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Imran evades arrest after hours-long standoff

►Islamabad DIG, other policemen injured as PTI workers, police clash over move to arrest PTI chief ►Protests break out in major cities on PTI chairman's call ►President Alvi worries about Imran's safety and dignity ►Imran calls on Pakistanis to stand up for their rights and true freedom



LAHORE: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) workers and police clashed on Tuesday in Lahore's Zaman Park area after a contingent of the Islamabad police, along with armoured vehicles, reached party chief Imran Khan's Lahore residence to arrest the former premier after non-bailable warrants were issued in the ongoing Toshakhana (gift depository) case against him.

The official Twitter handle of the party urged supporters and workers to gather outside the residence and remain peaceful. However, PTI workers reportedly started stoning police officials as the police began baton-charging the crowds, turning Zaman Park into a battleground. Police allegedly used water cannons to hold back PTI workers, with some being taken into custody.

Deputy Inspector General (DIG) Operations Islamabad Shahzad Nadeem Bukhari was reportedly injured in the clashes and taken to Services Hospital for treatment. Apparently, police were forced to retreat towards The Mall after hours-long standoff. PTI workers, meanwhile, laid siege to the path leading to Imran's residence as well as Canal Road.

Earlier, as Imran Khan and other PTI leaders appealed to party workers to stage protests throughout the country, the party workers started protests on different points of Lahore prominently Liberty Chowk, Babi Sabu Interchange and Mall Road.

Protests also broke out in

other major cities. In Karachi, PTI workers protested at 4K Chowrangi, 5 Star Chowrangi, Banaras Chowk, Al-Asif Square, Shaheen Chowk, Mirza Adam Khan Chowk and Murgli Khana.

Videos shared by the PTI's Karachi chapter also showed workers gathered at Qayyumabad Chowrangi, 11 Chundrigar, Hassan Square and Soharb Goth.

The PTI claimed that Sindh police fired tear gas shells at its workers and supporters at Hassan Square to disperse the crowd.

Footage shared by the party showed party workers running away amid the sound of gunfire.

In Peshawar, a large number of PTI supporters demonstrated outside the press club. Workers also blocked Sher Shah Suri road and marched towards the Governor House. Islamabad police said that PTI protesters had blocked Tarnol Road but timely action had been taken to reopen it for traffic. "A case has been registered in Tarnol Police Station against the PTI workers who blocked the road on the orders of Imran Khan," police said.

In Rawalpindi, protesters marched to Committee Chowk and also gathered at Liaqat Bagh but were later dispersed by police officials. In a video message on Twitter, Imran said police had arrived at Zaman Park to arrest him. "They think that after I am arrested, the nation will fall asleep. You have to prove them wrong," he said.

"My fellow Pakistanis, the

police are outside waiting to arrest me. They believe that if Imran Khan is put in jail, the nation will fall asleep. You must prove them wrong. You must show that this nation is alive and kicking," he said. He called on Pakistanis to stand up for their rights and true freedom, stating that he has been fighting this battle all his life and would continue to do so.

However, he warned that if something were to happen to him, his supporters must carry on the fight and never accept the tyranny of the "thieves" who are making decisions for the country, particularly the one man who holds the reins of power. "God has given me everything, and I am fighting this battle for you. I have been fighting this battle all my life, and I will continue to do so," he said.

"But if something happens to me, if I am jailed or if they kill me, then you must show that this nation will carry on fighting. You must never accept the tyranny of these thieves, especially the one man who is making decisions for the country." The situation remained tense in Zaman Park till the filing of this report.

