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President calls for timely justice delivery to avoid aggravation of disputes

Says no nation needs any foreign aid if they truly follow the values and teachings of Islam

QUETTA (APP): President Dr Arif Alvi on Wednesday called for early disposal of the small domestic cases to avoid the aggravation of disputes and bloodshed.

He said the federal and provincial ombudsmen had their key role in the promotion of public service and good governance.

Addressing a seminar here, the president said as a member of National Assembly (NA) in 2017, he proactively worked for passing a bill related to alternate dispute resolution to reduce the burden on the mainstream judiciary.

Dr Arif Alvi pointed out, "When physical interaction was not possible

owing to security issues, the executives including himself must have arranged online setups such as "Zoom meetings" to ensure direct communication with the common people to guarantee timely justice delivery."

Last night, he said, "He disposed of 10 cases of the federal ombudsman and normally he disposes of the cases of appeals in just a few hours."

The president also stressed the need to raise awareness about the role of the ombudsman as few people were currently aware of its role.

He also directed for removal of obstacles in the way of interaction between

government officials and the common people.

He said, "Islam teaches people to show patience and forgiveness to promote peace and harmony in society."

"No nation needs any foreign aid if they truly follow the values and teachings of Islam."

Referring to the living standards of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) and the His companions, the president also asked the country's executives to follow them and adopt the living standard of the common man.

Speaking about the importance of woman's rights and their participation in

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LAHORE: Foreign Minister of Belarus Sergei Aleinik calls on the Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif.

CM urges airlines to increase Quetta flights

Quetta International Airport's main runway upgrade receives high praise from CM

Independent Report
QUETTA: Chief Minister Mir Abdul Qudoos Bizenjo on Wednesday expressed delight and congratulated the successful completion of the main runway upgrade and activation at Quetta International Airport.

He commended the performance of the airport manager and project director and extended his heartfelt congratulations on the significant project's accomplishment. The Chief Minister conveyed his appreciation during a ceremony held to mark the occasion.

Addressing the audience, Chief Minister Mir Abdul Qudoos Bizenjo hailed the modernization of the runway, equipped with state-of-the-art airport lighting systems, at a cost of five billion rupees. He stated that now Quetta will

be able to accommodate Boeing 777 and its equivalent aircraft, enabling their smooth landings during all types of weather conditions, day and night.

Highlighting the geographical significance of Quetta for the provincial government, the Chief Minister emphasized that the city holds immense commercial importance due to its proximity to Iran and Afghanistan. The availability of landing facilities for larger aircraft will enhance trade and tourism activities in the province.

CM further stated that the completion of the project will provide the people of Quetta with improved air travel facilities, and it is expected that other airlines, including PIA (Pakistan International Airlines), will increase their flights to and from Quetta.



QUETTA: A delegations of Editors Council Balochistan led by Anwar Sajidi meeting with Principal Secretary of Chief Minister Imran Gichki

Ejaz Ahmed Qureshi says 95 percent victims get relief through Federal Ombudsman institution

Independent Report
QUETTA: The Federal Ombudsman, Ejaz Ahmed Qureshi has stated that we

have heard 164,000 complaints during the year 2022 with 110,000 heard during 2021 at the Federal Ombudsman secretariat and its other offices in the country.



He said that it is our utmost endeavor to provide relief to the maximum people. He said that we

Mr. Qureshi said that all departments have effective coordination in the province. He said that we try to resolve the federal government institutions' related issues at federal level if not resolved at the provincial level.

He said that the issues related to the orphan children, pensions and utility bills are registered for resolution at the federal ombudsman offices.

He said that the federal ombudsman advisors are going at the divisional level, however, we are also creating awareness through the newspapers.

He mentioned that the departments and institutions accept their mistakes in almost 70 percent issues, however, implementation on our orders is made on remaining 30 percent issues.

Soldier martyred as terrorist attack on polio team in Spinwam thwarted

RAWALPINDI (APP): A soldier of the Pakistan Army embraced martyrdom on Wednesday while successfully thwarting a terrorist attack on polio vaccination team in general area Spinwam of North Waziristan District of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province.

According to an Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) news release, the terrorists attempted to disrupt the ongoing polio campaign by firing on the members of a polio team, employed in the general area Spinwam of North Waziristan District.

The security forces, deputed to provide protection to the polio team, effectively engaged the terrorists ensuring safety of all members of the team and extricated them unharmed.

Martial law has been imposed: Imran Khan

ISLAMABAD (Online): PTI chairman Imran Khan has said half martial law has been imposed.

"Staging protest in front of GHQ is our right. The democracy will end if the citizens are tried in military courts, he said in an interview with US media.

He held the law and constitution allow us to stage peaceful protest. Voicing protest in front of GHQ is our right. PTI people did not go inside and on the other hand they were stopping others to go inside.

About May 9 incident, Imran Khan said the fire broke out at four and five places. The places like corps commander house and radio Pakistan were included in them. Cameras will be therein. Safe city cameras are therein. Every thing will become known. This inquiry is very simple.



QUETTA: - President Dr. Arif Alvi addressing a seminar on the role of Ombudsman in safeguarding public rights and good governance, at Governor House

Pakistan highly values its broad-based ties with Belarus: PM

LAHORE (APP): Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif Wednesday said Pakistan greatly valued its cordial and broad-based relations with Belarus.

He also affirmed Pakistan's commitment towards building mutually beneficial cooperation with Belarus in all areas, including economic, agriculture, science and technology, information technology, education, and culture domains.

The prime minister received Foreign Minister of Belarus Sergei Aleinik, the PM Office Media Wing said in a press release.

Foreign Minister Aleinik conveyed the warm greetings of President Lukashenko to the prime minister, while highlighting

that Belarus regarded Pakistan as an important country in the region and appreciated its efforts to promote regional peace and stability. The prime minister also briefed the foreign minister on the human rights violations by India in the Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK).

Noting that Pakistan and Belarus would be commemorating the 30th anniversary of the establishment of their diplomatic relations in 2024, the prime minister welcomed continued high-level exchanges and engagement.

In this regard, he also reiterated his invitation to the Belarusian president to undertake a visit to Pakistan, at his earliest convenience.



QUETTA: Governor Balochistan Malik Abdul Wali Khan Kakar seeing off President Dr. Arif Ali at Quetta Airport

Governor emphasizes reforms for justice system and good governance

Independent Report
QUETTA: Governor of Balochistan, Malik Abdul Wali Khan Kakar, has stated the need to address deficiencies and ambiguities in the justice system's delivery of justice and implement reforms in accordance with the demands of time and human needs.

Expressing concern, he highlighted that our courts generally lack affordable and prompt justice, making it unaffordable for the common man to pay exorbitant

fees to lawyers. He voiced these concerns while addressing the participants of a one-day seminar titled "Protection of Public Rights and the Role of Accountability in Good Governance" held at Governor House, Quetta.

The special guest at the seminar was President of Pakistan, Dr. Arif Alvi. The event saw the attendance of parliamentarians, Federal Ombudsman Aijaz

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Quetta Airport's upgraded main runway inaugurated with successful flight landing

Independent Report
QUETTA: Quetta International Airport's main runway, 13L/31R, has undergone a successful upgrade and is now operational. The first flight, PK-325 (Islamabad-Quetta), landed on the newly upgraded runway at 6:20 am. Airport Manager Malik Mazhar and Project Director were present during the landing.

After the successful landing on the upgraded runway, the pilots of the flight met with the Airport Manager. During the meeting, the pilots congratulated the Airport Manager on the completion of the project and praised the smooth and beautiful landing experience. They highlighted the excellent installation of the runway lights, which made

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ISLAMABAD: Balochistan Home Minister Mir Ziaullah Lango, Senators Danesh Kumar, Abdul Qadir, MNAs Aslam Bhotani and Khalid Magsi meeting with Chairman Senate Muhammad Sadiq Sanjrani

British CGS lauds Pakistan Armed Forces' sacrifices in fight against terrorism

RAWALPINDI (Online): Gen Sir Nicholas Patrick Carter, chief of general staff (CGS) of the UK Army, on Wednesday called on Chief of Army Staff (COAS) General Asim Munir and acknowledged the Pakistan Army's sacrifices in the fight against terrorism.

According to a press release issued by the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR), Gen Sir Sanders met Gen Munir at the General Headquarters in Rawalpindi.

"Upon arrival at the GHQ, CGS UK Army laid a floral wreath at Yadgar-e-Shuhada [memorials of martyrs]. A smartly turned-out contingent of the Pakistan Army presented the guard of honour to the visiting dignitary."

During the meeting, regional security issues and matters of mutual interest were discussed.

"The visiting dignitary acknowledged the sacrifices and achievements of the Pakistan Army in the fight against terrorism and efforts for bringing peace and sta-

bility in the region," the ISPR said.

The statement added that Gen Sir Sanders also called on Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee General Sahir Shamshad Mirza at the Joint Staff Headquarters in Rawalpindi earlier today.

The British army chief arrived in Pakistan on Monday for a five-day "defence engagement" visit.

"Gen Sir Sanders' visit came almost a year after Pakistan's devastating floods which left nearly one-third of the country submerged and affected an estimated 33 million people, the ISPR had said in a statement issued earlier this week. "The UK's ministry of defence was directly involved in providing assistance for flood relief operations, airlifting in eight boats and 10 portable generators at the request of Pakistan's Chief of Army Staff," it added.

"Discussing bilateral military cooperation in response to climate change-related crises will be a key focus of the visit."



RAWALPINDI: Chief of General Staff (CGS) UK Army, General Sir Patrick Nicholas Yardley Monrad Sanders laid floral wreath at Yadgar-e-Shuhada during his visit to General Headquarters (GHQ) in Rawalpindi.

Launch of Balochistan health card program marks milestone agreement

National identity card of every individual to serve as Health card; Helpline set up by State Life Insurance Corporation to work 24/7 to facilitate all

Independent Report
QUETTA: In a significant development for healthcare in Balochistan, a momentous agreement has been reached between the Health Department and State Life Insurance Company, marking the launch of the Balochistan Health Card Program, on Wednesday.



The ceremony, attended by Provincial Health Minister Syed Ehsan Shah, Chairman B.R.A Noor ul Haq Baloch, Chairman State Life Insurance Shoaib Javed Hussain, Secretary Health Asfandiyar Khan, and Executive Directors of State Life Insurance, Munawar Ali Sheikh and Abdul Shakoor Sheikh, witnessed the signing of the Health Card Agreement by Chief Executive Officer of Balochistan Health Card Program, Assadullah Kakar, and Divisional Head of State Life Insurance Company, Mohammad Ashar. Expressing his optimism, Provincial Health Minister Syed Ehsan Shah emphasized the significance of the State Life partnership, stating that the health sector holds a prominent position in the government's priorities.

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Mitha Khan Kakar says PM meeting with Iranian President to make Pak-Iran relation more cordial

QUETTA (APP): Adviser to Chief Minister Balochistan on Information Haji Mitha Khan Kakar on Wednesday said meeting between Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi would make friendly relations of both the countries more cordial.

He expressed these views while talking to Iran's Deputy Consul General, Fereydoon Perlorin who called on him at his residence, said a handout issued here.

Director General of Khana-e-Farhang Quetta, Syed Abul Hasan Meeri was also present.

The advisor said that exchanges of delegations at cultural, journalistic and

businessmen's levels were necessary to make Pakistan-Iran bilateral relations more stable. He lauded the improvement in relations between Saudi Arabia and Iran and termed it in the interest of the Muslim world.

Fereydoon Perlorin said that Iran was always ready to provide electricity and gas facilities to Pakistan.

"Businessmen and parliamentarians can play a key role in increasing the volume of trade between the two countries," he said, adding that launching direct flights from Quetta to Tehran and Mashhad and improving the Quetta-Taftan railway track would benefit people, including businessmen and visitors.

IHC stops special committee from initiating proceedings against son of former CJP

ISLAMABAD (Online): Islamabad High Court (IHC) has stopped the special committee constituted to probe into audio leaks to initiate proceedings against son of former Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) Saqib Nisar.

The petition filed against formation of special committee came up for hearing before a single bench of IHC led by Justice Babar Sattar here Wednesday.

During the hearing of the case Justice Babar Sattar questioned is it a special committee.

Lawyer Latif Khosa replied the same rules will be for special committee

which are for ordinary committee.

The court while addressing Latif Khosa said you will have to make concerned ministry a party.

Latif Khosa replied there is no respective ministry in this matter. Even then we will make. We have challenged only this that speaker and assembly are not authorized to see the private matter.

What matter is pending hearing in Supreme Court (SC) we haven't challenged it, he stated. Audio leak is alleged conversation made between two private persons. Parliament is not authorized to see the matters of private people.

