incidents in the country.

During the last regime of indain Lover Sheikh Hasina Wajid carried out a blood-bath against her opponents and during the Last Government time Jamaat-e-Islami will give death sentence to 5 important and prominent leaders of Bangladesh for their loyalty to Pakistan and Muslims

Analysis



Asim Tanveer

Trade regulator to address Sarhad Chamber of Commerce and Industry's election grievances: Peshawar High Court



Commerce Desk

PESHAWAR: In significant legal development, the Peshawar High Court has directed the Regulator Trade Organization to resolve the grievances regarding the election process of the Sarhad Chamber of Commerce and Industry. This directive was issued by Justice Arshid Ali and Justice Muhammad Ijaz in response to a constitutional petition filed by Sharafat Ali Mubarak and three others.

The petitioners, represented by their counsel Mr. Bassam Ahmad Siddiqui, contended that the current office bearers had unduly influenced the election process. They alleged that fake voters were included in the provisional voter list and that no executive committee meeting was convened for the appointment of the election commission, thereby allowing the sitting office bearers to control the entire process. Mr. Siddiqui argued that the Regulator Trade Organization is obligated under the Trade Organization Act, 2013, to oversee and ensure the integrity of the election process.

During the proceedings, Barrister Rahat Nahaqi, who appeared on behalf of the Regulator Trade Organization. After considering the arguments from both sides, the court directed the regulator to address the petitioners' grievances within 20 days, ensuring an opportunity for a hearing.

This ruling underscores the petitioners' serious concerns about the fairness and transparency of the election process, which they believe has been compromised by the actions of the current office bearers.



Islamabad
30° - 38° Clear

SERVICES

Namaz Timings

Fajr 3:52 am
Zohr 12:13 pm
Asr 5:03 pm
Maghrib 7:01 pm
Isha 8:34 pm

EMERGENCY

Rescue (Police) 15
Bomb Disposal 15
Fire Services Rawalpindi/
Islamabad 1122 & 16
Emergency Ambulance 1122 &
& Rescue Services 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

Pakistan welcomes international chefs at FoodAg 2024

City Desk

KARACHI: Federal Minister for Commerce Jam Kamal Khan on Thursday said that Pakistan offers a variety of continental food, the expertise brought by the international chefs participating in FoodAg 2024 is something new.

Addressing the soft launch of the second FoodAg 2024, at a local hotel, he said the Pakistan is quickly embracing new continental recipes.

He invited the visiting chefs to explore Pakistan's street food, highlighting its unique taste.

He mentioned that the trend of eateries and cafes is growing globally, and Pakistan is no exception, with a strong love for food and an expanding food culture.

He emphasized that food serves as a bridge for people to learn about each other and their



cultures. Jam Kamal Khan expressed hope that food could help strengthen and further expand bilateral relations.

He assured that the Trade Development Authority of Pakistan (TDAP) team and others would do their utmost to provide excellent hospitality

to the visiting chefs.

Speaking at the event, South African chef Shaun highlighted that FoodAg 2024 will enable chefs to learn about ingredients from different cultures and countries.

He emphasized that food has always influenced the world and continues to do so.

Shaun noted that the food Pakistanis eat today is vastly different from what was consumed in the 1500s.

He also pointed out some variations in ingredients used across different countries and regions.

The soft launch event of the Second International Food & Agriculture Exhibition 2024, was attended by the TDAP Chief Executive Zubair Motiwala, chefs from different countries including Malaysia, South Africa, Turkey, Azerbaijan, Egypt and others.

The FoodAg 2024 is being organized by TDAP at EXPO Center Karachi from August 9th to 11th. With its theme of "Growing a sustainable future". The FoodAg 2024 will bring International and local communities together to generate a hope for building a common future.

Private schools de-sealed after meeting with senior authority of Rawalpindi



City Desk

RAWALPINDI: Through the efforts of All Pakistan Private Schools Management Association North Punjab, educational institutions sealed by Rawalpindi Development Authority were de-sealed. We grateful to Commissioner Rawalpindi Division, Director General RDA, Chairman District Coordination Committee and Member National Assembly Engineer Qamarul Islam Raja, Member National Assembly Muhammad Hanif Abbasi, Director Planning RDA Janshed Aftab.

President All Pakistan Private Schools Management Association North Punjab and Member District Registration Authority Abrar Ahmad Khan said this in a statement. Abrar Ahmad Khan said that two days ago, a 26-member delegation led by me met the Director General RDA Madam Kinzai Murtaza. And discussed in detail various aspects of commercialization of schools buildings and Apsma assured to play its role for permanent solution of this issue. On the demand of the association, Madam Kinzai Murtaza had given permission to de-seal the private educational institutions on the condition of submitting the undertaking. And today the undertaking was given by the owners of all the affected educational institutions and after necessary office action, Director Planning Janshed Aftab issued instructions to Area Inspector Chaudhry Mukhtar Ahmed to de-seal the schools. Abrar Ahmed Khan said that I hope we will be able to find a permanent solution to this issue, a consensus was reached to continue the meetings with the RDA and written suggestions have also been sought from the association in the next meeting.

PAC organized Digital Art Exhibition



City Desk

RAWALPINDI: A two-day digital art exhibition titled "Historical Places of Pakistan" was organized at the Punjab Arts Council in connection with the Independence Day celebrations. The inaugural ceremony was graced by the presence of former Director of the Arts Council, Naheed Manzoor, and Waqar Ahmed as the chief guests. Director Arts Council, Sajjad Hussain, Deputy Director Muhammad Shakoor, and Assistant Director Muhammad Suleman were also present alongside the chief guests on this occasion. The exhibition showcased 60 artworks by 30 students from the Arts Council's graphic designing class. The chief guest remarked that digital art is as much an art form as the work of a painter or any other artist. They emphasized that the promotion of art and culture not only strengthens society intellectually but also highlights national identity and serves as a means of connection between different civilizations. Waqar Ahmed stated that art and culture are the soul of any society. Art is an expression of human emotions, thoughts, and creativity, manifesting in various forms such as painting, sculpture, music, dance, literature, and theater. It reflects human creativity and experiences. The promotion of art and culture not only leads to social development but also guides individuals toward a comprehensive and meaningful life. Director of the Arts Council, Sajjad Hussain, commented that the Punjab Arts Council plays an exemplary role in promoting and advancing the culture of Punjab. The Punjab Arts Council is not only preserving its heritage but also transferring it to the new generation. At the end of the ceremony, certificates of appreciation were distributed among the students.

ASEAN Day Celebration

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Petroleum Dr Musadik Malik at the celebration of 57th ASEAN Day themed connected and resilient community on Thursday.



Photo: PID

Kashmir Dispute: National Institute of Maritime Affairs holds seminar

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: On conclusion of 5 years of illegal revocation of article 370 & 35A by the Government of India, the National Institute of Maritime Affairs (NIMA) held a seminar titled "Kashmir Dispute: Latest Imperatives and Way Forward," on 08 August, 2024. The seminar was aimed at analyzing the Kashmir dispute in historical, legal and humanitarian perspectives to develop a comprehensive way forward. Ms. Mushaal Hussein Mullick, a renowned human rights activist and former SAPM on human rights and women empowerment graced the occasion as the chief guest. The event featured distinguished speakers, including Ambassador Nadeem Riyaz, Mr. Altaf Hussain Wani, Advocate Mr. Ahmer Bilal Soofi, Dr. Asma



Shakir Khawaja, Barrister Taimur Malik and students from various think-tanks and universities.

The speakers stressed upon the need to construct an effective legal narrative on Kashmir to engage global audience as

well as youth using established media houses to advance the Kashmir cause. Ms. Mullick highlighted the continued human rights violations that are taking place in Illegally Indian Occupied Jammu & Kashmir. She proposed to establish a

legal cell in the foreign office in order to provide consistency in Kashmir policies. The event successfully brought together scholars, policy makers, activists and legal experts to ponder and proffer suggestions in this regard.