Separately, President Arif Alvi said that he was deeply saddened by today's events. "Unhealthy revenge politics. Poor priorities of govt of a country that should focus on economic misery of the people. Are we destroying political landscape?" he wrote. He said he was concerned about safety and dignity of Imran Khan like that of all politicians. **STAFF REPORT**

PM forewarns of more burden on masses to unlock IMF deal

►Shehbaz hopes staff-level agreement with the Fund would reach within a few days ►Premier comes down hard on Imran for 'defying' courts

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Tuesday warned of "more burden" on the already inflation-hit masses moving forward as Pakistan scrambles and meets the International Monetary Fund's (IMF) conditions for reviving the stalled \$1.1 billion loan tranche.

But he hoped that a staff-level agreement with the IMF would reach within a few days as the government had accepted even the "toughest" conditions put by the global financial institution.

During an interview on Tuesday, the prime minister said that when he came into power, he and his partners were aware that the situation was very bad and that Pakistan was on the brink of default. But what he did not know was "that Imran Khan had completely gone back on the promises he made with the IMF, and I was also not aware that [IMF's] trust in Pakistan was also damaged to a great deal."

The premier also said that due to Khan's repeated backtracking, the Washington-based lender is forcing Pakistan to implement the pre-conditions for unlocking the loan tranche.

"Definitely, these conditions resulted in burdening the masses and they will be burdened further. I absolutely acknowledge this," the prime minister said, mentioning that "hardworking Pakistanis will be burdened by this."

The IMF deal would unlock other bilateral and multilateral financing avenues for Pakistan to shore up its foreign exchange reserves, which have fallen to just four weeks' worth of import cover. Islamabad has met most of the global lender's demands to clear the review. The last one yet to be fulfilled on the list is an assurance on external financing to fund its balance



of payment gap for the current fiscal year, which ends on June 30.

The prime minister also said that it was not only the IMF's conditions that were leading to historic-high inflation but Pakistan was also being impacted due to "imported inflation".

Since his government came into power last year in April after removing Khan from power, PM Shehbaz said the Russia-Ukraine war broke out and resulted in the increase in prices of fertiliser, oil, and other commodities that the nation imports.

As the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) chairman has been facing scores of court cases and avoiding in-person appearances, PM Shehbaz came down hard on Imran Khan for "defying courts - from the Supreme Court to lower courts". The incumbent premier expressed wonder that despite defying all the courts, Khan is getting "relief from everywhere".

When asked if Khan's arrest push his popularity graph up, he replied that the PTI leader has been trying his best to escape arrest. The premier's remarks came as earlier today a heavy contingent of police reached Zaman Park to arrest Imran Khan in the Toshakhana case - the only case in which his arrest warrants are not suspended.

PM Shehbaz also recalled that a judge was removed from his post through a "WhatsApp message" when his senior party leader Rana Sanaulah was arrested in a fake case.

In 2019, Sanaulah was taken into custody by the Anti-Narcotics Force's (ANF) Lahore team while he was travelling from Faisalabad to Lahore. The ANF allegedly recovered drugs from his car. He went on to say that Maryam was arrested when she arrived at the jail to meet her father and the PML-N supremo, Nawaz Sharif, in the tenure of the Khan-led government.

Replying to a question about the appointment of the incumbent army chief, the prime minister said that he made the decision about appointing Asim Munir as chief of the army staff on merit. Premier Shehbaz picked Asim Munir as the new COAS in November 2022.

As per the seniority list provided by the General Headquarters (GHQ), Gen Asim Munir's name was at the top of the list, the prime minister further said.

To another question, PM Shehbaz expressed deep grief over the murder of eminent journalist Arshad Sharif - who was shot dead by the Kenyan police in a "mistaken identity" case while he was travelling to Nairobi from the country's Magadi town in October last year - and vowed to provide him with the justice to the bereaved family. **STAFF REPORT**

Threats to judge: Imran's arrest warrants suspended

►IHC rejects request to fix PTI chief's appeal on same day

Staff Report

ISLAMABAD: A local court on Tuesday suspended the non-bailable arrest warrants of former prime minister Imran Khan till March 16, in the judge-threatening case.