Later the court stopped the special committee from initiating proceedings against son of former CJP Saqib Nisar.

The court also suspended call up notice issued by special committee of parliament to Najam Saqib.

Justice Babar Sattar also removed the objections raised by registrar office on the petition.

The court issued notice to federal government for June 19. The court has sought reply from records audios. Special committee issued notice under what powers. The court has also sought parawise comments.



LAHORE: Chief of the Naval Staff, Admiral Muhammad Amjad Khan Niazi addresses the audience during 52nd PN Staff Course Convocation Ceremony held at PN War College in Lahore.

IRI has always been at forefront to promote Islamic social reforms: Zafarul Haq

ISLAMABAD (INP): Secretary General, World Muslim Congress, Raja Zafarul Haq has said that Islamic Research Institute (IRI) of International Islamic University, Islamabad (IIUI) has always been at the forefront of promoting Islamic social reform and the reconstruction of society.

He was speaking as chief guest of the first graduation ceremony of IRI held at the Faisal Masjid Campus on Wednesday. Prof. Dr Hathal Hamoud Alotabi, President International Islamic University and Chairman Council of Islamic Research Institute chaired the ceremony.

On the occasion, certificates were conferred upon over one hundred scholars of postdoctoral in-

ternational fellowship. Scholars who were conferred awards hail from Pakistan, Maldives, Iraq, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and Afghanistan.

In the ceremony, certificates were also conferred in the categories of Postgraduate Training on Academic Research and Scientific Writing and Undergraduate Training on Research and Technical Writing.

Senator Raja Zafarul Haq said that notably, the recent initiative of Paigham-e-Pakistan, which has provided our nation with a platform to unite on a peace narrative, deserves immense praise. "I hope that the Islamic Research Institute and the International Islamic University will continue their journey and expand the

scope of these training programs, benefiting an even greater number of individuals and fostering unity and harmony in our society," he said.

The ceremony was attended by a galaxy of renowned Islamic researchers, scholars and intellectuals including Dr. S.M Zaman former Vice Chancellor AIOU, Former Chairman Council of Islamic Ideology & Former Vice President (A&F) of IIUI and Former Director General of Islamic Research Institute. It was also attended by Prof. Dr Ahmed Shujah Syed Vice President Research and Enterprises, Prof. Dr. Muhammad Khalid Masud, Former Chairman Council of Islamic Ideology and Former Director General of IRI, Prof. Dr. Sahibzada Sajid Ur Rehman Former Vice President IIUI/Former Director General of Dawah Academy, Former Professor of IRI and Director of Seerah Chair at AIOU, Directors General, Deans, Directors, professors, Present and former Scholars of IRI, Officers and officials of IRI & IIUI, IRI Postdoctoral Fellows, IRI Under Graduates and post Graduate research fellows.

The delegation comprising am-

Rs 1.60 per unit increase in power tariff likely for April

ISLAMABAD (APP): Power tariff is likely to be increased by Rs 1.60 per unit for April under monthly fuel cost adjustment (FCA) mechanism as National Electric Power Regulatory Authority (NEPRA) on Wednesday concluded public hearing into the petition filed by Central Power Purchasing Agency (CPPA-G) on behalf of XWDISCOs.

The CPPA-G sought Rs 2.01 per unit increase on account of FCA for month of April.

The hearing was presided by the NEPRA Authority comprising Chair-

man NEPRA, Tauseef H. Farooqi, Member (Licensing), Engr. Maqsood Anwar Khan, Member (Technical & Finance), Mathar Niaz Rana and Member (Law), Ms. Amina Ahmed.

However, as per the authority calculation, the raise was Rs 1.60 per cent. The Authority would issue detailed judgment after examining the statistics.

The hearing was also attended by large number of representatives and senior officials of XWDISCOs, CPPA-G, NTDC/NPCC, the business community, journalists and general public etc.



MANILA: A group photograph of Secretary Workers Welfare Fund, Zulfiqar Ahmad at the Asia-Gulf Cooperation Council.

Governor emphasizes....

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Qureshi, Provincial Ombudsmen from all four provinces, senior government officials, lawyers' fraternity, individuals associated with industry and trade, as well as a significant number of men and women from various other fields.

Referring to pending cases that have been under trial for years in various courts, he pointed out that the delay in justice is essentially the loss of valuable time and money for the poor.

It is imperative to expedite judicial proceedings, change the archaic procedures, and introduce new reforms. Governor Balochistan highlighted that resolving land disputes and cases of murder as tribal feuds or taking personal initiatives in the presence of police, Levies, and administration is an abso-

lute inappropriate and improper approach. It is essential for the administration, police stations, and courts to play a substantial role in crime prevention and control. He stated that cases of sexual harassment hold sensitive nature and such incidents, wherever they occur, are regrettable.

However, using cases of sexual harassment for personal revenge, enmity, or manipulation is also condemnable. Governor Balochistan emphasized that human rights organizations, including courts, police stations, and other institutions, should remain constantly connected with the public and work collaboratively to combat all forms of crime effectively and proactively.

Governor Balochistan congratulated Provincial Ombudsman Nazir Baloch and his entire team on the successful organization of the seminar.

FM to attend Jordan's royal wedding, meet Iraqi leadership

ISLAMABAD (APP): Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari is travelling this afternoon to Jordan and Iraq, the Foreign Office said on Wednesday.

In the first leg of the visit, the Foreign Minister will travel to Jordan to attend the royal wedding.

From Jordan, the Foreign Minister will visit Iraq from June 5-7.

"During the visit, the Foreign Ministry will meet with Iraqi leadership, and hold detailed meeting with his counterpart," the FO said.

Quetta Airport's upgraded...

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the landing even more remarkable. The Airport Manager expressed gratitude for the pilots' appreciation and mentioned that the project cost approximately five billion rupees. He further explained that the upgraded runway is equipped with the latest airport lighting system and is capable of accommodating various aircraft, including Boeing 777 and its equivalent, for landings in all weather conditions, day and night.

The completion of the main runway upgrade at Quetta International Airport marks a significant milestone in enhancing the airport's capabilities. The successful landing of the first flight signifies the improved infrastructure and services available for air travel in Quetta. This development is expected to further facilitate connectivity and contribute to the growth of trade and tourism in the region.



QUETTA: President Dr. Arif Alvi and Governor Balochistan Malik Abdul Wali Khan Kakar in a group photo with participants of seminar

Interior Minister says: Nawaz Sharif to return home soon

ISLAMABAD (APP): Interior Minister Rana Sanaullah on Wednesday said that PML-N supremo Nawaz Sharif had the right to get relief from the fabricated cases against him and expressed his confidence that Nawaz Sharif will return home soon to lead the party for the general election 2023 campaign.

"Innocent Nawaz Sharif should be granted the opportunity to plead his case before a court," he said in an exclusive talk with a private news channel. PML-N would move the court to review on Nawaz Sharif's disqualification as

the party chief, he added.

Replying to a question, Sanaullah said that the PML-N leader was not like PTI chief Imran Khan who is hiding behind bail.

"We never took bails in our cases because fake cases were registered against us," he added.

To another question, the interior minister said, "We have our own committed party leaders and PPP has the right to form the government in Punjab." He further said that his party was not afraid of any new political party, saying if there will be, it would not be a challenge for PML-N.

Ramesh stresses for religious tourism promotion through Gandhara sites

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister of State, Chairman for Prime Minister (PM) Task Force on Gandhara Tourism Dr Ramesh Kumar Vankwani on Wednesday stressed the need to further explore the sacred sites and monuments built during Gandhara era as to promote religious tourism in the country.

PM's Task Force organized a visit to the Buddha's archaeological sites and caves in Shah Allah Ditta, D-12 here. The delegation comprising am-

bassadors of Thailand and Indonesia, diplomats, members of civil society and media attended the event.

Talking to the media, Ramesh said, "Islamabad Capital Territory's history is as old as human history."

The chairman apprised that evidence of Hinduism and Buddhism religions were existing in the federal capital. He underlined the need to explore these sites to attract international tourists to Pakistan, with an aim to generate revenue through religious tourism.

Economic stability linked with political stability: Dar

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Finance and Revenue Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar on Wednesday said that economic stability is linked with political stability as lenders, investors and financial organizations make decisions while considering the country's said improving prospects.

Talking to a private news channel, he said that the finance ministry had completed all technical formalities for the ninth review of the International Monetary Fund's (IMF) program.

"It is unfortunate that the review has been delayed by three months, but we have completed all prior actions," he said. "We have

to control our internal expenditures. The IMF programme will conclude on June 30," he added.

The minister said that the finance ministry had reduced the current account deficit. He said some internal and external elements blatantly attempted to destabilize the country's economy.

The budget preparation was in the final stage, said Dar, adding that the government would present a business-friendly budget in order to avoid further burdening the poor.

"The devaluation of the currency has heightened the inflation and the government is aware of the people's suffering and assured that every promise

made with the public would be fulfilled," he assured.

"The government is working on the formation of a comprehensive strategy to bring the dollar price down to its actual level which is less than 250 rupees," he apprised.

Senator Ishaq Dar said that human rights were not being violated in the prosecution of perpetrators of the May 9 mayhem, reiterating that those responsible for targeting the military installations would be prosecuted in military courts.

He also blamed Imran Khan and other PTI leaders for brainwashing youth in a bid to create chaos and unrest in the country.



LAHORE: Advisor to PM for Kashmir and Gilgit Baltistan Affairs, Qamar uz Zaman Kaira calls on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif.

CJP sends complaints against SC judge Justice Mazhar to SJC members

ISLAMABAD (Online): The Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) has sent the complaints filed against the Supreme Court judge Justice Mazhar Ali Akbar Naqvi to the members of Supreme Judicial Council (SJC).

According to sources, the copies of recent com-

plaints have been sent to Justice Qazi Faez Isa, Justice Sardar Tariq Masood, Justice Mohammad Ahmed Ali Sheikh, Justice Ameer Bhatti against Justice Mazhar Ali Naqvi.

Chief Justice of Pakistan has not called the meeting of Supreme Judicial Council so far.

Ashrafi condemns 'disinformation war', calls for unity against threats to national security

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan Ulema Council Chairman and Prime Minister's Special Representative on Interfaith Harmony and Middle East Hafiz Muhammad Tahir Mahmood Ashrafi on Wednesday highlighted the emergence of a new war of 'disinformation' imposed on Pakistan through social media by non-state actors.

He, in a convention on 'Stability of Pakistan' held at Jamea Masjid Marhaba, expressed concerns that this disinformation campaign aimed to create a hostile environment in the country.

Ashrafi emphasized the negative impact of disinformation, stating that it had resulted in the polarization of society, leading to division, stress, and disappointment.

He called on the secondary students to distance themselves from such anti-state activities and become sources of countering

disinformation through effective communication in the society. He also criticized the alleged double standard within the country's judicial system, noting that cases involving influential individuals were given "preferential treatment", while those concerning marginalized sections of society languished for years without resolution. He emphasized that justice, as a fundamental component of the Khilafat-e-Rashida system, played a vital role in maintaining peace and tranquility in the society.

Praising the sacrifices made by the Pakistan Army, Ashrafi acknowledged the 90,000 lives lost in the war on terror, which aimed to restore peace and prosperity in the country. He labeled May 9 as a black day, referring to the unprecedented attacks on public, private, and military installations, which had never been witnessed in Pakistan's 75-year history.

President calls for timely...

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society, the president said, "Islam is the first religion that emphasized to provide an inheritance to women and in Quran it has been emphasized with clarity."

Normally in our society, he said women of a family withdrew their inheritance rights in favour of their brothers which happened often under pressure. However, he said it rarely

happened that men of a family withdrew their inheritance right in favour of their sisters.

Stressing the need to ensure the women's participation in every field of life, President Alvi said the country could not afford the burden of 52% population, therefore they must be given freedom in public places so that they could freely work at any place.

Senate Body briefed on SBP report about extra dollars charged for opening LC's

ISLAMABAD (INP): Meeting of the Senate Standing Committee on Finance and Revenue was held on Wednesday under the Chairmanship of Senator Saleem Mandiwala here at the Parliament House.

The committee took briefing by the Deputy Governor State Bank of Pakistan on SBP report on banks scam of extra US dollar rates being charged from the customers for the opening of LC's. The Deputy Governor SBP said that State Bank gave a clean chit to the banks after 9 months on the increase in dollar value.

Launch of Balochistan....

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He added that Chief Minister Mir Abdul Qudoos Bizenjo has given special directives to prioritize the implementation of the Health Card Program, adding that the swift implementation is expected within two months.