Fall of Hasina paves way for 'Bangladesh-China-Pakistan' regional initiative: Dr Shafqat

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Research Fellow at SDPI and a specialist on South Asian Affairs, Dr Shafqat Munir on Thursday expressed the optimism that with the fall of Hasina Wajid, a new power balance in South Asia will help strengthen Bangladesh-China-Pakistan regional initiative for peace, development, and prosperity.

Talking about the recent uprising in Bangladesh in a SDTV programme, Dr Shafqat said Awami League's politics was of hatred, and divide without realising the sentiments of three generations of Bangladesh as she could not maintain the heroism of her late father for long and with her largely pro-In-

dian stance she keep distancing herself from a large number of people who disagreed with her politics of authoritarianism. The three generations included: the population who lived in united Pakistan, a generation that was grown up in Bangladesh with some bitterness of the past, and a new young generation who did not have the baggage of strained history.

Sharing his experience of interacting with these three generations, Dr Shafqat said by and large a majority of the people hailing from these generations with predominantly did not like the country's tilt towards India by distancing from Pakistan. One extremist sizeable population that was supporting Awami

League was certainly siding with Hasina on her pro-Indian politics. Amid this reality, Ms Hasina remained insecure that is why she relied on Indian security and Modi's then stature which has now been eroded after the general election 2024 in India. Indian elections happened to be a demise of Hindutva. Hasina had assumed that India and Modi will emerge as the most powerful but that proved to be a counter productive for her political strides," he added.

Dr Shafqat said Modi used Hasina to derail the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC). In the SAARC region- Bangladesh, India, and Pakistan are leading powers followed by Nepal, Sri Lanka and

others. Hasina put her weight behind Modi while now the new power dynamics may take place in the region which hopefully would help revive SAARC with India no more a spoiler power.

"I met several people who shared good memories of their lives in united Pakistan and denied that all Bengalis were against Pakistan. They were of the view that all Bengalis did not want to separate from Pakistan but due to some vested interests, the separation was projected as independence by some national, regional, and international players. A senior citizen was of the view that how could they claim independence as Hasina subjugated us to India," Dr Shafqat said.

The Army and other state institutions were closely watching Hasina's policies and once this uprising started and reached its peak, the Army declared that they are with their people and not with Hasina, the government. The sparked strengths and the mob moved to topple the government. Over the years, mutiny within the Bangladesh Army was witnessed but the Army and other institutions had reformed themselves and finally did not block toppling of an authoritarian and arrogant regime.

The Army and protests in Bangladesh, he said, unanimously challenged the mandate and upheld state interest during the protests to end Indian influ-



ence over their sovereign state, adding, "The development that has been done is through Indian investments in the businesses and industry apart from Chinese investments. The economy was developed but not linked with political stability."

Importantly, he said Pakistan's flag was hoisted in the protests and a large number of the population believed that separation from Pakistan was a political compulsion imposed by outer forces. It is hoped

that the protesters, caretaker government, and leading political parties will ensure that democracy is restored as Begum Khalida Zia has demanded for fresh elections in next three months to shorten the span of the caretaker set up. Begum Zia had ruled with a balanced approach towards India and Pakistan. However, during Zia's rule Pakistanis were never intimidated but during Haseena Wajid's regime, they used to detain Pakistanis on the Airport despite a valid visa.

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UN stand on Kashmir 'unchanged': peaceful settlement according to Charter

United Nations spokesman said Wednesday that the world body's position on Jammu and Kashmir remains "unchanged", saying that the final settlement of the dispute concerning Jammu and Kashmir is to be reached by peaceful means in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations and full respect for human rights.

"Our position on Kashmir remains unchanged," Farhan Aziz Haq, the UN's deputy spokesperson, said in response to a question about the deteriorating human rights situation in Kashmir and the continued suffering of the people there following India's annexation of occupied Kashmir on August 5, 2019.

"The position of the United Nations on this region is governed by the Charter of the United Nations and applicable Security Council resolutions," he told reports at the regular noon briefing.

"The Secretary-General," Farhan Haq added, "also recalls the 1972 agreement on bilateral relations between India and Pakistan, also known as the Simla Agreement."

Pakistan marked the fifth anniversary of the day when the Hindu nationalist government of Prime minister Narendra Modi stripped Indian-occupied Kashmir of its special status, which allowed it a separate constitution and inherited protections on land and jobs under Articles 370 and 35A of the Indian Constitution.

Article 370 also forbids Indians from outside Jammu and Kashmir from permanently settling, buying land, holding local government jobs, and securing education scholarships.

India's move was accompanied by a telecoms blackout in Muslim-majority Jammu and Kashmir state, restrictions on public movement, and the deployment of thousands of troops.

Apart from stepping up its repression, India has granted domicile certificates to thousands of Indians to settle in occupied Kashmir in a bid to change the State's demographic character.

The certificate, a sort of citizenship right, entitles a person to residency and government jobs in the region, which till last year was reserved only for the Kashmiris.

Recently Pakistan observe Youm-e-Istehsal mark the fifth year of Indian military siege of Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK) and denounce illegal, immoral and unconstitutional step to strip its special status.

The whole nation of Pakistani give a message to their Kashmiri brethren that the people of Pakistan would always stand with them in their just struggle for right to independence and against the atrocities committed by the Indian forces.

Escalating Political Temperature..

During my close association with various governments, including those of PML(N), PPP, martial law regimes, and PTI, I observed a troubling pattern among ruling parties. These parties tend to treat the opposition as adversaries, countering every move, rhetoric, and narrative put forth by opposition parties. This approach is highly counterproductive for the government, as it escalates tension, increases political temperature, creates uncertainty, and heightens anxiety and worries among the populace. Such a scenario ultimately undermines the government while benefiting the opposition. Governments conveniently forget that engaging constructively with the opposition tends to result in more stable and productive governance, while adversarial approaches often lead to political gridlock and inefficiency.

Presently, the power chessboard laid out in the country reflects an interesting positioning. The government, the establishment, the parliament, and the Election Commission are aligned. They also have on their side co-opted traditional media and gagged social media, whereas PTI, the people, and the judiciary seem to be on the other side of the table.

This layout suggests that the government has at its disposal the weapons of the state's brute power, which it is using to intimidate, harass, and control opposition leaders, their activists, and their most trusted mouthpiece, social media. It is armed with legislative tools, which it is using aggressively. For example, it is delaying and sabotaging the constitution of election tribunals and making amendments to the Election Act 2023 to frustrate the majority judgment of the Supreme Court. Additionally, the Election Commission turned PTI's victory based on form 45 into a defeat using form 47.

In this scenario, though the opposition does not have a kinetically equipped institution, it is still proving to be an equal match to the government. Despite its hands being tied, its leadership incarcerated, and state power fully unleashed to obliterate the party, the opposition remains resilient.

The big question is why the opposition, seemingly without power pieces, is proving to be a formidable opponent. Perhaps it is due to the strategic use of pawns, which, when moved cleverly, can trump even the most powerful pieces like the queen or the king. We have seen the power of the pawns during the military coup in Turkey when fighter jets, guns, and tanks were rendered ineffective. Similarly, in Bangladesh, pawns defeated the highly entrenched government, forcing the queen to flee the country in total disgrace instead of resigning and staying to defend her honor and dignity or even laying down her life rather than abandoning her own motherland.

This perceived nexus may be altogether untrue and built upon the wildest imagination, not grounded in facts. However, it remains a matter of great concern for the state, minus the judiciary, which the government claims supports the opposition. The opposition nexus of PTI, the judiciary, and the people is a potent combination and resonates well with PTI's main notion of equal justice for the people.