Additional Sessions Judge Faizan Haider Gilani announced the verdict on the petition filed by PTI's chairman. Imran Khan's lawyer adopted the stance that all actions applied in the FIR against his client were bailable. To a question from the judge, he said that previously no warrants were issued in this case. The lawyer said that his client was a former prime minister and it was his right to be provided security. The judge asked whether the petitioner had anything in written regarding the withdrawal of security? he lawyer said that he would provide the same. The judge asked the lawyer to tell any legal reforms introduced by the PTI's government. He said that Imran Khan could come in Kacheri as the court had to provide him copies of the case documents. The prosecutor said that the sections applied in the FIR had no connection with the arrest warrants. PTI's lawyer prayed the court to adjourn the case till March 21, as they had filed a petition to IHC seeking appearance of Imran Khan through video links. Taunting at the judge, he said that then he could adjourn the case for two months.

After hearing arguments, the court suspended

the arrest warrants of Imran Khan till March 16. The court also instructed the lawyer to provide the proof regarding the withdrawal of the security of PTI's chairman. It may be mentioned here that Imran Khan had challenged the arrest warrants on the same day. The petition was filed before the duty judge Sikandar Khan due to the leave of session Judge Tahir Mehmood. However, the case was marked to the court of additional session judge Faizan Haider Gilani. The arrest warrants were issued due to continuous non-appearance of PTI's chairman before the court.

Meanwhile, the Islamabad High Court (IHC) on Tuesday rejected the request of Imran Khan to fix his appeal for hearing on same day against his non-bailable arrest warrants in Toshakhana case. Chief Justice Aamer Farooq would take up the case for hearing today along with the objections raised by the Registrar's office. The Registrar had objected to the petition for having no biometric verification. The petition was moved by Imran Khan's lawyer Imtiaz Panjwani Advocate. It prayed the court suspend the non-bailable arrest warrants of his client in Toshakhana case.

Imran was set to be indicted in the Toshakhana Reference on Feb 28, but his lawyer had requested ADSJ Zafar Iqbal that he be exempted from the hearing because he had to appear in several other courts. His indictment was deferred twice before.

Maryam flays Imran for 'evading' arrest

►PML-N leader says election unacceptable until Nawaz served justice

SHEIKHUPURA: Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz Chief Organizer Maryam Nawaz Tuesday said that mentioned would not be acceptable until and unless party supremo Nawaz Sharif was provided justice.

Addressing the PML-N organisational convention, she said the scale of justice should be balanced first and then elections should be held in the country.

She said the PML-N would not only contest elections but also win it with a thumping majority. She said, "PTI held a rally in Lahore on Monday which was rejected by people, because they did not want to sacrifice their children for a person who hid himself under a charpoy when the police arrived at his residence to arrest him." Maryam regretted that the PTI chairman was using party workers and women as a human shield.

The PML-N leader said she respected Zille Shah, a PTI worker, who was killed in a road accident some days ago. She said that she heard Zille Shah's father telling a TV channel that when the body of his son was lying in a hospital, Imran Khan called him to Zaman Park residence to offer condolences.

Referring to former chief justice Saqib Nisar's remarks about her, she said: "I want to tell 'Dam walaa baba' that Maryam Nawaz has been brought up by Nawaz Sharif and Kalsoom Nawaz, both gentle persons, and their daughter is also a cultured woman." The PML-N chief



organizer said that Nawaz Sharif presented himself for arrest as he had not committed anything wrong. But Imran Khan was not ready to court arrest, as he and his wife were thieves.

She said it was divine justice that Rana Sanaulah, who was implicated in a fake case, was now interior minister of the country, but the person (Imran Khan) who had got registered that case against the PML-N leader, was now running away from police.

Nawaz's reaction
Former prime minister and PML-N supremo Nawaz Sharif taunted Imran Khan for trying to evade his arrest, saying, "If there was a person full of bravery and honour in his place, he would have drowned in shame instead of putting on this circus show [outside his residence]."