The program aims to benefit every resident of Balochistan, whether they reside in urban or rural areas or coastal regions. Notably, the program will provide free healthcare facilities worth up to Rs. 1 million.

Additionally, a dedicated information center will be established in every hospital on the panel, offering standardized services. The media has been urged to play an active role in highlighting this historic program, as stated by Minister Syed Ehsan Shah.

Chairman B.R.A Nurul Haq Baloch emphasized that the Health Card is an important social security

program and will greatly benefit people living in remote areas.

Chairman State Life Insurance Shoaib Javed Hussain stated that the program represents a unique initiative that will provide universal health coverage to every citizen of Balochistan.

Divisional Head of State Life Insurance, Mohammad Ashar, briefed that approximately 2 million families across 34 districts of Balochistan will benefit from the Health Card Program.

To ensure continuous support, a 24/7 helpline has been established, and facilitation desks will be set up in all hospitals. Moreover, an effective real-time data and monitoring system will be implemented.

Under this program, every individual's national identity card will serve as their health card, streamlining access to healthcare services throughout the province.

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QUETTA: Provincial President of Pakistan Muslim League (N) Dr. Shakeel Ahmad chaired the party session at Party Office in Provincial Capital.

Govt determined to bring prosperity to masses across the region: AJK PM

ISLAMABAD (APP): Azad Jammu and Kashmir Prime Minister Chaudhry Anwarul Haq said that his government was determined to bring economic prosperity to all sectors of the economy in the region. Addressing a consultative meeting on the upcoming budget at Jammu and Kashmir House in the federal metropolis late Tuesday, the prime minister said that it would ensure equal distribution of resources in various sectors including education and health.

"Special importance should be given to education, health, tourism, agriculture, livestock and information technology," he emphasized while talking to the officials of the State government.

He said, the continuity of providing facilities to the people should be maintained by presenting a balanced and people-friendly budget.

The meeting was attended among others by the Most Senior Minister Colonel (Retd) Waqar Ahmed Noor, Government Minister Raja Faisal Mumtaz Rathore, Chief Secretary Dr. Muhammad Usman Chachar senior officers of the State government including Additional Chief Secretary Development, Secretary Finance and others.

Addressing the meeting, the AJK prime minister said that the budget should be enhanced for every department in order to achieve institutional stability and strength. He said that the health and education sectors needed special focus.

Chaudhry Anwarul Haq said that provision of balanced funds to all sectors, including hydraulic power, education, tourism, information, electronics, public health, physical planning, local government, electronics, livestock, agriculture, sports, information and agriculture should be ensured in the budget.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar chaired the meeting of the Executive Committee of the National Economic Council (ECNEC, in Federal Capital).

NA body on 'conduct of judges' starts working

ISLAMABAD (APP): The National Assembly's Special Committee on Wednesday initiated the process to prepare and forward a reference or references under Article 209 of the Constitution to the Supreme Judicial Council against any judge or judges of apex court on the ground of misconduct or other available grounds.

The committee met here at the Parliament House. The meeting was attended by Members of the National Assembly Mohsin Nawaz Ranjha, Khurshid Ahmed Junejo, Salahuddin and Salahuddin Ayubi.

The committee formally started its proceedings with the election of Mohsin Nawaz Ranjha as its chairman. His name for the slot was proposed by Khurshid Ahmed Junejo and seconded by Salahuddin and Salahuddin Ayubi.

After his election as chairman, Mohsin Ranjha presided over the meeting. All members of the committee congratulated the newly elected chairman and assured to extend their full cooperation for smooth functioning of the committee.

Mohsin Ranjha expressed his gratitude to the members for posing trust in him and assured them to run the business of the committee with consensus.

Shaza Fatima unveils plan to distribute 100,000 laptops among talented students

ISLAMABAD (APP): Special Assistant to the Prime Minister (SAPM) on Youth Affairs Shaza Fatima Khawaja on Wednesday unveiled the Federal Government's plan of distributing 100,000 laptops among talented students of universities and colleges during the next year.

"Laptops have an important role in building a knowledge economy which ultimately creates massive job opportunities for youth," the SAPM said in an exclusive interview with APP. She said the laptop scheme, which was halted by the previous government, had been resumed.

It was a flagship project of the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) which was launched during the last government tenure of Muhammad Nawaz Sharif who had a vision to empower the youth by creating an enabling environment in the country, she added.

"Half a million laptops were distributed by the Federal Government during 2013 to 2018 by keeping the importance of technology in mind which is crucial to acquire modern education in the current era," she added. The SAPM recalled that the youth continued their employment and educational activities through laptops during the Coronavirus pandemic.

She also shared details about a proposal of allocating Rs 100 billion in the upcoming budget for the distribution of subsidized loans among the youth under the ongoing scheme.

Half of the allocated money would be dedicated for the agriculture sector while the rest would be distributed for promoting entrepreneurship in the country, she added. She explained that the agri loan would help the youth add innovation and technology in the agriculture sectors to bring it at par with international level. Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, she said, inaugurated the loan scheme on January 24 and loans amounting to Rs 22 billion had been disbursed so far.



ISLAMABAD: Chairman Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs Mr. Mohsin Dwar at PIPS.

NA education body lauds govt for including 1973 constitution in curriculum

ISLAMABAD (APP): National Assembly Standing Committee on Federal Education and Professional Training Wednesday appreciated the government for including relevant Articles of the Constitution of Pakistan, 1973, in the curriculum. The committee hoped the inclusion would enable the youth to learn and understand students' basic rights.

The 41st meeting of the Standing Committee on Federal Education and Professional Training was held under the Chairmanship of MNA, Makhdoom Syed Sami-ul-Hassan Gillani. On the matter referred by the House regarding introducing and teaching of

the Constitution of Pakistan as a subject in education syllabus moved by MNA, Khurshid Ahmed Junejo, the committee was informed that the ministry, on the directions of the Prime Minister's Strategic Reforms Initiatives (PMSRI), inculcated understanding of relevant Articles of the constitution amongst school and college students through Pakistan Studies' curriculum for grades 9 to 12.

This will create a wide-scale awareness amongst the youth about the constitution including their fundamental rights and enabling them to play effective roles as citizens of the country.

French envoy visits NUML

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Department of French, National University of Modern Languages (NUML) organized the celebration ceremony of the Academic Cooperation Agreement on Wednesday.

This Agreement was signed in 2020 between Alliance Française d'Isalambad and NUML but the ceremony of this accord could not be held due to covid-19. The Ambassador of France, Nicolas Galey, was the Chief Guest, while Pro-Rector RSI Dr. Zubair Iqbal, Dean faculty of Languages Jamil Asghar Jami, Ms. Gaelle Le Breton, Director of all Alliance Françaises in Pakistan, Mr. Ali Bhatti.

Nazir Tarar chairs meeting of Cabinet Sub-committee to engage foreign law firm

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Law and Justice Senator Azam Nazir Tarar on Wednesday chaired a meeting of the Cabinet Sub-Committee to recommend the mechanism to engage foreign law firm of strategy for treaties with investment provisions (TIPS).

According to the spokesperson of the ministry, representative of Board of Investment, Privatization Commission, Attorney General Office and PPRA attended the meeting.

The Committee was constituted by the Cabinet to recommend the mechanism for engaging reputed international law firms for transactions and appointment of financial and legal advisors.

After deliberation on the matter, it was decided that the appointment of transaction advisors, financial advisors and legal advisors in respect of privatization matters should be given a formal shape for the approval of the Federal Cabinet.



National Commission on the Status of Women held its 74th Board Meeting to bid farewell to its board members of the 7th Commission in Islamabad.

IHC gives 2-day time to DIG for recovery of brother of Shahzad Akbar

ISLAMABAD (Online): Islamabad High Court (IHC) has given two days time to DIG Operations for recovery of brother of Shahzad Akbar. The petition in connection with recovery of brother of Shahzad Akbar former SAPM on accountability came up for hearing before single bench of IHC led by Justice Mohsin Akhtar Kayani. DIG operations Shahzad Bokhari appeared on court's order. Qasim Wadood, counsel for the petitioner also appeared in the court.

Saudi Health Ministry ready to ensure disease-free Hajj

ISLAMABAD (APP): The health of incoming pilgrims will be monitored at 14 ports of entry to the Kingdom by land, sea, and air during this Hajj season. Saudi Arabia's Ministry of Health said that it had set a number of health requirements to prevent diseases coming into the country, maintain health security and provide preventive and curative services during the Hajj season.

An integrated system of health control centers is being set up at the ports of entry, which will be completed before the beginning of the Hajj season.

Officials said that entry point health services were the first line of defense for Hajj. Health experts will also take precautionary measures in accordance with global developments and international health regulations that apply to those coming to Hajj, their luggage and transport. Arab News reported. Medical services will be provided at Jeddah Islamic Port, King Abdulaziz International Airport in Jeddah, Prince Mohammed bin Abdulaziz International Airport in Madinah, Prince Abdul Mohsin bin Abdulaziz Airport in Yanbu, Taif International Airport, Al-Batha Port, Empty Quarter Port, Salwa Port, King Fahd Causeway, Al-Raqa' Port, Jdeidet Arar Port, Al-Haditha Port, Halat Ammar Port, and Al-Wadiah Port.

The centers will be staffed at all times, stocked with medical supplies such as vaccines and equipped with isolation rooms.

Special Committee of the NA on the Supreme Judicial Council meets

ISLAMABAD (Online): Special Committee of the National Assembly on Supreme Judicial Council has sought a detailed briefing from the Ministry of Law regarding the Superior Judiciary.

The meeting of special committee of NA Supreme Judicial Council was held on Wednesday.

Special Committee has started work on conduct of judges of superior judiciary and framing reference.

5-member special committee has nominated Mohsin Shah Nawaz Ranjha as Chairman Committee.

All members have unanimously nominated Mohsin Shah Nawaz Ranjha as Chairman Committee. While thanking to all members Mohsin Shah Nawaz has said, all decisions will be made according to constitution and law with the consultation of all members.

The committee will give final decision on reference.

Law Minister Senator Azam Nazeer should come and brief this committee and guide regarding the reference on the violation of the constitution and law.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Law and Justice Senator Azam Nazir Tarar chaired a meeting of the cabinet subcommittee to recommend mechanism to engage foreign law firm of strategy for treaties with investment provisions.

FGEHA set to start dev. work in sectors G-12, F-12

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Government Employees Housing Authority (FGEHA) is all set to start the development work in sectors G-12 and F-12 of the capital.

"In the initial phase, the authority has decided to prepare layout plan of both the sectors", an official source told APP on Wednesday.

He said the layout plans of the two sectors would be outsourced.

"In this context, the authority has asked for proposals for the preparation of layout plans from planning consultants or firms of national and international repute registered with Pakistan Council for Architects and Town Planners," he said.

Four books launched at AIOU

ISLAMABAD (APP): A book launch ceremony was held at Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU), in which four different books were launched. This event was organized by the Department of Pakistani Languages, AIOU. Chairman, the Department of Pakistani Languages, Prof. Dr. Abdullah Jan Abid presided over the ceremony while Chairperson, the Department of Punjabi, Lahore College for Women University, Dr. Mujahida Butt was the chief guest. Four books titled 'Adbiyat-e-Sindh', 'Baluchistan: Qadeem Tareekhi Manazir',

MNAs demand effective awareness campaign, increased taxes on tobacco products, SSBs

ISLAMABAD (INP): The members of the National Assembly (MNAs) on Wednesday demanded the Lower House of the Parliament to propose increased taxes on tobacco products and sugar-sweetened beverages (SSBs) in the upcoming budget and initiate effective public awareness campaign to shun its use among masses wasting both health and money.

MNA Dr. Ramesh Kumar Vankvani of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) said that last year, World No Tobacco Day was celebrated amid budget and he had proposed the government to increase taxes on tobacco products, and intoxicants to make it unaffordable to youth and masses of other age groups to reduce its use.

He added that one way was to increase taxes on tobacco, disallow under 18 youth smoking at public places and detain them if found violating so that it could bring a sense of fear among the people.

He sought the Speaker to issue a ruling to the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting to run effective awareness campaigns on discouraging the use of tobacco products.

He also proposed the House to recommend increase in tax on cigarettes and tobacco products and also SSBs like coke and pepsi. "A glass of SSBs contains 8 spoons of sugar which is health injurious and casts negative impacts on human body," Cheema regretted that

the tobacco mafia was strong, wealthy and influential enough and running effective campaigns to mislead the public. They have started another campaign of pouches (nicotine packed in small pouches) tobacco products like Velo as an alternative to cigarettes to quit smoking which was equally injurious to human health and also addictive in nature, he said.