The reason behind the impression of these two nexuses is a big question mark. The government and the establishment should seriously consider turning the tables. This can be achieved by repositioning the government in direct oppo-

sition to its current approach. It should transform its perception from hiding behind the state's brute power, the power of the parliament, or the nuisance of the Election Commission, to standing with justice and the people of Pakistan. The government should realize that once the people rise against it, all those towing the government's boat will disappear, letting it sink into total misery.

Ceasing to react and oppose every move made by the opposition, and refraining from counter-blame and hurling accusations, would be a constructive step. For example, instead of countering the opposition's criticism of government policies with past comparisons, the government should acknowledge the issues, empathize with the people, and highlight its strategies to address these challenges.

To start with, the government should abandon its belligerent posture and hawkish approach. Being in power should mean demonstrating humility, forgiveness, benevolence, and consideration. It should stop reacting to and opposing every move made by the opposition, and refrain from counter-blame, touting, and hurling accusations.

For example, in response to the opposition's criticism of government policies and lack of good governance, such as "high inflation," higher electricity costs, exorbitant prices of essential kitchen items, higher unemployment rates, and other such allegations, the government often counters by arguing that inflation was even higher during the opposition party's tenure or that inflation was much lower during their previous term in power. Instead, the government should acknowledge the unprecedented inflation, express

empathy with the people of the country, and highlight its strategies, plans, and efforts to control inflation. It should invite all opposition parties for dialogue and take them into confidence regarding the government's efforts to address the issues and challenges faced by the people.

The government should also avoid giving knee-jerk reactions to every political move made by the opposition. It is a proven strategy of the opposition to counter every move the government makes, aiming to unsettle the government and provoke knee-jerk reactions that lead to mistakes and errors. The opposition will gladly seize upon these lapses, amplify them, and increase their impact by isolating slips of the tongue, wrong phrases, or mistakes from their context.

The government in general, and the establishment in particular, should desist from holding counter press conferences to bash and name-call the opposition. This is exactly what the opposition wants and thrives on. Soon after the conference, all phrases and sentences that suit the opposition's narratives will be clipped, given added value, and presented in the most sensational contexts across all forms of media, both traditional and social. A new round of bashing on the government, and especially on the establishment, will then begin, eroding the political capital of the government and conversely increasing the political capital of the opposition.

In this scenario, the ideal approach for the government and establishment would be to adopt a more collaborative and less confrontational stance, focusing on governance and addressing the people's concerns rather than engaging in constant political warfare.

Writer is Former Press Secretary to the President, Former Press Minister to the Embassy of Pakistan to France and Former MD, SRBC, CEO, AIV



Analysis

Qamar Bashir



Cartoon by Amjad Rasmi. (Courtesy of Asharq Al-Awsat)

Defense Budget: Vital for Ensuring Our Survival - I

In a world marked by geopolitical tensions, regional conflicts, and evolving security threats, the importance of a robust and capable military is more vital than ever. Countries worldwide invest significant resources in maintaining strong armed forces to safeguard their sovereignty, deter aggression, and protect national interests.

A primary role of a formidable military is to ensure a nation's sovereignty and territorial integrity. It is crucial to defend borders and national boundaries against external threats, securing land, airspace, and maritime domains. A well-prepared and equipped military acts as a deterrent to potential aggressors and serves as a critical defense line during crises and conflicts.

The foremost duty of any government is to ensure the safety and security of its citizens. A strong military plays a pivotal role in national defense, enabling swift and decisive responses to various forms of threats, whether conventional or asymmetric. This preparedness is essential for stability and resilience against security challenges like terrorism, cyber attacks, and unconventional warfare tactics.

Military strength enhances a nation's global influence and supports diplomatic efforts. It enables participation in international peacekeeping missions, contributes to global security initiatives, and strengthens diplomatic negotiations. Defense investments, including

technology development and defense industries, stimulate economic growth, innovation, and job creation.

Furthermore, a secure environment created by a strong military inspires investor confidence, fosters trade, and facilitates infrastructure development, promoting long-term economic stability. Beyond conventional roles, a strong military plays a crucial role in humanitarian aid and disaster relief operations, providing rapid response and logistical expertise during emergencies.

Given the evolving nature of security threats, from traditional conflicts to cyber warfare and pandemics, a strong military must continuously adapt and innovate. Investments in intelligence capabilities, cyber defense, unmanned systems, and artificial intelligence are essential for maintaining readiness in today's complex security landscape.

In an era defined by geopolitical tensions and technological advancements, the allocation of resources towards defense has become a critical indicator of a nation's strategic priorities. Current data on defense budgets across different countries provides valuable insights into global military expenditures and strategic goals. As the world's largest economy and a dominant military force, the United States continues to lead global defense spending. Its annual defense budget has consistently been around \$750 billion in recent years, underscoring its commitment to main-

taining military supremacy and tackling emerging threats such as cyber warfare and space security.

China, fueled by rapid economic growth, has significantly increased its defense expenditures. With a focus on modernizing its armed forces and asserting regional dominance, China now allocates over \$250 billion annually to defense. This sharp rise reflects its aspirations to play a major role in global security dynamics.

Russia maintains a strong defense stance with an annual budget of approximately \$65 billion. This funding supports efforts to modernize military capabilities, strengthen strategic deterrence, and exert influence across Eastern Europe, Central Asia, and beyond.

Within the European Union, member states like Germany, France, and the United Kingdom are collectively enhancing defense cooperation and spending. Together, they contribute over \$250 billion annually towards defense, aimed at bolstering NATO and addressing regional security challenges. Initiatives such as the European Defence Fund highlight their commitment to collective defense and security in Europe. India dedicates over \$70 billion annually to defense, asserting its regional dominance. In the Middle East, particularly Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, significant portions of GDP are allocated to defense due to regional rivalries, geopolitical instability, and concerns over Iran's influence. Together, these nations spend in excess of \$100 billion annually, focusing on advanced weaponry and military modernization.

To be continued

Analysis



Abdul Basit Alvi

Bloodshed in Parachinar: A call for action II

Ayesha Fatima

There are some notable incidents occurred in Parachinar in which TTP has played the role of fuel to fire to exploit these tensions for their own gain. The incident of sectarian violence that erupted in 2007 and lasted till 2008 is one of the deadliest episodes of violence in the history of Parachinar. The dispute believed to begun over a strategic piece of land and religious procession. These local conflicts were used by militant organizations, who encouraged violence and gave both sides weapons and assistance. The violence swiftly grew more intense and turned into a full fledged war. Whole communities were consumed. The social fabric of Parachinar was severely damaged by this conflict. The level of violence and involvement of militants set a precedent for future conflicts. Following on May 6, 2011 a bomb exploded in a Shia dominated market in Parachinar resulted into 32 deaths and over 60 injuries. This bombing was part of a broader pattern of sectarian violence targeting Shia community. Sunni extremist groups including factions with TTP aimed to destabilize the region and provoke sectarian retaliation. On January 21, 2017 a bomb exploded in Eidgah market, a prominent Shia area. It resulted into 25 deaths and a dozen injuries. The same year in June there was another explosion. This time it was twin explosion in the Turi market again targeting Shias. It resulted into 70 deaths and more than 200 people were injured. The Sunni extremist group along with the affiliation with TTP were claimed the both attacks.

Now the question arises how TTP has been able to sustain their activities and why there are complications for government and military to intervene? A variety of historical and geopolitical reasons have shaped the government's complicated and diverse response to the issues in Parachinar and the larger Kurram District. The state has not had a strong historical presence in FATA. The region was governed under special set of laws (The Frontier Crimes Regulations) prior to its 2018 merger with Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The goal of this merger was to integrate Pakistan's tribal regions into the country's mainstream legal and administrative system. However, there are still unresolved governance, infrastructural and security challenges, making the shift complicated

and delayed. Moreover, most of the settlements and managements in Parachinar is done by local Jirgas having deep-rooted legitimacy and local influence. The strong inclination towards using Jirgas to settle disputes restricts the role of central government which ultimately helps extremists' groups like TTP. Jirgas independently administrations erode governmental authority and leaves a power vacuum, which gives the TTP room to operate and shape local dynamics.