"I would have left politics instead of being accused of cowardice and dishonor," he added. **STAFF REPORT**

Governor announces KP Assembly polls on May 28

►Army 'not available' for election duty due to security situation, ECP told ►Punjab officials express inability to ensure foolproof security for elections

PESHAWAR: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) Governor Haji Ghulam Ali on Tuesday announced May 28 as the date for provincial assembly elections. Speaking to reporters after a meeting with Chief Election Commissioner Sikandar Sultan Raja, the KP governor said "my work is to give the date for the elections in the province but conducting the polls falls under the electoral watchdog's domain."

Earlier in the day, the KP governor also met President Dr Arif Alvi, who advised him to "forthwith" announce the date for general elections to the KP Assembly to "avoid any complication". According to a press release issued by the President's Secretariat, the KP governor called on Alvi at the Aiwan-e-Sadr and discussed matters related to the holding of general elections.

"The president advised Ali to implement the apex court's order in letter and spirit wherein it had been directed that the KP governor, after consultation with the Election Commission of Pakistan, forthwith appoint a date for the holding of the general election to the provincial assembly to avoid any complication

as almost a period of two weeks had already passed," it said.

"The president emphasised the need for upholding the Constitution and holding general elections within the given time period, which had been mandated by the Constitution, further affirmed by the Supreme Court of Pakistan, and was essential for strengthening parliamentary democracy in the country," the press release added.

Meanwhile, the ECP was informed on Tuesday that the Pakistan Army will not be available for poll-related duties due to the prevalent security situation within the country and on the borders. A press release issued from the electoral body said that Defence Secretary Lt Gen (r) Hamood Uz Zaman Khan and Additional Secretary Maj Gen Khuram Sarfraz Khan briefed the CEC and ECP officials on the country's prevalent situation and the military's deployment within Pakistan and on its borders.

"They said that the army attaches importance to its basic duties, in which the security of the borders and the country is its first priority. They said that the army is not available for elec-

tion duty at this time due to the present situation in the country," the press release reads.

The defence ministry officials said that the current economic situation of the country was also affecting the army.

However, they added that in the end it would be the government's decision whether it kept the military restricted to its primary duties or appointed it for secondary tasks such as election-related duties. "They also clarified that in case of election duty, the army can be deployed in quick reaction force mode but it is not possible to perform duty in static mode," the press release reads. Moreover, the Punjab chief secretary and the inspector general of police have expressed their inability to provide foolproof security to polls for Punjab Assembly without the assistance of law enforcement agencies.

Briefing the ECP, the chief secretary said that it was not currently feasible to hold elections under current conditions. The IGP said that the deployment of police was not limited to just the polling day but extends to ensuring the safety and security of officials during census and the prevention of crimes. **STAFF REPORT**

PM for enhancing cooperation with Bahrain

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Tuesday, while expressing satisfaction over positive trajectory of the relations between Pakistan and Bahrain, stressed the importance of enhancing mutual cooperation in multiple fields.

The prime minister, in a meeting with Commander of Bahrain National Guard General Shaikh Mohammed Bin Isa Bin Salman Al Khalifa who called on him here, emphasised the bilateral cooperation in the fields of information technology, medicine, construction, food security, and export of Pakistani skilled and semi-skilled human resource.

Both sides discussed avenues of cooperation between the two brotherly countries. The prime minister hailed the historic fraternal ties between the two countries, characterized by common aspirations, respect, and values. General



Al Khalifa acknowledged the deep-seated bilateral relations between the two countries and shared aspirations for further strengthening them in all areas of common interest.

Bahrain currently hosts over 120,000 Pakistani diaspora which contributes significantly towards the progress and development of both nations. Commander

Bahrain National Guard, General Shaikh Mohammed Bin Isa Bin Salman Al Khalifa called on Chief of the Air Staff (CAS), Air Chief Marshal Zaheer Ahmed Baber Sidhu, during his visit to Air Headquarters here on Tuesday.