Dr. Vankvani underlined that most importantly the social awareness and responsibility should be increased to get rid of tobacco products use rising among the youth.

"We need to bring a behavioural change in the society.



ISLAMABAD: Police personals stands alert outside NAB court during Former Prime Minister Imran Khan and his wife Bushra Bibi hearing at Islamabad High Court in the Federal Capital.

NDMA issues warning about potential impacts of rainfall in central, northern regions

ISLAMABAD (INP): The National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) has issued a warning regarding the possible impacts of light to moderate rainfall in the central and northern regions of the country. According to the NDMA, there was a possibility of isolated heavy falls and hailstorms in some areas. Moreover, the NDMA has identified potential risks of landslides in mountainous regions, flash flooding, and hill torrents in vulnerable areas due to rain.

The authority has also urged citizens to stay up-to-date with the latest weather reports and follow advisories issued by the Provincial authorities to minimize potential damage. NDMA further added that in case of an emergency, citizens should reach out to the relevant authorities for immediate assistance.

The NDMA reiterated its commitment to ensuring the safety and well-being of citizens throughout the country. As the weather situation develops, NDMA will continue to monitor the situation and issue relevant advisories accordingly.



ISLAMABAD: Group photo of Parliamentary Secretary Ministry of National Health Services Regulations & Coordination Dr. Shazia Sobia Aslam Soomro during the seminar on Youth Must Thrive - Tobacco Tax Imperative to Protect our Generations at "World No Tobacco Day Celebrated organized by Society for the Protection of the Rights of the Child (SPARC).



ISLAMABAD: A view of the dedicated cycle parking stand at Super Market as it is a very good initiative by Capital Development Authority (CDA) for the facilitation of the people in Federal Capital.

IoU initiates students, experts mobilisation GUD Program at QAU

ISLAMABAD (Online): The Institute of Urbanism (IoU) on Wednesday initiated its Green Urban Development (GUD) programme with a special focus on the life cycle approach to sustainable Urban Development through capacity enhancement and fostering partnership among multi-stakeholders including the public sector, youth, policymakers and media.

The focused group discussion and awareness sessions were organized for students and subject experts of Quaid-e-Azam University (QAU). Head of Department, Environmental Sciences

Department of QAU, Dr. Sohail Rana, introduced the audience to the agenda of the session and welcomed the guests, said a news release issued here on Wednesday.

Dr. Rana said that the sessions were aimed to encourage students and experts to have an understanding of the GUD program and related activities. Managing Director (MD) of the School of Leadership Foundation (SoLF), Maryam Irfan briefed the audience that GUD was a joint initiative of the Institute of Urbanism (IoU) and the SoLF with the financial support of the US Embassy.

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Gwadar International Airport: A Catalyst for Progress

The ongoing construction of the New Gwadar International Airport marks a significant milestone in Pakistan's development and opens up new avenues for progress and connectivity. With over 70% of the construction work completed, this ambitious project spearheaded by the Gwadar Development Authority promises to be a game-changer for the region.

The comprehensive scope of work undertaken encompasses civil, structural, mechanical, and engineering tasks, demonstrating meticulous planning and execution. The dedicated efforts of the teams from the China Communication Construction Company and the Civil Aviation Authority of Pakistan have propelled the project towards its final stages. The installation of Navigational Aid and Communication systems is progressing rapidly, with completion expected within 60 days.

A key highlight of the New Gwadar International Airport is its adherence to international standards. State-of-the-art runway pathways have been meticulously designed to accommodate various aircraft, including wide-bodied planes like the Airbus A380 and Boeing B-747. These pathways, complemented by well-planned taxiways, aprons, and other operational areas, ensure seamless takeoff and landing procedures. Furthermore, the runway's durability has been enhanced to handle heavy aircraft, reinforcing the airport's capacity and efficiency.

Safety remains paramount at the New Gwadar International Airport. The presence of an ATC tower, high-intensity lighting, and painted runway centerlines ensures secure operations, even during challenging weather conditions. These advanced airfield facilities provide reassurance to both passengers and airlines alike, making the airport a reliable and dependable transportation hub.

The completion of vital infrastructure elements is a testament to the ambitious vision driving the project. The operational building, complex registration office, water supply system, PTCL fiber optic network, desalination plant, grid station, and security system have all been successfully established within the sprawling 4,300-acre site. This achievement solidifies the New Gwadar International Airport's position as the largest ongoing airport construction project in Pakistan.

The economic significance of this airport cannot be understated. Its strategic location in Gwadar, adjacent to the Arabian Sea, positions it as a vital trade and connectivity hub for both domestic and international routes. With an open skies policy in place, the airport is set to enhance bilateral trade between Pakistan and China, strengthening economic ties and fostering mutual growth. The anticipated progress in Gwadar, coupled with increased accessibility, will unlock the region's untapped potential and contribute to the overall development of Balochistan.

As the New Gwadar International Airport takes shape, it symbolizes a symbol of progress, innovation, and forward-thinking. The groundbreaking ceremony held in March 2019 marked the beginning of a transformative journey, and now, nearing completion, the airport holds immense promise for the future. Its secondary runway and modern terminal building further demonstrate its commitment to efficiency, capacity, and passenger comfort.

The New Gwadar International Airport represents a monumental step forward for Pakistan, as it prepares to welcome the world and become a vibrant gateway of opportunity. It is a testament to the country's determination to enhance connectivity, foster economic growth, and solidify its position on the global stage. The completion of this ambitious project will undoubtedly shape the trajectory of the region, empowering Gwadar and Pakistan as a whole.

As we witness the rise of the New Gwadar International Airport, we anticipate a new era of progress, connectivity, and prosperity. It is a collective endeavor that reflects the nation's aspirations and paves the way for a brighter future.



Zahid Hussain

They all appeared to be reading from the same script as they renounced their affiliation with the PTI. They left in droves; many of them had occupied senior positions in the party and in government. Just a few days in detention seemed to have broken them. It produced a domino effect, with a mass exodus of the second- and third-tier leadership. Some succumbed to intense pressure from the security agencies and the threat of persecution, while others jumped ship before the vessel hit the rocks.

We are witnesses to a process of the dismantling of a party by the same forces that had once propped it up. Tension had been building up for quite some time but the confrontation came to a head after

the May 9 attack on the 'citadel' by enraged PTI supporters. The empire struck back with a ferocity not seen in recent times. The party simply buckled under.

Imran Khan grossly miscalculated the cost of taking on the powerful establishment. The party may not be over yet but it will be hard for the former prime minister to regain lost political ground.

The virtual dismemberment of the PTI is part of a new round of political engineering, a game that has regularly been played by the powerful and ubiquitous security establishment.

But the way arguably the most powerful political force has fallen apart is intriguing. The monotonous tone of the deserters leaves nothing to the imagination. Reading from the same text, they condemn the May 9 violence and declare their allegiance to the security forces.

Interestingly, their conscience woke up some days after the incident. It required a few days in detention or a midnight visit by the 'invisibles' to revive a sense of 'patriotism' in

them. After joining the ranks of flag wavers, the deserters are now looking for new avenues, abandoning thousands of young men and women who were carried away by the promise of a revolution.

Many of them are languishing in prison and face trial under anti-terrorism laws. Of course, there are still some brave hearts in the leadership who are staying firm. But the die has been cast. The job of dismantling the party has to be completed.

What we are witnessing is the replay of the old game of political engineering. While the director is the same, the actors' roles keep changing. The protagonist of the previous act is now the new villain and the baddies are now back in the leading role.

Almost every political party at some point has gone through this phase of ignominy in this sordid power game orchestrated by the establishment. Political engineering is a means of maintaining control over power.

The country has gone through various phases of direct military rule, alter-

nating with civilian democratic dispensations functioning under the shadow of Big Brother. The civil-military clash has often led to regime change. The game of musical chairs has continued, preventing democratic institutions from consolidating.

This is the story of 75 years of our political history. Not surprisingly, the country's basic power structure has never changed. Political engineering is also a way of protecting vested interests.

The political parties, that mostly represent the ruling elite, willingly ally themselves with the establishment in order to protect their own interests. The rise of Imran Khan also owes itself to political engineering, and the confrontation with his erstwhile patrons now threatens to block his way back to power.

The hybrid rule of which the PTI was a beneficiary hugely weakened the democratic process, thus strengthening the hold of the security establishment. Khan's victimisation of opposition leaders vitiated the political atmosphere. Even after his ouster from power, his con-

tinuing confrontational policies blocked the democratic process.

His inflated ego has been the biggest obstruction in the way of any political dialogue. Instead of sitting in parliament, he set off on a collision course, seeking to bring down the PDM government through street power. What happened on May 9 is the result of his vitriolic narrative.

Ironically, in a role reversal, the PML-N which had earlier been the victim of political engineering has now become an instrument of it in the latest season of the game of thrones. There has also been talk about banning the PTI or disqualifying Imran Khan. Nothing could be more damaging for the political process.

More than any other political party, the PML-N should realise that such actions never work. A ban cannot keep a popular leader out of the political arena even if one is not allowed to participate in electoral politics. Nawaz Sharif is disqualified for life but he remains one of the most powerful leaders, virtually running the current government from self-exile in London.

Amid the clampdown and exodus of senior party leaders, there is some indication of softening in Khan's hard-line position. In a recent statement, he called for talks among all stakeholders to resolve the present political crisis. It is a sharp departure from his earlier position not to engage with the ruling coalition at all.

With his party facing disintegration and the sword of disqualification hanging over his head, Khan's options are shrinking. His political survival also depends on the continuation of the democratic process. -- Courtesy Dawn

Despite the large exodus of senior party members, Imran Khan's mass popularity doesn't seem to have diminished. He cannot be removed from the political arena. Any move to ban the party will further weaken the democratic process. Indeed, the perpetrators of the May 9 violence must be brought to justice and Khan too should face the charges against him in court. But the May 9 incident must not be used to delay the elections. Any unconstitutional move will strengthen Bonapartism.

Amid the clampdown and exodus of senior party leaders, there is some indication of softening in Khan's hard-line position. In a recent statement, he called for talks among all stakeholders to resolve the present political crisis. It is a sharp departure from his earlier position not to engage with the ruling coalition at all.

With his party facing disintegration and the sword of disqualification hanging over his head, Khan's options are shrinking. His political survival also depends on the continuation of the democratic process. -- Courtesy Dawn

Game of political engineering

Parenthood and the state



Nayab Jan

The story is all too familiar in Pakistan; for far too long, we have witnessed the various manifestations of the unfair choices working parents are subjected to in the face of relentless socio-economic pressures. Whereas child birth brings with it unquantifiable joy, skewed expectations and pressures can make it an overwhelming experience. For women particularly, the bargain can be brutal, as childbirth brings with it the painful realization that the very ethos of our workplaces makes their careers and ambitions discardable commodities. However, there are days we are reminded of the monumental role the state can play in navigating the arduous terrain of parenthood. On May 15, 2023 three historic bills that seek to effectively respond to the contemporary realities

of parenthood were passed by parliament in a joint sitting.

The bills are monumental for ensuring fair and sustainable employment for both men and women. According to the bill regarding maternity and paternity leaves for parents, women are entitled to paid maternity leave of: 180 days (six months) on first birth; 120 days (four months) on second birth; and 90 days (three months) on the third birth.

Male employees will be entitled to paid paternity leave of: 30 days (one month) a total of three times during service.

As per the bill, the maternity/paternity leave policy will be applicable to both public and private establishments in the federal capital territory of Islamabad. Whereas implementation comes under the purview of the executive, the bills mention explicit penalties for non-compliance. Employers who do not comply face up to six months of imprisonment and/or a fine of Rs100,000.

Similarly, the bill concerning daycare centres requires all government and private establishments which have at least 70 em-

ployees, to provide daycare facilities, in light of more women entering the workforce. Non compliance can be punishable by a fine of Rs100,000 and/or up to six months in prison. Lastly, the bill pertaining to paramedics in schools requires all public and private schools, with an enrolment of over 30 students to have trained paramedical staff who can provide immediate medical assistance and administer first aid to the students.

Senator Quratulain Marri, the architect behind these landmark bills, holds a special affinity for legislation around various social issues. Like numerous Pakistanis, she has witnessed close friends and family face a myriad of hard choices and anxieties while starting or expanding their families. A time which should otherwise be momentous and joyous, she says, becomes riddled with financial worries and societal burdens.

The lack of adequate paid maternity leave leads numerous women to opt out of the workforce or take prolonged breaks, which eventually hampers their future career prospects, and has far reaching consequences for the economy.