Due to this local governance, the area has been offering resistance to military interventions due to which TTP has been able to sustain its activities. The local population often view these military operations as a threat and challenge to their legitimacy. We have an example of 2011 protest in Parachinar against military, demanding for more localized and effective security measures involving tribal leaders and Jirgas against TTP. During intense conflicts, local tribal councils have often organized their own militias against the threats of TTP. These Lashkars are seen more effective by locals as they are familiar with terrain and dynamics of regions. Their formation often leads to decreased reliance on external military forces. Though military have done several operations in region like operation Rah-e-Haq (2007) targeting militant groups like TTP in areas of Kurram district and Sawat valley. Similarly, another operation Koh-e-Safaid (2011), named after white mountain range in Kurram was done and claimed success but faced logistic challenges due to difficult terrain and entrenched positions of militants.

The recent attack of 29 July was yet another loss as Parachinar mourns. The demand of justice and peace is louder than ever. The attack has brought attention to the pressing need of security and stability in Parachinar as well as the larger difficulties Pakistan has in combating extremism and sectarian violence. In reaction to this horrific attack government must respond quickly, decisively and comprehensively. It is imperative that government recognizes the seriousness of the situation and acts pro-actively to stop tragedies in the future rather than adopting ostrich approach and downplaying or ignoring similar problems. Pakistan has to remain committed to justice, security and social cohesiveness if it is to defeat sectarian violence and create a peaceful future for its whole nation.

Writer is BS Student in International Relations, National Defence University, Islamabad

Good Bye Monal

Monal Restaurant to Close Doors After 18 Years on Margalla Hills



Monal Moments



کاروبار بند کرنے کا پیشگی نوٹس

2024/08/06

مرزا اسلم آباد

مزین: مولانا عباسی۔ ایچ جی ایم۔ اسلام علیہم

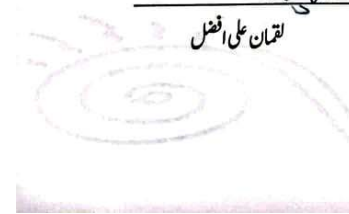
میرے لیے آپ کو بذریعہ خط مخاطب کرنا میری زندگی کا ایک نیا تجربہ ہے۔ اس کی وجہ وہ خدا ہے کہ ہمیں میرے الفاظ آسویں کر میری آنکھوں سے بہہ نہ جائیں اور یہ دیکھ کر آپ کے حوصلے مزید ٹوٹ نہ جائیں۔ ذہن دل کا اور جذبات قلم کا ساتھ نبی دے رہے کہ 18 سالہ رفاقت سے طبعی گئی اختیار کرنے کا اظہار کیے کروں۔ اگر میرے بس میں ہو تا تو میں آپ کو بتا دیتا کہ ایک باپ کے لیے اپنی اولاد سے جدا ہونا کتنا کرنا ہے۔

2006 سے اللہ نے میرا اور آپ کا رزق اکٹھا لکھ دیا۔ ہماری زندگی کے شب و روز آگے گزرے۔ ہماری خوشیاں اور غم ساٹھے ہو گئے۔ ہم نے ملکر ترقی، نیک نامی اور پاکستان کو تین الاقوامی سطح پر ایک پرامن خوشحال اور مہمان نواز ملک کے طور پر متعارف کروانے کا فریضہ جس خوش اسلوبی سے نبھایا اور اس کے نتیجے میں جو پوزیشن حاصل ہوئی ہے شک آنے والے ادارہ میں تاریخ ہمیں ضرور یاد رکھے گی۔

ایک غمزہ اور پوچھنے والے دل کے ساتھ میں آپ کو باضابطہ طور پر مطلع کرنا چاہتا ہوں کہ معزز سپریم کورٹ کے حالیہ فیصلے کی روشنی میں 11 ستمبر 2024 سے Monal رہنمائی ٹورٹ کو ہمیشہ کے لیے بند کر دیا جائے گا۔ مجھے اس بندش کے نتیجے میں ہونے والی بے روزگاری، معاشی بحالی اور مایوسی کا شدید احساس ہے لیکن میں مجبور ہوں۔ کاش میرے بس میں ہو تا تو آپ کے لیے راتوں رات روزگار کا بندوبست کر دیتا۔ لیکن موجودہ معاشی حالات کے پیش نظر 700 افراد کو کروپ کے دوسرے منصوبوں میں متبادل روزگار کی فراہمی ناممکن ہو گی۔ لہذا اسے تقدیر کا فیصلہ اور امر ربی سمجھتے ہوئے اپنے لیے متبادل روزگار کی تلاش شروع کر دیں اور مقررہ تاریخ سے پہلے اپنے تمام واجبات وصول کر لیں۔

اللہ تعالیٰ آپ کا اور ہم سب کا حامی بنا دے۔ آمین ختم آئیں۔

تعمیر علی افضل



Amjad Mehmood

The iconic Monal Restaurant, a beloved destination for food lovers perched atop the scenic Margalla Hills, is facing an uncertain future. On 11th June 2024, the Supreme Court of Pakistan, led by Chief Justice Qazi Fazal Isa, issued an order directing the relocation of all restaurants operating within the National Park Area, including Monal, within three months. The decision has sent shockwaves through the local community, as the restaurant has been a symbol of Islamabad's culinary and cultural heritage since its inception in 2006.

Monal Restaurant has been more than just a place to eat; it has been a cultural institution in Islamabad. Since its opening, the restaurant quickly gained popularity due to its top-class food quality and the serene, panoramic views of the capital it offered to its clientele. Every day, hundreds of families visit the restaurant to enjoy a meal in a tranquil envi-

ronment, far removed from the hustle and bustle of city life. The restaurant became a preferred choice not just for locals but also for diplomats and international visitors, who often frequented the establishment for breakfast and brunch, trusting in its high standards of food and service.

The Supreme Court's decision to relocate Monal and other eateries from the National Park Area is rooted in environmental concerns. Chief Justice Isa emphasized the importance of preserving the Margalla Hills National Park, a critical natural asset for the country in the decision. The court's order was a response to an appeal against a previous judgment by the Islamabad High Court (IHC) on January 11, 2022, which called for the sealing and takeover of Monal's premises.

While the preservation of national parks is undoubtedly a noble cause, the decision has sparked a debate on the balance between environmental conservation and the protection of long-standing businesses that contribute to the local economy

and culture.

The closure of Monal will have significant repercussions, not just for its customers, but also for its employees. Luqman Ali Afzal, the CEO of Monal Group, expressed deep sorrow and frustration over the decision. In a heartfelt notice to his employees, Afzal advised them to start seeking alternative employment, as the restaurant would cease operations on 11th September 2024. He lamented that he could not absorb the approximately 700 workers in other projects within the company, given the short notice and the scale of the business. Afzal also reflected on the journey of Monal, highlighting how it had become the first choice for many Islamabad residents seeking quality food and a peaceful environment to spend time with their families. The closure of Monal, he argued, would not just be the loss of a business but the end of a place that held countless memories for its patrons.