During the meeting, several key areas of mutual interest along with regional developments were discussed, a Pakistan Air Force (PAF) news release said. On his arrival, a smartly turned out contingent of Pakistan Air Force presented General Shaikh

modernisation plan of smart acquisitions from allied countries, upgradation of infrastructure and revamping of training. The Air Chief highlighted that both the countries enjoyed long lasting religious and historic relationships which were manifested through unprecedented strategic partnership. He also reiterated his resolve to further enhance the existing bilateral ties in military to military cooperation, strategic alliance and the training domain.

The CAS further said, "Pakistan values its strong diplomatic, economic and defence relationship with Bahrain which is based on convergence on all important issues relating to regional peace, security and stability". The visiting dignitary praised the professionalism of PAF personnel and the exceptional progress made by Pakistan Air Force over the years, especially through indigenousization. He also appreciated Pakistan's continuous efforts for regional stability and pledged to play his role



Mohammed Bin Isa Bin Salman Al Khalifa the guard of honour. Later the visiting dignitary was introduced to the Principal Staff Officers. He also laid floral wreath on the martyrs' monument.

The Chief of the Air Staff shared broad contours of PAF's

for further improvement in bilateral military cooperation at all levels. Both the dignitaries vowed to further consolidate cooperation in various fields including training, emerging technologies and mutual cooperation in aviation industry. AGENCIES

PM, Chairman Senate discuss political situation

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and Chairman Senate Sadiq Sanjani met on Tuesday and discussed overall political situation in the country besides matters of mutual interest. During the meeting, they also discussed effective legislation and its importance in the prosperity of the country. Minister for Finance and Revenue Ishaq Dar and Minister for Law and Justice Azam Nazir Tarar were present in the meeting. Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Tuesday expressed grief over the death of the mother of the former mayor of Rawalpindi and senior leader of Pakistan Muslim League (Nawaz), Sardar Naseem. The prime minister in a condolence message termed the loss of a mother as irreparable and prayed for the departed soul to rest in peace. He also prayed for the patience of the bereaved family. Minister for Information and Broadcasting Marriyung Aurangzeb on Tuesday expressed deep grief and sorrow over the death of the mother of senior leader of Pakistan Muslim League (Nawaz) and former mayor of Rawalpindi Sardar Naseem. In a statement, the minister expressed her heartfelt condolences to Sardar Naseem and his family. She prayed to Allah Almighty to rest the departed soul in eternal peace and grant courage to the bereaved family to bear this loss with fortitude. STAFF REPORT

SIGAR exposes India's negative role in Afghanistan

ISLAMABAD: A report by the Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction (SIGAR) has exposed India for playing the role of a spoiler in Afghanistan to fulfill its noxious designs. In its report "Why the Afghan Security Forces Collapsed" SIGAR, Washington's leading oversight authority for Afghanistan reconstruction has indicted India for financially supporting anti-Taliban warlords. The SIGAR is a credible forum that provides independent and objective investigations on the US operation in Afghanistan. The report, published in February this year, says that India funded anti-Taliban warlords who are considered its associates. It quoted a former Afghan general named Hibatullah Alizai who said that Northern Afghanistan leaders Atta Mohammad Noor and Abdul Rasheed Dostum went to India and got money to create resistance in the North that has traditionally resisted Taliban. Hibatullah claimed that he kept requesting Afghan government for funding for operation and supplies but failed. Contrary to that Dostum and Noor got money from Indians easily. However, India has not responded to the report since its release, according to SIGAR. India maintains a history of supporting Northern Alliance and maintaining an anti-Taliban bearing as the country did the same during the Taliban's previous regime from 1996 until October 2001. "The latest report is absolute proof of India's anti-Taliban policy where it has played the role of a spoiler against the Taliban regime," said a defence analyst. He said in addition to its spoiler role in Afghanistan, India maintained a history of funding proxies in the region to fulfill its own noxious designs. India always used Afghanistan as a staging ground and a second front against Pakistan. The analyst recalled that with Taliban coming into power, India got deeply worried about its strategic losses and now trying to mend fences with Taliban, however, Taliban being well conversant with India's spoiler role are quite cautious while dealing with India. He said India knew that peace in Afghanistan would make it a corridor of connectivity benefitting Afghanistan and the region which was not a favorable situation for India. He said for the last two decades, India had fooled the international community, promoted fake narratives, and used Afghan soil to foment terrorism against the region in general and Pakistan in particular. "Spoilers cannot be peacemakers. India is no more relevant vis-à-vis Afghanistan. India is in conflict with every neighbour and it is just illogical and senseless to consider India as a peacemaker," he remarked. APP