Even where maternity leave is provided, it is followed by the abject lack of daycare facilities, which leaves new mothers disgruntled and may affect productivity. For those who cannot rely on families or paid helpers for child care, the workday seems bleak. Consequently, the financial expectations from fathers are no less worrisome, who are unable to adequately participate in the child's early months, leading to unbalanced familial relationships.

The benefits of employers acknowledging and responding to the needs of parents are enormous. There is overwhelming evidence to support the numerous positive outcomes of female workforce participation, both to the workplace, and to the economy and society at large. Pakistan's current female labour force participation stands at around 22 per cent, which is one of the lowest in South Asia and globally. This is a lost opportunity in terms of productivity and economic growth.

The State Bank of Pakistan has recently estimated that reducing the gap in female labour force par-

ticipation can generate 19.3 million jobs and can boost GDP by almost 23 per cent. Similar figures have been presented by the World Bank and the ILO. In a recent report, the World Bank has emphasized the need to remove barriers that limit women's workforce participation and recognise the potential of this massive untapped reservoir. Per Najy Benhassine, World Bank country director for Pakistan, "Women in Pakistan have made progress in educational attainment, but this accumulated human capital is underused because of constraints they face to participate in the labour force."

These bills go to the root of the problem; they remove the impossible and unfair constraints women are subjected to which become the primary reason for their exit from the workplace. The choice between a satisfying career and a fulfilling family life lies at the very heart of the patriarchal bargain. Very few women are able to convince their families that they can balance both responsibilities, and unfortunately the way workplaces are structured makes failure almost inevitable. Hence, the system

sets women up for failure, depriving society of financially empowered women and the economy of additional growth and productivity. It is also well documented how workplaces negatively view female employees who choose to get married or start families during their employment tenures. Numerous women choose to conceal the news of their weddings and pregnancies from their employers due to the fear of negative stereotyping. Meanwhile, workplaces are known to try and evade responsibility under such circumstances which skews the balance against working mothers. The state must act responsibly and enact legislation which enables workplaces to become fairer places of employment for both men and women.

Many of these constraints are interconnected and require targeted state interventions, such as these bills, to address them. The gendered cultural norms that seek to limit women's workforce participation also place the entirety of financial burdens on fathers. -- Courtesy TheNews

Caregivers' burden



Rukhsana Shah

A study on Maternal Stress and Health Quality of Life in Mothers with Special Needs Children, authored by Sara Jaffree and Khadija Burhan of FCC University, Lahore, was published by Ataturk University recently. The study maintains that mothers of special needs children (SNC) face tremendous stress not only in accessing appropriate healthcare for their child, but also in negotiating economic, social and cultural support for themselves. The problem is exacerbated in conservative, including Muslim, societies where patriarchal attitudes, social stigma and superstition dominate the narrative and SNC and their families are shamed and excluded from the community.

The brunt of seeking medical treatment, education, therapies and vocational training, caring for the SNC physically and emotionally, and managing daily chores and family relations, falls on mothers. No wonder they feel exhausted, anxious and depressed, with low self-esteem and deteriorating health outcomes. The NIH in Maryland found that mothers of adolescents and adults with autism experienced "chronic stress comparable to combat soldiers". Many of them admitted to having said at least once in their lives: "I will kill him/her and then kill myself."

These women also experience insecurity due to the higher risk of abuse and violence of SNC. In many cases, family and in-laws are

not supportive or are hostile, while conservative norms restrict their mobility. Compared to fathers, mothers of SNC have very few opportunities to mingle with the larger community and are deprived of leisure activities. The solitary burden they have to bear due to unsupportive government policies and community neglect is incredible.

With three per cent of children currently diagnosed with autism according to the Centre for Prevention of Diseases, US, and an increasing number of self-diagnosed adults, there is an urgent need to restructure social welfare services in Pakistan. The government with its limited resources needs the help of civil society organisations to spread awareness and acceptance of invisible disabilities like autism and ADHD. It is also imperative to develop responsive communities to play a supportive role.

The ASD Welfare Trust is working to spread awareness about autism and related conditions in small towns and villages in Pakistan. The goal is to empower women — mothers, teachers, lady health workers — with information as well as comfort. Autism awareness seminars are held in local hotels and marriage halls where lectures and discussions are followed by lunch, giving people a chance to intermingle.

Social engagement helps reduce class barriers, isolation and stigma, and creates opportunities for catharsis, psychoeducation and problem-solving. For parents, such activities are transformative as they find a new environment of empathy.

The approach focuses on groups and communities with little or no access to information, and that are vulnerable not only to the stigma attached to disability, but also to harmful practices such as recourse to faith healers and neglect of children and young adults,

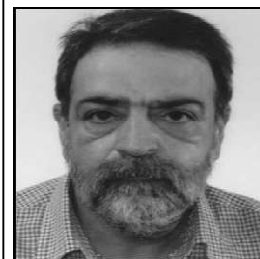
particularly girls with autism, who are perceived as mad and socially and economically unproductive.

Social engagement improves communication, empathy and support for SNC and their families. Collective training programmes for mothers are needed to make them aware of the need for consistent engagement with their children, especially those with neurodivergent conditions. This is a neglected area as many mothers tend to leave everything to teachers and avoid personal responsibility.

In recent years, the concept of social role valorisation is being used by many social service delivery groups to train community leaders to support disabled and neurodivergent persons. According to SRV theory, everyone has the capacity to play a positive role in his/her personal life as well as that of society. The community needs to recognise these multiple roles and identities and add value to these through social role valorisation. The strategy is to mobilise and sensitise communities to evolve from devaluation of persons who are different from the rest, to "valuation" and appreciation of their roles in different community settings.

It is the responsibility of the government to reinforce these initiatives through training of social welfare and health officials about the laws, rules and services related to SNC rights. Financial subsidies, free healthcare, hospitalisation, and maternal counselling must be given to SNC and their families. The government must engage with community notables, religious leaders, NGOs and CBOs and the media to create awareness and mobilise collective community support for their inclusion in educational, economic and socio-cultural activities. -- Courtesy Dawn

Never say die



Mahir Ali

Henry Kissinger, often viewed as a war criminal, marked his 100th birthday last Saturday amid the usual accolades of the high and mighty, alongside a few barbs from others with a more realistic view of what his realpolitik entailed. Those hosting the soirées, however, tend to overlook the blood on the hand that cuts the cake.

Kissinger served as national security adviser and secretary of state in the Nixon and Ford regimes, and had been a consultant to the Kennedy and Johnson administrations. His advice has been sought by every US government since he last held public office in the mid-1970s. In many ways, he is a key architect of the world in which we live.

It may be fairly remarkable that his intellect remains intact, and his recent interventions on questions such as Russia/Ukraine and China/Taiwan are more nuanced than the bluster of the Biden administration. The ultimate aim in both cases, however, is pretty much the same: maintaining US hegemony in a world where alternatives exist.

Kissinger faced a somewhat similar dilemma during his years in power — it isn't uncommon to view him as effectively a co-president in what has been dubbed the Nixon administration. Much has changed in the half-century since the US strove for better ties with both China and the Soviet Union than the two had with each other. The conciliation with Beijing was achieved in part through the good offices of Pakistan's military ruler

Yahya Khan.

It isn't unreasonable to assume that the Yahya regime might have been dented from its 1971 military action in East Pakistan had Washington sought to dissuade it instead of egging it on, ignoring the information and advice it received from the US consulate in Dhaka and its embassy in New Delhi. Recently declassified texts of recorded White House conversations reveal the extent to which Richard Nixon held Indira Gandhi — and, more broadly, all Indians — in contempt, with Kissinger echoing the racist platitudes.

Bangladesh, infamously dismissed as a 'basket case', might not make it to the top five of Kissinger's 'greatest hits', though. There are many others. The primary slot must be reserved for Indochina — not just Vietnam, but also Laos and particularly Cambodia. There are several others, not least Chile, East Timor and Angola, where catastrophes unfolded courtesy of the Nixon regime's ignorance, insouciance, encouragement or intervention.

The secret bombing of Cambodia was to ostensibly flush out or eliminate Vietnamese communist guerrillas (the Vietcong or, more accurately, the National Liberation Front). But villagers in bordering villages were killed in the bombing raids, strafing from helicopters, and by boots on the ground who didn't just shoot everything that moved — in keeping with Nixon-Kissinger instructions — but also looted villages.

The intervention wasn't that direct in Angola, Chile or East Timor, but the human consequences were not dissimilar. A Soviet-backed liberation movement's ascendancy in Angola simply had to be resisted, even if it meant collaborating with South Africa's apartheid regime. The result was years of avoidable violence.

In Chile, US efforts to

thwart Salvador Allende's mandate in 1970 led to the Pinochet coup 50 years ago. Indonesia's Suharto had presided over a massacre of hundreds of thousands of suspected communists — using lists provided by the CIA — since the mid-1960s. The massacres of freedom fighters in East Timor a decade later were not considered a travesty. In the case of Angola, Kissinger was surprised when the Cubans intervened to prevent a takeover by South Africa.

The Washington hi-rachery bristled when Nelson Mandela thanked Fidel Castro for preventing the apartheid regime from extending its ascendancy by conquering Luanda on behalf of the US. That wasn't the only Kissinger venture to go awry, however. Perhaps it could even be argued that almost everything he touched globally turned to excrement sooner or later. Which makes his status as an oracle among substantial segments of the US foreign policy establishment all the more insane.

Notwithstanding that Kissinger's purported threat to "make a horrible example" of Z.A. Bhutto if he proceeded with Pakistan's nuclear aspirations, there was a bit of a mutual admiration society between the two of them, with ZAB hailing Kissinger as a 20th-century Metemich. Kissinger is quoted in Owen Bennett-Jones' *The Bhutto Dynasty* as saying: "I am reluctant to negotiate anything with Prime Minister Bhutto. I always lose my shirt." Contrast those underhanded compliments with the opinion of the late celebrity chef Anthony Bourdain, who wrote in 2001: "Once you've been to Cambodia, you'll never stop wanting to beat Henry Kissinger to death with your bare hands ... and you will never understand why he is not sitting in dock at The Hague next to [Serbian leader Slobodan] Milosevic." -- Courtesy Dawn

Punjab Governor says: Strong economy pivotal to the prosperity of country

Independent Report
LAHORE: A Pakistan Muslim League - Nawaz (PML-N) Sargodha delegation led by President Sargodha Division Chaudhry Shahnawaz Ranjha called on Governor Punjab Muhammad Balighur Rehman and discussed prevailing political scenario in the country during a meeting at the Governor's House, here on Wednesday.

Speaking on the occasion, Punjab Governor Muhammad Balighur Rehman said that a strong economy is pivotal to the prosperity of country. He said that if the economy is good, there will be improvement in all sectors, including education and health. Balighur Rehman said the government is utilizing all resources to stabilize the economy.

The Governor Punjab said that on May 9, the youth were misled, they not only attacked military installations, but also desecrated the memorials of national heroes. "The martyrs of Pakistan Army and security agencies are our benefactors and pride," he said, adding that the martyrs who laid down their lives for the security and defense of the country deserve utmost respect.

He said there is only one person and thought behind these events, adding that people have now started to compare and distinguish between the constructive and the destructive politics. He further said instead of believing what is heard, research is necessary to know the facts.



BAHAWALPUR: Ambassador of Kazakhstan to Pakistan Yerzhan Kistafin is being briefed about the history of Bahawalpur State and the contributions of Nawab of Bahawalpur Sir Sadiq Muhammad Khan Abbasi to Pakistan during his visit to Noor Mahal.

PTI using women to cover-up its violence, attacks: Talal Chaudhry

FAISALABAD (INP): Former State Minister/Central Leader of Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) Muhammad Talal Chaudhry on Wednesday said that Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) used women to cover up its violence and attacks on sensitive military installations on 9th May and in this connection, a misleading propaganda was promoted to hide its misdeed. Addressing a press conference at his residence here, he said that 9th May was not an incident but it was a calculated activity which was conceived, designed and implemented in a planned manner. He said that the PTI continued its legacy of hate and in this incident once again the element of hate was used. The people were trained and deputed on a special mission with specific direction to hit the selected targets. Now a conspiracy was hatched to win sympathy of the masses through a bogus propaganda of torturing females only for harassing the institution which were investigating their crimes, he added.

Minister seeks everyone role for protection of child rights

PESHAWAR (APP): Special Assistant to Caretaker Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa for Zakat Ushr, Social Welfare, Special Education and Women Empowerment Salma Begum on Wednesday said that everyone must perform their role for child rights' protection and eradicating social issues and challenges faced by children.

She urged the parents to pay special attention to the provision of their children's basic rights.