The Supreme Court's decision to shut down Monal draws parallels with a similar case from September 2021, when a three-

judge bench of the Supreme Court, headed by then-Chief Justice Gulzar Ahmed, ordered the demolition of the Nasla Tower in Karachi. The tower, located on Shahrah-e-Faisal, was deemed illegal, and its demolition left several families homeless, wiping out their life savings and investments. Critics argue that while such decisions may be legally justified, they often fail to consider the broader impact on the public. The Nasla Tower case resulted in a disputed plot of land that remains vacant, while the residents were left without homes. Similarly, the closure of Monal is expected to leave a void in the community, with the Margalla Hills National Park likely remaining unchanged but devoid of a beloved landmark.

The decision to shut down Monal has sparked discussions about the potential consequences for local and foreign investors in Pakistan. When local businesses, built with proper approvals and compliance, are forced to close, it can undermine investor confidence. The uncertainty surrounding such decisions may

deter both local and international investors from putting their money into the country, fearing that their businesses could be at risk in the future. Surprisingly, the authorities and officials who play the culprit in allowing the establishment of such businesses without marking any illegal aspect remain untouched by all means.

As the deadline of 11th September 2024 approaches,

the people of Islamabad and the employees of Monal await the inevitable closure with a sense of loss and uncertainty. While the Supreme Court's decision will remove what it perceives as a hazard from the Margalla Hills National Park, the question remains: at what cost? The closure of Monal will not only affect the livelihoods of hundreds of workers but will also mark the end of a significant chapter

in Islamabad's cultural and culinary history.

The debate over the balance between environmental preservation and the protection of businesses that have become integral to the community is likely to continue. For now, however, Islamabad is set to bid farewell to one of its most cherished establishments, leaving many to wonder if there could have been a better way forward.

Uzbekistan's open and constructive foreign policy is based primarily on national interests

Kozimjon Tojiyev

Uzbekistan's foreign policy is based on the norms and principles of its Constitution, the laws "On the Basic Principles of Foreign Policy of Uzbekistan", "On International Treaties of the Republic of Uzbekistan", "On Defense", the Military Doctrine, on the principles and objectives of the United Nations and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, along with obligations arising from international treaties and agreements of the country, ratified by the Oliy Majlis (Supreme Assembly).

Adopted during a referendum in 2023, the new edition of the Constitution introduced a range of new norms that define the basic principles of foreign policy.

In particular, as the Basic Law stipulates, in the international community, Uzbekistan strives first and foremost to cement and develop friendly relations with neighboring nations based on principles of partnership, mutual support and peace.

In addition, under Article 17 of the Constitution, in its foreign policy the country shall adhere to the principles of sovereign equality of states, non-use of force or threat of force, inviolability of borders, territorial integrity of states, peaceful settlement of disputes, non-interference in the internal affairs of other states and other generally recognized principles and norms of international law. Article 18 stipulates that the Republic of Uzbekistan pursues a peaceful foreign policy aimed at the comprehensive development of bilateral and multilateral relations with states and international organizations.

Mutually advantageous ties have been established with countries distant and near. In recent years, the Uzbek leadership has made more than 100 senior and high-level visits to leading nations of the world like the USA, EU countries, Russia, China, Japan, South Korea, Turkey, Iran, United Arab Emirates, among others. Uzbekistan has been active partic-

ipant of regional and international organizations, including specialized agencies and institutions of the UN, the Commonwealth of Independent States, Shanghai Cooperation Organization, the Organization of Turkic States, the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, and the Economic Cooperation Organization. The country received observer status in the Eurasian Economic Union.

For the first time in its history, Uzbekistan has been elected member of the UN Human Rights Council, and also successfully completed the task of chairmanship in the Commonwealth of Independent States.

In addition, in recent years, bonds with countries of the European Union

policy of Uzbekistan, along with the vision of transforming Central Asia into a region of peace and tranquility, stable development and good neighborliness.

Uzbekistan pays special attention to the advancement of mutually beneficial interaction with adjacent nations and the consolidation of trade and economic ties with them. Thus, in 2022-2023 alone, more than 150 top and high-level events took place in Central Asia. A unique mechanism for the development of regional cooperation - consultative meetings of heads of state in the region - has been introduced.

Practical work has been underway to ensure trade, economic, transport and transit relations among the countries

President of the Republic of Uzbekistan Shavkat Mirziyoyev, 4 important resolutions have been passed by the UN General Assembly.

Uzbekistan attaches great significance to cooperation with the principal international organization of the world, which it has identified as one of the priorities of its foreign policy.

In the current intricate global circumstances, the role and responsibility of the UN have never been so essential as a universal institution designed to unite the efforts of member states to ensure peace and security, stability, protection of human rights and systemic development at the international level in the face of increasing threats to humanity.

increasing the influx of investments into our country.

Efforts are also underway to further enhance relations with the countries of South Asia, the Middle East and Africa, establish mutually beneficial cooperation in new and promising areas, and form transport and logistics corridors connecting the regions and allowing Uzbekistan to enter world markets.

One of the most important tasks of legislative bodies in overseeing the country's foreign policy is to improve the regulatory framework for the effective implementation of foreign policy and foreign economic activity.

The role and importance of the bicameral parliament, the highest representative body of Uzbekistan, has increased in foreign policy more than ever. In recent years, the geography of international relations of the chambers of the Oliy Majlis has expanded significantly, and cooperation with legislatures of other countries and international inter-parliamentary associations has risen to a new level. Thus, during 2015-2019 there were inter-parliamentary groups for cooperation with the parliaments of 28 countries, while in 2020 they numbered 43. Currently, the chambers of the Oliy Majlis have set up bilateral groups of friendship and cooperation with the parliaments of 58 countries. There is also a separate inter-parliamentary committee for cooperation with the European Parliament.

In particular, in 2020, to further strengthen the role of parliament in the development of relations with foreign countries, the Kengash (Councils) of the chambers of the Oliy Majlis of the Republic of Uzbekistan adopted the Concept of Parliamentary Diplomacy. The priority objectives of which are the development of cooperation with other national parliaments, strengthening inter-parliamentary relations to study their legislative experience, ensuring the active participation of the Oliy Majlis in the activities of international inter-parliamentary organizations, informing the international community about the reforms carried out in the country and promoting

Uzbekistan's international initiatives.

In order to further improve cooperation with the parliaments of foreign countries, Kengashes of the chambers of the Oliy Majlis of Uzbekistan adopted a joint resolution on intensifying the work of groups and commissions of the Oliy Majlis for cooperation with the parliaments of foreign countries and expanding practical interaction.

Another direction is to reinforce parliamentary control over the fulfillment of obligations under international treaties of the Republic of Uzbekistan. Thus, systemic efforts are in full swing to achieve national goals and objectives in the field of sustainable development.

Established by the Legislative Chamber and the Senate of the Oliy Majlis, a special parliamentary commission exercises parliamentary control over the implementation by the relevant ministries and departments of the tasks set by the government to achieve national sustainable development goals. At the same time, the assessment of the effectiveness of achieving the set goals is carried out in accordance with corresponding indicators.

The use of modern methods of parliamentary oversight in the realization of sustainable development goals and the use by parliamentarians of the capacities of international organizations will undoubtedly contribute to the successful achievement of national goals and objectives in sustainable development of Uzbekistan until 2030 and will have a positive impact on improving the well-being of the people.

That is, the national legislature today has been entitled broad opportunities to promote national interests on the world stage, acting as a proactive participant in international relations. And the Oliy Majlis aims to further develop international and inter-parliamentary relations for the sake of maintaining peace and security and achieving sustainable development.

Member of the Legislative Chamber of the Oliy Majlis Republic of Uzbekistan



have intensified significantly and acquired a new meaning.

Relations with the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development were restored. Those with the major economic, financial and investment institutions in the world, such as the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, the Asian Development Bank, and the Islamic Development Bank, are steadily developing. Proactive economic diplomacy has become a priority direction of the new foreign

of Central Asia, security and stability issues, those related to state borders, fair use of water resources, consolidation of cultural and humanitarian relations, friendship and good neighborliness among the states and peoples.