Marriage with minor: SC dismisses accused bail

ISLAMABAD: The Supreme Court (SC) on Tuesday dismissed the bail of a person accused of marrying a 14-year old girl and instructed the trial court to early conclude the case. A three-member bench headed by Justice Qazi Faziz Isa heard the case regarding the bail of accused Syed Zafar Ali Shah. Justice Isa questioned how a 14-year old girl could be married in Pakistan. He said that the form-B of the girl was before the marriage and a verified document. The defence lawyer adopted the stance that as per the medical report the said girl was seventeen years old. He said that 14.5 year old girl could get married in accordance of the Islamic laws. The court remarked that they could approach the Parliament for amendments if they had objections on law. To a question, the lawyer said that this crime had a imprisonment sentence in Pakistan. The court subsequently dismissed the bail. STAFF REPORT

EOBI chairman, board members summoned by SC

ISLAMABAD: The Supreme Court (SC) on Tuesday summoned chairman Employee Old-Age Benefits Institute (EOBI) and board members in personal capacity on next hearing in case pertaining corruption in the institution. Chief Justice Umar Ata Bandial remarked that the common people were being affected due to the corrupt practices in the institution. The court instructed the chairman EOBI and the secretary of the institution to appear before the court on the next hearing after preparation. The court remarked that the EOBI was not cooperating in property matters, adding that very the institution was so undisciplined. EOBI's lawyer said that inquiries were pending against the institutions for ten years in FIA and NAB. He said that EOBI's chairman Syeda Naheeda Durran's office was in Karachi. The EOBI's officials said that the department also had 16 boards of trustees besides a chairman and secretary. The chief justice instructed the chairman EOBI and secretary before the court on Thursday in SC's Karachi Registry. The further hearing of the case was then adjourned. STAFF REPORT

Pakistan Global Institute Bill ratified

ISLAMABAD: President Dr Arif Alvi on Tuesday gave his assent to the Pakistan Global Institute Bill 2022. The bill provides for the establishment of Pakistan Global Institute, according to a President House statement. The president signed the bill exercising his powers under Article 75 of the Constitution. STAFF REPORT

57 new corona cases reported

ISLAMABAD: Health officials on Tuesday said that 57 new Coronavirus cases were reported during the last 24 hours across the country. As per the data shared by the National Institute of Health (NIH), the case positivity ratio was 1.92 percent while 14 patients were in critical condition. No death was reported from the Coronavirus in the last 24 hours while 2,766 Covid-19 tests were conducted. As many as 584 tests were conducted in Lahore out of which, 10 cases were confirmed with a ratio of 1.71 percent, while 184 tests were conducted in Rawalpindi out of which 15 cases were reported confirmed with a ratio of 8.15 percent. One case was confirmed from 84 tests in Sargodha with a ratio of 1.19 percent. Meanwhile, Minister for National Health Services, Regulations, and Coordination, Abdul Qadir Patel said the government has strengthened the role of Border and Health Services in Pakistan to deal with any sub-variant of Covid-19. The minister said there was a surveillance system at all entry points of the country including airports. There will be rapid tests and screening of passengers at all airports, he added. He said the situation was completely under control and asked the general public to avoid listening to rumours. He added the Corona case positivity ratio was just 0.3 to 0.5 in the country while 90 per cent of the country's population already got the Covid-19 vaccine. "An efficient system with a proper management team is fully functional in the country to remain vigilant and is ready to make an emergency plan to deal with any sub-variant of Covid-19," the minister added. STAFF REPORT