She expressed these views in the closing ceremony of a two days training workshop on "Child Protection Information Management System (CP-IMS)" organized by the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Child and Welfare Commission in Peshawar.

This event, CP-IMS, signifies a significant milestone in our joint efforts to protect and promote the rights of children.

She added that she commend all the participants from CPWC, Child Protection Units, Zamung Kor, Police Department, and Newly Merged Districts for their dedication and commitment to the cause of child protection in their respective roles.

Smuggling bids foiled; 24 kg hashish, 2880 kg NCP tea recovered

TANK (APP): The Tank police on Wednesday foiled two smuggling bids in the limits of Shaheed Mureed Akbar (SMA) Police Station and recovered 24 kilogram hashish and six sacks of non-custom paid (NCP) tea worth Rs 768,000 approximately. In a statement, DSP Headquarters Asghar Ali Shah along with SMA Police Station SHO Abdul Ali Khan said that the police was strictly pursuing zero tolerance policy of District Police Officer Waqar Ahmad against all social crimes. Indiscriminate operations of the police were successfully underway to eradicate the menace of narcotics from the district, he told and added that he himself along with his team, were taking action on tip-off regarding drug smuggling, created a blockade in front of Sadgi check post on Tank-Pezu road. During the operation, the police stopped a white-coloured car bearing registration number.



LAHORE: Members of All Pakistan Clerks Association (APCA) are holding protest demonstration against massive unemployment, increasing price of daily use products and inflation price hiking, outside Secretariat in Lahore.



PESHAWAR: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Governor Haji Ghulam Ali along with Provincial Minister Sawal Nazir inaugurate Detour Road Hayatabad, which is being constructed at a total cost of Rs 1.53 billions.

CM visits Sundus Foundation and inquired about the health of Thalassaemia patients

Says give due respect to our mothers and sisters, maltreatment with ladies is beyond our thoughts, blame of 25 killings is baseless

Independent Report
LAHORE: Caretaker Chief Minister Punjab Mohsin Naqvi visited Sundus Foundation here today and inquired about the health of the under treatment patients. He offered bouquets and other gifts among the patient children.

On this occasion, he while talking to the media men said that "we give much more respect to

mothers and sisters and could not afford the maltreatment with them". He clarified that there were only 11 female prisoners belonging to PTI in jails across the Punjab and atleast four time counter check-up was made after every arrest of the accused. He said that the IG Police Punjab had already briefed the media men regarding the blame of torture on them. He surprised over

the killings of 25 persons which were against the facts and it was impossible that people would die and nobody would know not about them. He emphasized that the investigation shall be instituted if the name of 25 dead bodies were given to the government. Mohsin Naqvi further stated that if the JIT would move to Zaman Park for investigation it would become a

precedence to investigate at the door of accused in future. He said that law would guide if the person did not appear before the JIT. Caretaker Chief Minister Mohsin Naqvi clarified that the impression of shortage of medicines in hospitals in the Punjab was contrary to the facts and any sort of hurdle might come in supply chain of medicines but its close review was being ensured in this regard.

UET Mardan suspends ACE on charges of vandalism on May 9

PESHAWAR (APP): The University of Engineering and Technology (UET) Mardan on Wednesday notified suspension of an assistant controller of examination (ACE) over charges of his alleged involvement in vandalism on May 9 in the district.

According to the notification issued by the Registrar UET Mardan, the vice chancellor had approved the suspension of the services of ACE Muhammad Ismail in light of the investigation of the Superintendent of Police.

It said that the accused ACE was booked by the police under FIR No 833 dated May 9 under sections 341, 324, 435, 427, 120B, 147, 148, 149, 7ATA, 143, 188, 500, 501, 337A(I), 337 F1 PPC and 16-18MPO.

The notification said that SP Investigation Mardan through a letter no 1473/GB/Inv, dated May 26, conveyed the involvement of the officials in sabotage activities on May 9.



LAHORE: Pakistan Muslim League - Nawaz Sargodha delegation led by President Sargodha Division Chaudhry Shahnawaz Ranjha in a group photo with Governor Punjab Muhammad Balighur Rehman at the Governor's House

KP Governor inaugurates road to be constructed with Rs 1.53 billions

PESHAWAR (APP): Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Haji Ghulam Ali along with Provincial Minister Sawal Nazir on Wednesday inaugurated Detour Road Hayatabad, which is being constructed at a total cost of Rs 1.53 billions besides planting trees and installing street lights on the road for convenience of the local population. Provincial Ministers Haji Manzoor

Afridi, Abdul Halim Kasuria, Hamid Shah, Fazl Elahi, Muhammad Shafiullah, Advisor to Prisons Haji Hidayatullah were also present. With the construction of Detour Road, the heavy transport will have easy access to Afghanistan, and the local population will also be facilitated in transportation, the governor said.

Development Authority (PDA) officials in their briefing about the project said that the two-way Detour Road with a length of three kilometers was completed at a cost of Rs 1.53 billion. It was told in the briefing that the construction of the road would not only facilitate heavy goods vehicles going to Afghanistan, but the road would also be helpful for commercial traffic.



CHINIOT: Chief Justice Lahore High Court Muhammad Ameer Bhaffi addressing to lawyers at local hotel after inauguration of Judicial Complex at the cost of 1750 million consists of 167 kanal at Jhumra Road.

Minister visits Family park

SARGODHA (APP): Provincial Minister for Housing Health Engineering and Auqaf Barrister Azfar Ali Nasir on Wednesday visited Parks and Horticulture Authority Family Park in the city.

Director General PHA Syed Tauqeer Haider Kazmi was accompanied him.

The minister inspected various sections of the park, green belts and Miyawaki forest. Director General Tauqeer Haider briefed the minister about ongoing work in the park and establishment of new green belts in the city.

Later, the minister also planted a sapling in the family park. Meanwhile, the minister visited Dr Faisal Masood Teaching Hospital and inspected facilities available in the hospital. He checked the trauma centre, dressing room, CCU rooms, emergency wards, CT scan centre, and laboratory and medicine stores.

ANF seizes over 9410kg drugs, arrests 25 accused including two women

RAWALPINDI (APP): The Anti Narcotics Force (ANF) seized 9410.374 kg of drugs and 19 liters of liquor worth US\$ 169.768 million internationally, arrested 25 persons including two women and impounded seven vehicles while conducting 29 counter narcotics operations throughout the country during last week.

The ANF Headquarters spokesman told on Wednesday that the seized drugs were comprised on 3961.16 kg opium, 7.363 kg heroin, 5371.400 kg hashish, 67.140 kg methamphetamine (Ice), 100 gram ecstasy Tabs (170 tabs), 965 gram crystal heroin, 1.248 kg diazepam tabs (7460 tabs), 963 gram retalin tabs (8160 Tabs) and 35 gram rorpan tabs (180 tabs).

The ANF Balochistan recovered 9217.585 kg

drugs and 19 liters liquor in 11 operations and arrested two accused involved in drugs smuggling besides impounding three vehicles. The seized drugs were comprising on 3934.7 kg opium, 220 gram heroin, 5215.7 kg hashish, 66 kg methamphetamine (Ice) and 0.965 kg crystal heroin.

The ANF Punjab recovered 1.683 kg drugs in three operations while arrested three accused. The seized drugs were included 543 gram heroin and 1.140 kg methamphetamine (Ice).

The ANF KPK recovered 154.283 kg drugs in three operations and arrested six accused besides impounding a vehicle. The seized drugs were comprised on 24 kg opium, 129 kg hashish, 1.248 kg diazepam tabs (7460 tabs) and 35 gram rorpan tabs (180 tabs).

Ex-BA speaker calls on Sindh Governor

KARACHI (APP): Sindh Governor Kamran Khan Tessori on Wednesday said close cooperation between Sindh and Balochistan would be beneficial for both provinces.

He said this while talking to former speaker of Balochistan Assembly Syed Matiullah Agha, who called on him here at the Governor House.

Overall political situation of the country, financial challenges, need for close cooperation between Sindh and Balochistan and other matters of mutual interest were discussed in the meeting.

The governor said the current situation of the country required a positive contribution from all "By working together we can cope with the hardships on economic front successfully," he added.

KPK Former CM Mahmood comes on NAB's radar

PESHAWAR (Online): Former Chief Minister (CM) Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KPK) Mahmood Khan came on NAB's radar.

NAB has sought record of the recruitments made in the Fisheries department from the constituency of Chief Minister.

NAB has also decided to include Former Provincial Minister Livestock Mohibullah in inquiry. NAB has also summoned the record of employee's details, educational certificates.

Faisal Kundi says: PTI responsible for May 9 vandalism

PESHAWAR (APP): Minister of State for Poverty Alleviation and Social Safety, Faisal Karim Kundi here Wednesday claimed that Pakistan Tehreek e Insaf (PTI) was responsible for the ransacking of government and public properties during May 9-10 vandalism and accused Imran Khan for downing the arrested party workers.

Talking to media persons after visiting the burnt Radio Pakistan's building here to express solidarity with the employees of the national broadcaster and Associated Press of Pakistan, Faisal Kundi deplored that horde of Pakistan Tehreek e Insaf have ransacked and put on fire the government and people's properties including Radio Pakistan's

building and stolen its expansive computers, electronic appliances, furniture, sound system, vehicles engines and other expensive items.

He said the attacks on government and defense installations was a preplanned conspiracy, and that attackers, planners and abettors could not escape from law.

Faisal Kundi said that it was highly deplorable that Imran Khan has disowned its party workers who were put behind the bar in May 9 vandalism cases and had hardly talked about them.

He said Imran Khan talked about beauty and visit of Northern Areas of Pakistan but it was unfortunate that he never talked to meet the jailed workers.



LAHORE: Caretaker Chief Minister Punjab Mohsin Naqvi talk to media after visiting Thalassaemia center at Shadman.

IGP KP awards police officers for professional excellence

PESHAWAR (INP): The Inspector General of Police (IGP) Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Akhtar Hayat Khan has said that police officers and jawans who excel in line of duty would be generously awarded and encouraged at every forum.

This, he said, while distributing cash and commendation certificates amongst the Peshawar, Haripur and Tank police officers and jawans at a ceremony held at Central Police Office (CPO) here on Wednesday.

It is worthy to mention here that Peshawar police during a crackdown had successfully traced and arrested several car-lifters, mobile snatchers, dacoits and recovered stolen items from their possession.

Similarly, Haripur police had also shown their best performance and exhibited exemplary bravery in a raid on proclaimed offenders involved in murders, attempted murders and kidnapping cases while Tank police have also exhibited extraordinary performance of valour and courage in two separate encounters against miscreants and eliminated the terrorist groups. Addressing the ceremony, IGP Akhtar Hayat Khan appreciated the professionalism and hard work of the police teams in these cases. He said that tracing and arresting the real accused and recovering the stolen items spoke of the professional commitment and best policing of the KP police.

Court declares bail plea of Bushra Bibi ineffective

ISLAMABAD (APP): An Accountability Court (AC) on Wednesday declared the interim bail petition of Bushra Bibi, Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf Chairman Imran Khan's wife, as ineffective in 190 million pounds' investigation initiated by the National Accountability Bureau (NAB). The court, in its written order, said it had been told that neither Bushra Bibi's arrest warrants had been issued so far nor her custody was required in the said case.

It said Bushra Bibi had filed a petition seeking pre-arrest bail in the said case, which was being disposed of under Section 498 of the NAB Ordinance.

AC Judge Muhammad Bashir announced the verdict after hearing arguments against the petition. NAB Investigation Officer Mian Umar Nadeem and Bushra Bibi's lawyer Khawaja Haris appeared before the court during hearing.

During hearing, NAB's Deputy Prosecutor General Sardar Muzaffar Abbasi said that PTI's Chairman Imran Khan in his statement on May 13, used unethical words against NAB and its chairman. Imran Khan had been doing a false propaganda against NAB and claimed that the bureau had issued arrest warrants against his wife, he argued.



PESHAWAR: State Minister for Social Security and Poverty Alleviation, Faisal Karim Kundi talking to media after visiting the burnt building of Radio Pakistan Peshawar.

Joint efforts needed to end smoking in Pakistan: AC

PESHAWAR (APP): Assistant Commissioner Peshawar Sayeda Zainab Naqvi here on Wednesday said that May 31 was being celebrated worldwide as World No Tobacco Day (WNTD) and there was need for joint efforts to control the ever-increasing trend of smoking in Pakistan. For this, she said the district administration has taken actions at various shisha clubs and sealed these clubs were sealed.

Talking to APP,

Sayed Zainab Naqvi said that parents should keep an eye on their children and protect them from drugs.