Uzbekistan has been active in authoring initiatives of global importance.

New political initiatives in an open, pragmatic and constructive spirit received support from the international community. At the initiative of

Uzbekistan actively participates in the work of the UN and its specialized institutions, including the World Health Organization, International Labor Organization, World Intellectual Property Organization, UNESCO, World Food Program, World Bank, IAEA and others.

The Uzbekistan-2030 Strategy defines the tasks of strengthening interaction with Asia-Pacific countries, increasing the volume and range of exports to regional markets, and

Arshad Nadeem leads standings as first round of Paris Olympics javelin final concludes

Sports Desk

LAHORE: Pakistan's star athlete Arshad Nadeem remained at the top of the standings after the preliminary round of the Paris Olympics Javelin Throw final with a 92.97m throw in his second attempt.

Arshad's 92.97m throw is now the Olympic record, going past Norway's Andreas Thorkildsen, who threw farthest at 90.57 during the 2008 Beijing Olympics.

He carried on the momentum in his third attempt, which went 88.72m.

Arshad failed to make a mark in his first attempt as it was deemed as "No Throw".

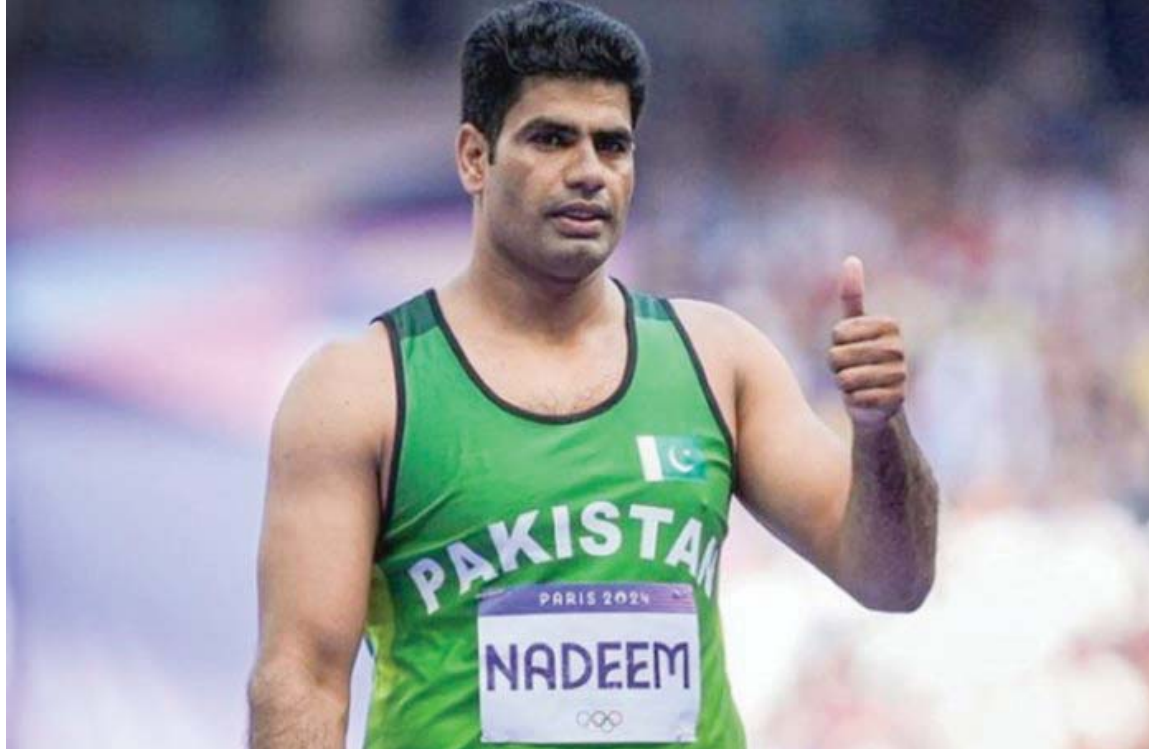
Meanwhile, Indian rival also Neeraj Chopra failed to make a mark in his first attempt before he recovered with an 89.45m throw. His third attempt was also ruled out.

All 12 participants will throw three times in the first stage, after which the top eight athletes will have three more throws.

For the unversed, Arshad Nadeem qualified in the final round of the Javelin throw on Tuesday with an 86.59-meter throw in his first attempt during the qualification round.

"I want to make Pakistan proud in the Olympic Games," Nadeem told a local news channel.

"I am optimistic about delivering a



good result in the final," he maintained while thanking fans for their support.

It is worth mentioning here that Arshad Nadeem is Pakistan's last hope

for a medal in the ongoing Paris Olympics as all of their remaining athletes have been knocked out of the medal race.

Pakistan last won a medal in the Olym-

pics during the 1992 Summer Games in Barcelona, however, Arshad is hopeful that he will once again bring the glory to the country.

Portugal defender Pepe announces retirement at 41

Sports Desk

LAHORE: Portugal veteran Pepe announced on Thursday in a video on social media he was retiring from football aged 41.

"I would like to thank you all," said the centre-back as he cited the clubs he represented, as well as the Portuguese national team and his family.

"Everyone gave me the support I needed to leave with my mind at ease."

Pepe joined Portuguese side Maritimo at the age of 18 and went on to play for Porto, Spanish giants Real Madrid and Turkish club Besiktas.

He spent a trophy-laden 10 years with Madrid, where he won three Champions Leagues, two Club World Cups and three Spanish league titles.

He also enjoyed two stints at Porto, between 2004-2007 and 2019-2024, winning a total of four Portuguese championships and five Portuguese Cups.



Former Madrid and Portugal teammate Cristiano Ronaldo paid homage to Pepe in a post on Instagram: "There are no words to express what you mean

to me, my friend.

"We won everything there was to win on the pitch, but the biggest triumph is the friendship and the respect I have for

you. You're unique, my brother.

"Thank you for so much."

Although born in Brazil, the centre-back made his international debut for his adopted country of Portugal in 2007 and went on to earn 141 caps, winning their first piece of major silverware at Euro 2016, as well as the Nations League three years later.

Pepe set a new record as the oldest player to ever play at a European Championship when he started Portugal's opening game at Euro 2024, aged 41.

Portugal's elimination on penalties at the quarter-final stage of the tournament against France turned out to be the final game of Pepe's 22-year career at the top level of the game.

Portuguese football federation president Fernando Gomes labelled the defender "one of the greatest players of all time" and thanked him for his "extraordinary professionalism, dedication... and passion for football".



Sports Desk

LAHORE: Pakistan's fast bowler Naseem Shah believes team needs to learn from past mistakes and come forward together

Naseem Shah urges Pakistan cricket team to learn from past mistakes

er as a united force.

Speaking to the media here at Islamabad Club, Shah said, "We must play as one team for Pakistan now. We have to learn from our past mistakes and improve."

Shah acknowledged the team's recent struggles, saying, "We haven't had a good

time lately. We didn't play good cricket, but every team goes through such phases."

He emphasized the importance of learning from mistakes and working together to overcome challenges.

On his personal comeback after injury, Shah said, "I'm trying to perform better. International matches are different, and

taking care of your fitness is crucial."

He stressed the importance of prioritizing fitness, saying, "When you play for your country, you know how much you need to maintain your fitness."

Shah said, "The team should work together, and we're doing that. Everyone is playing good cricket now."

Junaid Khan terms India's bowling "zero" without Jasprit Bumrah

Sports Desk

LAHORE: Former Pakistan pacer Junaid Khan took a dig at India's bowling attack following their historic defeat against Sri Lanka in the recently concluded three-match ODI series.

India, on Wednesday, succumbed to their first ODI series defeat against Sri Lanka in 27 years as the home side won the three-match series 2-0.