EIA REPORT - NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

This notice is published for the information of all stakeholders and general public that EPA Punjab has admitted the application of the following project to accord Environmental Approval required under Section 12 Punjab Environmental Protection Act 1997.

Name of Project	Location	District
Establishment of Hotel Building of M/S One View Hotel	Old Buxley Lodge, Property No. 79/H, Kuldana Road, Tehsil Murree, District Rawalpindi	Murree

2. All stakeholders and general public are invited to submit their comments for/against the grant of Environmental Approval. The comments may be submitted to Director EIA, EPA, Punjab, National Hockey Stadium (Qaddafi Stadium), Ferozepur Road, Lahore within a period of 07 days from the date of publication of this notice. Copy of Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) report submitted by the proponent of the project is available at the following locations for review of stakeholders/general public.

- EPA Library, National Hockey Stadium / Qaddafi Stadium, Lahore
- O/o Deputy Director (Environment), Rawalpindi
- Official Website of EPA Punjab (epd.punjab.gov.pk)
- O/o M/S One View Hotel Located at Old Buxley Lodge, Property No. 79/H, Kuldana Road, Tehsil Murree, District Rawalpindi

Date	Day	Time	Location
25-03-2023	Saturday	11:00 AM	Unique Valley View Hotel & Restaurant, Main Expressway, Lakot, Murree

4. All stakeholders and the general public are invited to attend the hearing proceedings to share their proposal/suggestions.

Director General Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) National Hockey Stadium / Qaddafi Stadium, Lahore Ph# 042-99232230	Mr. Waleed Wazir, Chief Executive Officer, M/S One View Hotel, Bandi P/o Khas, Rawat, Murree, District Rawalpindi Contact No. 0305-8171429
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NDMA asks disaster management authorities to prepare for contingencies

►Notice issued as heatwaves, forest fires, and glacial lake outburst floods expected

ISLAMABAD: The National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) has issued detailed guidelines for the departments concerned to ensure timely measures for disaster risk management (DRM) during the upcoming summer season.

The Authority in its guidelines mentioned that with the onset of the summer season; heatwaves, forest fires and glacial lake outburst flood (GLOF) events could be expected across the country in respective hazard-prone areas. It noted that based on the vulnerability of different regions, the impacts could vary, hence requiring requisite preparations by respective disaster management authorities, rescue agencies, line departments and local administrations.

The NDMA guidelines underscored the need for proactive measures from all provincial disaster management authorities (PDMAs), state disaster management authority (SDMA-AJK), Gilgit Baltistan Disaster Management Authority (GBDMA), Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) administration, health departments, line departments, rescue agencies, responders, urban search and rescue (USAR) teams, Armed Forces and federal departments and ministries to undertake dynamic measures to ensure timely preparations and response against likely hazards.

For Heatwave, the guidelines stated that PDMAs in collaboration

with district disaster management authorities (DDMAs) and local administration, would carry out extensive awareness campaigns for sensitizing the public to likely dangers associated with heatwave-like conditions and associated preventive measures. Moreover, the ministries, departments and local administration should undertake the required measures for protecting children from exposure to heatwave conditions in education institutes. Identification of high-risk areas and establishment of heat-stroke treatment centres with required doctors and paramedic staff and water.