Chief Executive Officer of West General Hospital and Research Center Dr. Zia-ur-Rehman was also present on this occasion.

The WNTD is observed around the world every year on May 31, she said, adding, the yearly celebration informs the public on the dangers of using tobacco.

Time ripe for collective efforts to achieve national development: Ahsan

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Professor Ahsan Iqbal Wednesday stressed the need for making collective efforts to put the country on a consistent path of progress and development, saying it was high time to take all Pakistanis along in achieving the national goals.

"The time has come to bring all Pakistanis forward and give them an opportunity to play a role in the development of the country," he said while addressing a two-day

conference titled "Leaders in Islamabad Business Summit-2023," here.

He was of the view to extend all possible support to the business companies earning dollars and contributing to build the country's foreign exchange reserves.

The minister said this year, the country faced worst impacts of global climate change, and now the incumbent government was working to overcome the issues of water and food security by switching over to smart agriculture system.

He said the China-

Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), a key component of China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), was a game-changer project for Pakistani besides the entire region of South Asia.

He said around \$ 29 billion had been invested in the CPEC-related project in a period of three years.

Ahsan Iqbal regretted that the economic policies and projects faced considerable dent during the tenure of PTI government, which caused serious damage to the national economy and development.

He said it was the PTI

regime that scandalized the CPEC-related projects and stopped the economic boom and foreign investment pouring into the country during the last tenure of the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) government.

He recalled that there was an economic boom during the PML-N's last tenure, adding in 2017, the ambassadors of developed countries including America, Britain, Japan, Germany and France were showing keen interest to invest in the Special Economic Zones (SEZs), under the CPEC.



ISLAMABAD: Group photo of Federal Minister for Planning & Development Ahsan Iqbal along with Federal Minister for Energy Khurram Dastagir Khan during the 2-days conference "Leaders in Islamabad Business Summit 2023".



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue, Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar and Defence Minister Khawaja Mohammad Asif exchanging views with a delegation of Pakistan Tobacco Company Limited led by Wael Sabra, Area Director Asia Pacific Middle East and Africa (APMEA) during meeting held at FBR HQ in Islamabad.

SCCI delegation meets Ishaq Dar

ISLAMABAD (APP): A delegation from Sialkot Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCI) held a meeting with Finance Minister

Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar and Defence Minister Khawaja Mohammad Asif on Budget 2023-24 proposals.

SAPM on Finance Tariq Bajwa, SAPM on Revenue Tariq Mehmood Pasha, Chairman RRC Ashfaq Younis Tola, Chairman FBR, and senior officers from Finance Division and FBR attended the meeting, said a press release issued here.

The delegation thanked the finance minister for inviting the budgetary proposals from the SCCI.

They discussed the current economic condition of the country with the finance minister and informed him about the range of issues being faced by them. To this end, they presented suggestions to

those issues in the form of budgetary proposals to be considered in the upcoming federal budget.

They also guaranteed the finance minister of their continuous assistance to the government to improve the situation of economic and business activities in Pakistan.

Finance Minister Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar appreciated the budgetary proposals of the delegation and expressed the resolve of the government in overcoming the issues being faced by the business community to ensure the economic growth of the country. He also assured the business leaders that the government will provide all possible assistance to the business community for economic stability and growth by bringing forward a business and people-friendly budget for Fiscal Year 2023-24.

Food Minister contradicts FAO WFP reports

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for National Food Security and Research Chaudhary Tariq Bashir Cheema Wednesday contradicted reports of the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and World Food Programme (WFP) regarding an acute shortage of food in Pakistan and said sufficient food stock was available to meet the country's demand.

Responding to a calling attention notice in the National Assembly regarding the expected acute shortage of food in the country as reported by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and World Food Programme (WFP), he said, "I fully disagreed with the reports of WFO and FAO and facts indicated in the reports have no reality and there is no need to worry."

He said this year 28.5 million metric tons of wheat was recorded, along with the carry-over stock of the previous year.

Budget to be people-friendly: Tasneem

SARGODHA (APP): State Minister for Productions and Industries Tasneem Ahmed Qureshi on Wednesday said the government was striving hard to raise living standard of people and the budget will facilitate the common man.

Talking to APP, he said that the budget would be people-friendly and the government would take solid steps to provide the maximum relief to the poor. He said the Pakistan Peoples Party was the party of the poor and middle-class which was striving hard to facilitate the masses at their doorsteps.

The state minister said due to ineffective financial policies of the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) the people had to face difficulties and hardships, adding that now the government was taking solid economic measures for welfare and prosperity of the masses.

Shipping activity at Port Qasim

KARACHI (APP): Three ships namely, Maersk Atlanta, Maria Elena and Theresa Orion carrying Containers and Palm oil, berthed at Qasim International Container Terminal and Liquid Terminal respectively.

Meanwhile two more ships, EM Astoria and Cielo Rosso with Containers and Mogas are also arrived at outer anchorage of the port during the same period.

A total of 07 ships were engaged at POA berths during the last 24 hours, out of them three ships, Maersk Atlanta, Hafnia Providence and Theresa are expected to sail on Wednesday.

Cargo volume of 169,440 tonnes.

Minister says electricity base tariff stable despite rupee depreciation

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Power Division Khurram Dastgir on Wednesday said that the base tariff of electricity has not been changed since September 2022 despite the devaluation of the currency.

Speaking at the sixth edition of Leaders in Islamabad Business Summit 2023 here, the minister said that the government has decided that in the future electricity generation would not be based on imported fuel.

"We will have five sources, out of which four will be domestic and one would be

semi-domestic," he said. He said the government set up large wind and solar-based power generation projects.

Power generation from local Thar coal has also jumped to over 2,500 MW, he said. He said no one could deny the importance of Thar coal. Power generation from local resources helped a lot to keep the power base tariff unchanged, he added.

He said fuel cost adjustment (FCA) remained negative during the last winter and its benefit was also passed on to the consumers.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Economic Affairs, Sardar Ayaz Sadiq exchanging views with Sergei Aleinik, Foreign Minister of Belarus during meeting held in Islamabad.

LCCI discloses proposals for upcoming federal budget

LAHORE (APP): Federal Finance Minister has assured Lahore Chamber of Commerce and Industry (LCCI) that the Federal Budget 2023-24 would be business friendly.

This was stated by the LCCI President Kashif Anwar while addressing at a press conference on upcoming Federal Budget 2023-24 here at Lahore Chamber on Wednesday. LCCI Senior Vice President Zafar Mahmood Chaudhry and Vice President Adnan Khalid Butt also spoke on the occasion.

The LCCI President informed the media that recently he has a fruitful meeting with the Federal Finance Minister Ishaq Dar and apprised him of the issues being faced by the business community besides presenting a set of budget proposals for the financial year 2023-24.

Sharing budget proposals with reporters, the LCCI President Kashif Anwar said that since the position of foreign reserves is improving, the government should take

measures including trade in local currency where ever possible and barter trade mechanism to mitigate the prevailing foreign exchange crisis.

He said that for broadening of tax base and better documentation, there should be facilitation in the form of declaration scheme which must be introduced to bring undeclared foreign reserves, local assets and wealth in economic circle for injection of liquidity in economy.

To reduce the cost of doing business, Kashif Anwar emphasized the need to align Pakistan's interest rates with regional economies. He also urged the government to lower the refinancing rate, introduce soft policies for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), and provide special financing schemes with low markup rates and no collateral requirements.

The LCCI President emphasized on the importance of reducing the cost of doing business.



FAISALABAD: A worker busy in his routine work at his workplace outside local factory at Ghulam Muhammad Abad, in City.

IWCCI demands incentives in upcoming budget for FY-2023-24

ISLAMABAD (INP): The Islamabad Women's Chamber of Commerce (IWCCI) has demanded incentives for businesswomen in the upcoming budget saying the dream of national development can never become a reality by keeping the majority of the country's population away from economic activities.

In its budget proposals, the IWCCI has demanded an increase in the taxable income limit for businesswomen, saying

that it will encourage them to join the document economy.

Founder president of the IWCCI Samina Fazil said in the budget proposals sent to Finance Minister Ishaq Dar, that reports of heavy taxation on various sectors are disturbing. Enhanced taxes will hurt the weak economy and reduce revenue rather than increase it, she added.

Samina Fazil demanded that the obstacles in the way of women's development.

China-Pakistan aviation industry coop. embracing new possibility

BEIJING (APP): As a major aviation power, whether in civilian or military fields, China has cooperated closely with Pakistan in the field of aviation for decades.

The Gwadar International Airport under construction, as an outstanding example of China-Pakistan aviation cooperation, is located 26 kilometers northeast of the port. So far, most of the infrastructure has been fully completed and it is expected to be officially opened for navigation in September.

"The same as Gwadar Port, the new airport is also a representative project of the CPEC, which can accommodate the take-off and landing of large aircraft such as Boeing

747. In addition, the intersecting east-west air routes face China, Iran, Afghanistan, India and Central Asian countries, as well as a series of international routes will pass through this area. Therefore, the airport will gradually become an air economic and trade hub in the future," according to a report published by China Economic Net (CEN).

With this platform, it will be more convenient for international goods, especially Chinese goods, to arrive in Balochistan, and then be distributed to various cities in the country. Pakistan's characteristic goods can also be transported more efficiently to all parts of the world, promoting local economic and trade

development.

Except for the civilian field, China-Pakistan aviation cooperation in the military field can also be called fruitful. Fighter China-1 (FC-1) is an all-weather, single-engine, multi-purpose light fighter jointly invested and developed by two countries, which Pakistan side calls it Joint Fighter-17 Thunder (JF-17), and equips the Pakistan Air Force as the main fighter.

As early as June 1999, the two parties officially signed a cooperative research and development contract, entering the stage of prototype development. On March 12, 2007, the fighter officially entered into service with the Pakistan Air Force.

Gold prices increase by Rs.1,600 per tola

ISLAMABAD (APP): The per tola price of 24 karat gold increased by Rs1,600 and was sold at Rs. 234,400 on Wednesday against its sale at Rs. Rs. 232,800 the previous day.

The price of 10 grams of 24 karat gold also increased by Rs 1,372 to Rs. 100,960 from Rs. 199,588, whereas the price of 10 grams 22 karat gold up down to Rs.184,214 from Rs.182,956, All Sindh Sarafa Jewellers Association reported.

The price of per tola silver decreased by Rs.50 to Rs.2,800 whereas that of ten-gram silver went down by Rs.42.87 to Rs.2,400.54

Zong 4G partners with 'Roshan Packages' to enhance digital business solutions

ISLAMABAD (APP): Zong 4G Pakistan's leading digital company, has partnered with Roshan Packages Limited, one of the country's largest packaging manufacturers, to provide bespoke connectivity for its business.

This partnership will enable Roshan Packages Limited to employ Zong 4G's business solutions to optimize the efficacy and reliability of its daily operations across the board.

As part of this partnership, Zong 4G will provide Roshan Packages Limited with customized connectivity solutions

tailored to meet their specific business needs.

By leveraging Zong's sophisticated services, Roshan Packages Ltd. aims to achieve increased operational efficiency and reliability in their day-to-day activities.

The official spokesperson of Zong 4G said, "We are delighted to join hands with Roshan Packages Limited in enhancing their daily operations. Zong 4G is committed to digitizing Pakistan's corporate landscape by providing next-generation business solutions that are crucial for sustainable business growth."



LAHORE: Lahore Chamber of Commerce and Industry (LCCI) President, Kashif Anwar addresses to media persons during press conference regarding Budget 2023-24, in Lahore.

PIA bears 36.77b loss in only last 3 months

LAHORE (Online): National airline beard Rs36.77 billion loss within the short period of three months.

Deficit increased due to increased price of fuel and dollar and uncontrolled expenses.

Pakistan International Airline (PIA) issue quarterly result of the quarter ended on march 2023.

According to report PIA income was 59 billion Pkr from January to March. 24 million increased this year's quarter as compared to last year this quarter. PIA also got 5 billion grass profit three month earlier.

Representative told 28.55 billion were spent in regard of salaries and ongoing expenditures. Last year in same quarter PTI spent 21 billion Pkr on salaries and ongoing expenditures.

According to authorities, in March 2023 PIA bought 25.6 billion fuel. Big part in increased loss is due to double price of fuel expenses. Fuel and

Pakistani cherries poised to debut in Chinese market

BEIJING (APP): This year, for the first time ever, Pakistani cherries are poised to make their entrance into the Chinese market, marking an important step in the international expansion of the country's cherry industry.