Sri Lanka came from behind in the ODI series opener to force a tie before Jeffrey Vandersay's 6/33 gave them a resounding 32-run victory in the second fixture.

The home side completely outplayed India in the third ODI, banking on the visitors' woes against their disciplined spin-laden bowling attack.

Meanwhile, former Pakistan pacer Junaid Khan, reacting to India's historic defeat against Sri Lanka, made a major asser-



tion regarding their bowling attack, stating that they are reliant on right-arm pacer Bumrah.

"Would you agree? Without Bumrah, India's bowling is zero... #INDvSL #SLVSIND," he wrote on X.

Remember, Jasprit Bumrah was given rest from India's white-ball tour to Sri Lanka, comprised of a three-match

each ODI and T20I series, in a bid to ensure the pacer's workload management.

Meanwhile, India's captain Rohit Sharma, in response to a question on India's alleged complacency in the series, said that his side will give their best when he is the captain of the team.

"It is a joke. When you are playing for India, there is no complacency. And, as far as I am here captaining the team, it's not going to be the case. You come out here trying to win every game," the Indian captain added.

He acknowledged that the hosts outplayed the visitors throughout the series on the back of all-rounder performances.

"Yeah, we were outplayed throughout the series. You've got to give credit where it is due. Sri Lanka played better than us," Sharma said.

Route of Azadi Marathon released

Tahir Amin Malik

LAHORE: Sports Board Punjab (SBP) has released the route of upcoming Azadi Marathon and Family Fun Race here on Thursday.

The Azadi Marathon and Family Fun Race will be organised on August 11 (Sunday) under the auspices of Punjab Sports Department.

As per route, the participating athletes of Azadi Marathon will kick off the race from Liberty Chowk at 7:00am and cover the 12-km distance via Hafeez Center, Ch Zahoor Elahi Road, Main Market, KFC, Siddique Trade Center, Zafar Ali Road, EFU House, Canal Road, Punjab Cardiology, Shadman Underpass, Tollinton Market, Qurtaba Chowk, Shama Chowk, Ichhra Stop, Muslim Town, PCSIR, Gaddafi Stadium, Kalma Chowk, Center Point and wrap up the race at Liberty Chowk.

Similarly, the participants of Family Fun Race will start their race from Liberty Chowk and cover the 3-km distance via Hafeez Center, Ch Zahoor Elahi Road, Main Market, KFC and finish their race at Siddique Trade Center.

DG Sports Punjab Pervez Iqbal said that Sports Board Punjab is making best arrangements for Azadi Marathon and Family Fun Race. "Medical booths and water points will be set up at several points of the route to cope with any medical emergency," he informed.

Six schemes approved under 'Khailta Punjab' programme

Sports Desk

LAHORE: Secretary Youth Affairs Punjab Muzaffar Khan Sial presided over an important meeting of the Departmental Development Sub-Committee at Punjab Stadium on Thursday.

In the meeting, six sports schemes were approved under Khailta Punjab programme and a digital project was also presented in collaboration with the Sports Department and PITB.

Additional Secretary Farhan Farooq, Project Director PMU Qaiser Raza, Deputy Secretary Marhaba Naimat, Planning Officer P&D Department Sania Sajid, Section Officer Finance Department M Qasim and Deputy Director Tariq Khanzada participated in the meeting.

Addressing the meeting, Secretary Youth Affairs Punjab Muzaffar Khan Sial said that new sports complexes will be built at Taxila, Rawalpindi, Kamoke and Gujranwala. "Gopi Rai and Niaz Beg Sports Complexes will also be constructed in Lahore. Besides this, a modern elite training center is being built in Nishtar Park Sports Complex," he added.

He informed that Kotli Ameer Ali Sports Complex in Sialkot is also being restored. "So far a total of 129 sports schemes have been approved by the Departmental Development Sub-Committee," he maintained.

Muzaffar Sial further said that all possible measures are being taken for the development of sports culture across the province. "Development of sports activities among the younger generation is our mission," he asserted.

Arham Bin Farrukh Shines at TTC Open in Sharjah with Gold and Bronze Medals

Sports Desk

KARACHI: Pakistan's table tennis sensation, Arham bin Farrukh, has made his mark on the international stage by winning both gold and bronze medals at the TTC Open International Table Tennis Championship in Sharjah.

Arham clinched the gold medal in the highly competitive Under-21 category, triumphing over Indian player Akshak in a thrilling final match by 3-1. Score was 9-11, 11-9, 11-7, 11-4. His exceptional performance demonstrated his skill and determination, securing a significant victory for Pakistan.

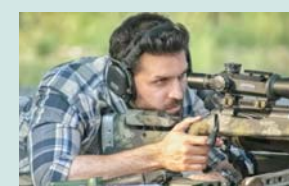
In addition to his gold medal, Arham showcased his versatility and prowess by winning a bronze medal in the open category. He reached the semi-final, solidifying his reputation as a formidable competitor in the international table tennis arena.

This double victory not only highlights Arham's talent but also brings pride to Pakistan.



Pak Long Range shooter Mohsin Nawaz meets DG PSB

Sports Desk



LAHORE: Pakistani long-range F-Class shooter Mohsin Nawaz met with the Director General of the Pakistan Sports Board on Thursday at the Pakistan Sports Complex.

According to details, the meeting highlighted Nawaz's achievements and discussed future support for long-range shooting in Pakistan.

Paris Olympics: India beat Spain to clinch Bronze in Hockey

Sports Desk

LAHORE: India men's Hockey team came from behind to down Spain 2-1 and clinched the bronze medal in the ongoing Paris Olympics 2024.

Spain had a flying start to the third-place playoff as they secured an early lead through their captain Marc Miralles in the 18th minute. The early deficit, however, did not haunt India much as they hit back in the 30th minute to draw level, courtesy of their skipper Harmanpreet Singh.

Singh struck again two minutes later to put India ahead in the 33rd minute.

India's defence then did well to refrain Spain from firing in an equalizer and clung on to their lead till the final whistle.

Notably, a bronze in the Paris Olympics 2024 took India's tally of Olympic medals in Hockey to 13.

This was the nation's second-consecutive bronze medal in field hockey, their first since Munich 1972.

India's men's hockey team entered the Paris Olympics 2024 as the most successful side in Olympic history with eight gold, one silver, and three bronze medals.

The nation that was going downhill in Hockey defied all the odds and ended a 41-year medal drought by claiming the bronze medal at Tokyo 2020.

Meeting

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif chairs a meeting regarding facilitation of investments in Pakistan on Thursday.



Photo: Online

President for unity among Muslim countries to address challenges

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: President Asif Ali Zardari has underlined the need for greater unity and cooperation among Muslim countries to overcome the challenges being faced by the Muslim Ummah. He expressed these views while talking to the Imam of Masjid Al-Nabvi, Dr Salah bin Mohammad M Albdier, who called on him, at Aiwan-e-Sadr, on Thursday.

Welcoming Dr Salah bin Mohammad M Albdier, the President said that Pakistan and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) enjoyed excellent relations, based on common faith, history, and

brotherhood. He expressed satisfaction that relations between two brotherly countries were growing stronger, and reaffirmed Pakistan's commitment to further boosting bilateral ties. He urged the need for promoting cultural and people-to-people relations to bring the two brotherly countries further closer. Reiterating Pakistan's support to KSA, the President said that KSA was a close friend and Pakistan would always stand with Saudi Arabia.

The Imam of Masjid Al-Nabvi said that the leadership and people of KSA highly valued their relations with Pakistan. He stated that Paki-



stan and KSA enjoyed strong partnership and both countries should work together to address the challenges faced by the Islamic World. He lauded the contributions of the Pakistani community towards the development of

Saudi Arabia. He also highlighted that the reforms initiated by the Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman Al-Saud would bring further development and prosperity to KSA.