It also advised the Ministry of National Health Services, Regulations and Coordination (MoHNS&C) to issue necessary instructions to all concerned for enhancing departmental and hospital capacities to manage heatwave conditions. For individual measures, the NDMA guidelines advised the masses to remain hydrated; drink sufficient quantity of water, keep a drinking water bottle for regular intake, stay cool; avoid exposure to direct sunlight and crowded spaces, remain informed; keep track of local weather conditions to avoid exposure to extreme conditions and in case of any signs of illness consult a qualified physician to seek expert medical advice.

It also exhorted to plan work, exercise and outdoor activities; manage work timeline according to weather conditions and avoid

unnecessary exposure to heatwave-like conditions, special attention and care to the elderly and people with underlying health conditions must be ensured. The guidelines also underscored the need for vehicular fitness as vehicles and humans both can be adversely affected due to heatwave-like conditions, ensure that moves and travels were planned to avoid unnecessary exposure to heat and sun.

For Forest and Urban Fires, it is advised to carry out immediate risk and vulnerability assessment of respective regions to identify fire-prone sites and areas. The NDMA guidelines also demanded expediting the work of preparation and mitigation measures in forests namely the creation of fire lines and lanes, ditching, clearance of dry foliage, and dry grass, planning and executing controlled fires. All measures in line with standard operating procedures (SOPs) of the forest department must be ensured.

It also underscored the need for fire drills, the fitness of equipment, readiness of water supply and replenishment points, checking and refilling of fire extinguishers, and local communities' engagement at fire-prone sites to enable round-the-clock monitoring and feedback mechanism for early warnings and alerts for at-risk population and assets, (areas in the vicinity of forests and high-rise buildings/ storage facilities/ warehouses etc).

The NDMA in its guidelines also advised holding forest and urban fire mock exercises for both departmental preparedness and combined exercises with all stakeholders for the readiness of men and machinery and equipment. For the GLOF events, it mentioned carrying out immediate risk and vulnerability assessment of respective regions to identify possible GLOF sites and areas in addition to already identified locations.

It also noted to ensure a clock monitoring mechanism, and arrangements through all possible means and resources, especially involving the local communities for immediate dissemination of early warnings. Moreover, a mass awareness campaign for the general public on GLOFs in at-risk areas covering key steps like avoiding unnecessary movement in such areas, especially across nullahs, streams and rivers, high risk associated with the exponential rise of flow or discharge, which can result in washing away of houses, infrastructure, vehicles, humans and livestock, alerting general masses living in low-lying areas to exercise extra caution including community-based alert system, evacuation plan of at-risk community and conduct of evacuation drills. The law enforcement agencies (LEAs) and Traffic Police should advise travellers regarding likely situations, dangers and safety measures, it added. AGENCIES

Three-day workshop on journalists' safety kicks off at FCCU

Staff Report

LAHORE: Forman Christian College University Faculty of Humanities, at Forman Christian College (A Chartered University) in collaboration with Journalism & Media International Center (JMIC), Oslo Metropolitan University, Norway, hosted a three-day workshop on "Journalist Safety, Ensuring physical and mental safety of Journalists amid violent events" on Tuesday.

The workshop which would continue for three days is aimed at making sure that the journalists are aware of their personal safety amidst dangerous situations and how to deal with government protocol and their own mental health surrounding the aftermath of such chaos.

International war correspondent Abeer Saady joined the workshop as a trainer.



Dr Altaf Khan, the Dean of Humanities inaugurated the workshop and in his opening remarks said "Violent events create an ecosystem and it is important to revisit protocols to understand the system". Abeer Saady discussed the safety of Journalists and said

during one of her sessions regarding Risk Assessment, "you should not become a story while covering a story".

The day was divided into 5 sessions each including interactive activities for the participants to make sure that the purpose of this workshop was fulfilled and the message was conveyed. The workshop gathered media academics and journalists from various parts of the country.

The next two days, Abeer Saady will further discuss the importance of Journalists Safety and its different perspectives.