The President appreciated the courage and vision of Prince Mohammed bin Salman, who was spearheading the process of reforms for the betterment and welfare of the people of KSA. He expressed the hope that the visit of the Imam of Masjid Al-Nabvi would further boost bilateral relations.

The Imam of Masjid Al-Nabvi also prayed for the peace and prosperity of Pakistan.

Ex-PM Imran Khan claims government won't last long

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Former prime minister Imran Khan has given a "deadline" for the end of the government, alleging that the incumbent setup has only two months left.

"I am predicting from jail that the government has only two months left, as it is sinking deeper into the quagmire," he said in an informal conversation with journalists at the Adiala Jail on Thursday. "I have a lot of time, but your time is running out. They are

foolish and don't understand." Khan is incarcerated for more than a year as his legal battles go on. Last month, his party's hopes were dashed when the national-graft buster and the Lahore police arrested him after his conviction in the "un-Islamic" case was overturned. It was the last legal case.

The PTI has described such cases as "politically motivated", a charge which the government denies. Khan has also made conditional offers to the army and a conditional



apology for the May 9 events. While speaking about the £190 million case, the former prime minister stated that he

would produce a witness in court. Khan refused to reveal the identity fearing the safety of the person.

The PTI founder dismissed the notion that he had sought an unconditional apology, stating that he "is only speaking for Pakistan."

Khan said that he would not make any deals and the government could file as many cases as it wants. He alleged that some leaders in the government were instigating the army against PTI to eliminate the party.

Palestine condemns Israeli actions against Norwegian Diplomats

News Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Expatriates unequivocally condemns and rejects the recent decision by Israel, the occupying power, to restrict the work of Norwegian diplomats in the occupied State of Palestine, including Jerusalem. This decision represents a serious and alarming precedent, posing a direct threat to all countries by attempting to influence their principled positions on the occupation's ongoing violations against the Palestinian people.

The Ministry praises the strong bilateral relations between the State of Palestine and the Kingdom of Norway and underscores the critical importance of Norway's diplomatic representation in the State of Palestine.

We express our firm rejection of Israel's attempts to fabricate false pretexts to exert pressure on countries and international institutions that stand in solidarity with our people. Such actions are clearly intended to undermine those who contribute to diplomatic and legal efforts to hold the occupying power accountable for its crimes and violations against the Palestinian people.

Bangladesh Nobel laureate Muhammad Yunus takes charge of caretaker govt

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Bangladesh's Nobel Peace Prize-winning economist Muhammad Yunus was sworn in as the head of the country's caretaker government on Thursday, three days after former prime minister Sheikh Hasina was forced to quit and flee the country following violent protests.

"I will uphold, support and protect the constitution," Yunus said during the swearing-in ceremony, adding that he would perform his duties "sincerely".

Yunus, 84, was recommended for the role by student protesters and returned to Dhaka earlier today from Paris, where he was undergoing medical treatment.

"The country has the possibility of becoming a very beautiful nation," an emotional Yunus told reporters at the Dhaka airport, where he was greeted by top military officers and



student leaders.

"Today is a glorious day for us," Yunus said.

"Bangladesh has created a new victory day. Bangladesh has got a second independence," the economist said.

The student protesters had saved the country and that freedom had to be protected, he said, adding: "Whatever path our students show us, we will move ahead with that."

Yunus called for the restoration of order after weeks of violence that left at least 455 people dead, calling on citizens to guard each other, including minorities who came under attack.

"Law and order is our first task ... We cannot take a step forward unless we fix the law and order situation," he said.

"My call to the people is if you have trust in me, then make sure there will be no attacks against anyone, anywhere in the country."

"Every person is our brother ... our task is to protect them," he said, adding that "the whole of Bangladesh is one big family".

Yunus choked with emotion as he recalled the killing of student activist Abu Sayeed, shot dead in July by police from close range.

He paid tribute to the youth who sparked the protest movement and those who risked all for their desire for change. "They protected the nation and gave it a new life," he said.

Yunus will be the chief adviser in the interim government tasked with holding fresh elections in the South Asian country of 170 million people.

Published by: Almass Ayoub Sabir from Zero Point Printers Rawalpindi

PM approves reform programme for easing of doing business, investment

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif Thursday approved the launch of the largest reform programme of Ease of Doing Business and investment in Pakistan.

The first digital registry of Pakistani laws and rules was initiated to promote business and investment.

The prime minister thanked the international institutions which expressed interest in funding the project.

He directed that agreements with the international institutions which were interested in funding of the project, should be finalized.

He especially thanked the American development partners for their interest in assistance for the implementation of the agenda of economic reforms of the government.

He said besides meetings and consultations the relevant officials and ministries should ensure timely implementation of the policy measures.

The prime minister formed a special committee which would fully focus on the implementation of the project.

He said in the first phase of the project, sectors of high importance would be reformed.

He thanked Dr Scott Jacob for working on the project. He appreciated the Investment Board and

other relevant departments for assistance in formulating a strategy for the project.

Besides Dr Scott Jacob, federal ministers Muhammad Aurangzeb, Ahad Khan Cheema, Attaullah Tarar, Abdul Aleem Khan, Minister for State Shaza Fatima Khawaja, chief secretaries of the four provinces and high level officials attended the meeting.

The meeting was informed about the details of the project and the timeline for its implementation.

It was briefed that all the laws and rules for investment would be compiled together and digitized and all the unnecessary laws and rules which were hurdle in the way of investment and business would be abolished.

Bureaucratic hurdles would be removed and the time needed for registration and permits and other important steps would be reduced through digitization. These steps would not only create ease in doing business and making investments but would also put the private sector on fast pace progress.

It was further briefed that this project would bring Pakistan among those countries in the world which were most suitable for ease of doing business and investment.

The prime minister set the target that in the first part of the project, highly important laws and rules should be collected and compiled on priority basis by December 2024.

Pakistan, Algeria minister discuss enhancing bilateral ties at OIC summit



Spokesman Report

JADDAH: Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of Pakistan, Mr. Muhammad Ishaq Dar, met the Algerian Minister of Foreign Affairs and National Community Abroad, Mr. Ahmed Attaf, on the sidelines of the extraordinary meeting of Foreign

Ministers of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation – OIC in Jeddah on August 7, 2024, where they praised the strong historical relations between the two brotherly countries and stressed the importance to enhance bilateral cooperation in various fields, especially in the areas of trade, partnership and investment.

Government to terminate contracts with 15 IPPs: report

News Desk

ISLAMABAD: The government has decided to review and terminate contracts with 15 independent power producer (IPP) companies in an effort to provide relief to the public burdened by high electricity costs, Express News reported.

The government has initiated relief measures and a task force has finalised the framework for this purpose, the news outlet reported while citing sources within the government.

After the decision, the contracts with six IPPs established in the 1990s would be "immediately terminated" while the agreements with nine other companies would be phased out gradually.

Companies whose contracts will be terminated without extension include Gul Ahmed Energy Limited, Kohinoor Energy, Liberty Power Project, Tapal Energy Limited, Attack Generation, and KAPCO. There would not

be any extension in agreements signed with them.

Moreover, the agreements with Lal Pir, Pakgen, Fauji Kabirwala Power, Habibullah Coastal, Japan Power Generation, Saba Power, HUBCO, Southern Electric Power, and Roush Power would be phased out over the next three to five years.

They added that the agreements with the IPPs installed during the 1990s would also be gradually terminated over the next three to five years.

Meanwhile, a framework has been developed for consumers with more than 201 units, which includes a decision to change the policy of keeping such consumers in the same slab for six months.

Special slabs would be maintained for consumers with more than 201 units. Consideration was being given to setting a rate of Rs26 per unit for electricity consumers with more than 201 units.