"[The cherry in] our Pakistani market is too cheap... So if we have this opportunity to export our cherries to China, then we and the orchard owners, they can earn much more," Doular Karim, a Kashgar-based Pakistani logistics trader, who has been prepared to bring Pakistani cherries eastward this year, told China Economic Net (CEN) in an interview.

Karim said the cherries to be exported would come from Gilgit-Balochistan, a major producer of cherries in Pakistan. He noted that despite the presence of local cherry varieties in China, Pakistani cherries would still be able to carve out a niche in the Chinese market, particularly due to

their organic nature.

"Before, we have already tested it [the Pakistani cherry] in the laboratory in Islamabad, [and the results showed that] it is totally organic," he said. The Pakistani exporter added that Pakistani cherries "typically ripen between May and the end of July, when Chinese cherries tend to be out of market. This is another advantage of Pakistani cherries."

Karim revealed that the primary market for Pakistani cherries would be China's Xinjiang given the proximity and ease of access, and then they planned to gradually expand to other regions of China. "We have devised a detailed marketing strategy to promote our cherries in Xinjiang," he said. "However, we have yet to solve issues of logistics and cold storage."

Karim told CEN that he was working with local chambers of commerce to address these issues and streamline the process.

SECP warns time & again to beware of fraudulent financial activities

ISLAMABAD (INP): The Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan (SECP), has been warning the public time and again to raise awareness among the general public regarding typologies of potentially fraudulent activities perpetrated by companies or entities/individuals posing as legitimate incorporated persons that come to its attention. The objective is to educate public, enabling them to recognize and avoid falling prey to deceptive practices.

On the basis of

information available on social media and complaints/queries received recently it is observed that following typical business models are being used to lure public. Mobile/web-based apps promising lucrative profits/referral bonuses on deposits/investments; Seeking deposits in the name of making investments on your behalf in different products and promise lucrative return like investments in Surface Mount LED (SMD) screens, trading of different products/ forex/cryptos.

Pakistan can earn \$300m through PVC exports

ISLAMABAD (APP): Significant investments to expand and improve the efficiency of domestic PVC production have created an opportunity for Pakistan to earn USD 300 million through the export of surplus volumes and products.

Currently, Pakistan's per capita PVC consumption stands at 1.2 kg versus a global average of 6.1 kg. Growth in our per capita consumption will be driven by rising per capita income, increasing

urbanization, and robust domestic manufacturing in the coming years. Through various customer engagement and market development initiatives, such as a retail outlet - think PVC, Engro Polymer and Chemicals Limited (EPCL) is actively promoting various standardized, high-quality PVC products.

At a media briefing on Wednesday, Mahmood Siddiqui, Vice President of the Manufacturing wing of the Company, highlighted.

North Korea fails to launch spy satellite as rocket plunges into sea

Monitoring Desk
SEOUL: North Korea said Wednesday it failed to launch its first spy satellite into space, in a blow to the nuclear-armed state's efforts to strengthen its military capabilities amid growing tensions with its neighbors and the United States. Pyongyang said it would soon try another launch after learning what went wrong to send the rocket plunging into the sea following liftoff. It was an unusually frank acknowledgment of failure by Kim Jong Un's regime, but the attempted launch sparked alarm among its neighbors, with rare emergency alerts and evacuation warnings rattling people in South Korea and Japan. The newly developed Chollima-1 rocket, which was carrying the Malligyong-1 spy satellite, was launched as scheduled at 6:27 a.m. local time (5:27 p.m. ET Tuesday) from the Sohae Satel-

lite Launching Ground in the country's northwest, according to the North Korean state news agency KCNA. It then fell into the sea

off the west coast of the Korean Peninsula "after losing thrust due to the abnormal starting of the second-stage engine," it said.

US 'strongly condemns' North Korea's purported satellite launch

Monitoring Desk
WASHINGTON: The Biden administration on Tuesday condemned North Korea after the country's state-run news agency said Pyongyang had attempted and failed to launch a military satellite.

"The United States strongly condemns the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) for its launch using ballistic missile technology, which is a brazen violation of multiple UN Security Council resolutions, raises tensions, and risks destabilizing the security situation in the region and beyond," National Security Council spokesperson Adam Hodge said in a statement. Hodge also said that the apparent satellite launch "involved technologies that are directly related to the DPRK intercontinental ballistic missile program." President Biden and his team will monitor the situation "in close coordination" with their allies, according to the statement, and urge other countries to condemn North Korea's launch and call on Pyongyang to join serious negotiations on the matter.



Moldova says Europe summit signals unity in face of Russia's war

UN agency sees melting ice as a global threat

Monitoring Desk
GENEVA: The United Nations' weather agency announced on Tuesday it was making the cryosphere a new top priority, saying the melting of sea ice, glaciers and permafrost posed a global threat. Member states at the UN's World Meteorological Organisation (WMO) are concerned about the impacts of melting ice on sea levels, natural disasters, ecosystems and economies. "The cryosphere issue is a hot topic not just for the Arctic and Antarctic, but it is a global issue," said WMO chief Petteri Taalas. WMO countries meeting in Geneva called for increased funding for more coordinated observations and predictions, and better data exchange, research and services. Nations far from

the polar regions, such as in the Caribbean and Africa, voiced concerns that changes in the cryosphere would affect the whole planet. "What happens in polar regions and high mountain regions doesn't stay in those regions," WMO spokeswoman Clare Nullis told reporters. "More than a billion people rely on water from snow and glaciers melt which is carried by the major rivers of the world. When those glaciers retreat... you need to think what's going to happen to the water security of those people." Besides implementing the 2015 Paris climate accords and reducing greenhouse gas emissions, the WMO said better monitoring was needed to track the scale and speed of change.

Nevada Republican governor approves abortion protections in cross-party move

Monitoring Desk
CARSON CITY: Nevada's Joe Lombardo on Tuesday became one of the first Republican governors to enshrine protections for out-of-state abortion patients and in-state providers, adding the western swing state to the list of those passing new laws to solidify their status as safe havens for abortion patients. The legislation codifies an existing executive order from former Gov. Steve Sisolak last year — who lost reelection to Lombardo — that bars state agencies from assisting in out-of-state investigations that could lead to the prosecution of abortion patients who travel to Nevada. It also ensures medical boards and commissions that oversee medical licenses do not discipline or disqualify doctors who provide abortions. Lombardo, who describes himself as "pro-life"

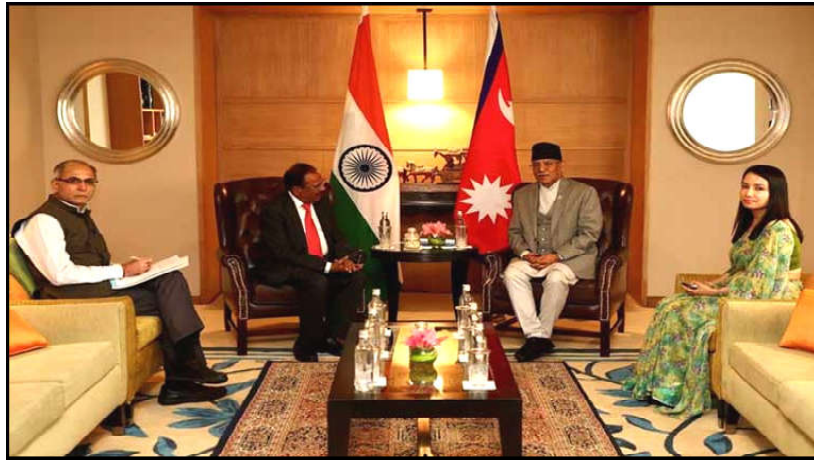
and was endorsed by the National Right to Life Committee, said on the campaign trail that he would respect the will of voters who codified abortion rights up to 24 weeks in a 1990 referendum vote. He was the only Republican to defeat a state Democratic incumbent in the last election. "I want to thank (Lombardo) for following through on his commitment to ensuring that Nevada won't participate in prosecutions of women who come here to exercise their reproductive rights," said Democratic Senate Majority Leader Nicole Cannizzaro, who sponsored the legislation, in a statement Tuesday. Lombardo is one of the only Republican governors — following Vermont Gov. Phil Scott and former Massachusetts Gov. Charlie Baker — to sign a law enshrining protections for abortion.

Air New Zealand to weigh passengers in month-long survey

Monitoring Desk
WELLINGTON: New Zealand's national airline is asking passengers to step on the scales before they board international flights. Air New Zealand says it wants to weigh 10,000 passengers during a month-long survey so pilots can better know the weight and balance of their planes before takeoff. But the numbers from the scales won't be flashing up for all to see. There will be no visible display anywhere, the airline promised, and the weigh-in data will remain anonymous

even to airline staff. "We weigh everything that goes on the aircraft — from the cargo to the meals onboard, to the luggage in the hold," said Alastair James, a load control improvement specialist for the airline, in a statement. "For customers, crew and cabin bags, we use average weights, which we get from doing this survey." Indeed the numbers are required by the nation's industry watchdog, the Civil Aviation Authority. Under the authority's rules, airlines have various options to estimate passen-

ger weight. One option is to periodically carry out surveys like Air New Zealand is doing to establish an average weight. Another option is to accept a standard weight set by the authority. Currently, the authority's designated weight for people 13 and over is 86kg, which includes carry-on luggage. The authority last changed the average passenger weight in 2004, increasing it from 77kg. Health statistics show New Zealanders are becoming heavier.



Nepal PM Dahal to seek energy, new air route deals on India visit

Qatar prime minister, Taliban chief hold secret Afghan talks

Monitoring Desk
WASHINGTON: The Qatar prime minister held secret talks with the supreme leader of the Taliban this month on resolving tension with the international community, a source briefed on the meeting said, signaling a new willingness by Afghanistan's rulers to discuss ways to end their isolation. The May 12 meeting in the southern Afghan city of Kandahar between Qatari Prime Minister Mohammed bin Abdulrahman al-Thani and Haibatullah Akhundzada is the first the reclusive Taliban chief is known to have held with a foreign leader. U.S. President Joe

Biden's administration was briefed on the talks and is "coordinating on all issues discussed" by the pair, including furthering dialogue with the Taliban, said the source. The source, who spoke on condition of anonymity, said other issues Sheikh Mohammed raised with Haibatullah included the need to end a Taliban ban on girls' education and women's employment. The meeting represents a diplomatic success for Qatar, which has criticized Taliban restrictions on women while using long-standing ties with the Islamist movement to push for deeper engagement with Kabul by the interna-

tional community. The United States has led demands for the Taliban to end the bans on girls' schooling and women working, including for U.N. agencies and humanitarian groups, to restore their freedom of movement and bring Afghans from outside Taliban ranks into government. The source's comments suggested that Washington supported elevating what have been unproductive lower-level talks in the hope of a breakthrough that could end the world's only bans of their kind and ease dire humanitarian and financial crises that have left tens of millions of Afghans hungry and jobless.

China warns of artificial intelligence risks, calls for beefed-up national security measures

Monitoring Desk
BEIJING: China's ruling Communist Party has warned of the risks posed by advances in artificial intelligence while calling for heightened national security measures. The statement issued after a meeting Tuesday chaired by party leader and President Xi Jinping underscores the tension between the government's determination to seize global leadership in cutting-edge technology and concerns about the possible social and political harms of such technologies. It also followed a warning by scientists and

tech industry leaders in the U.S., including high-level executives at Microsoft and Google, about the perils that artificial intelligence poses to humanity. The meeting in Beijing discussed the need for "dedicated efforts to safeguard political security and improve the security governance of internet data and artificial intelligence," the official Xinhua News Agency said. "It was stressed at the meeting that the complexity and severity of national security problems faced by our country have increased dramatically.

Monitoring equipment re-installed at some Iranian sites -IAEA reports

Monitoring Desk
VIENNA: The U.N. nuclear watchdog has re-installed some monitoring equipment originally put in place under the 2015 nuclear deal with major powers that Iran then ordered removed last year, the watchdog said in two reports on Wednesday seen by Reuters. The added monitoring equipment included surveillance cameras at a site in Isfahan where centrifuge parts are produced as well as monitoring equipment at two declared enrichment facilities, the confidential reports to member states said.



Qatar prime minister, Taliban chief hold secret Afghan talks.

Israel's Mossad says former agent was among 4 people who died when boat sank

Monitoring Desk
JERUSALEM: Israel's intelligence agency said Wednesday that a retired agent was among four people killed in northern Italy when a sudden storm sank a houseboat hired for a weekend pleasure cruise on a lake. The former agent was on the vessel with 22 other people on a lake near the town of Lisanza. Two Italian intelligence agents and a Russian woman — part of the two-person crew — also died. The Israeli prime minister's office issued a statement on behalf of the Mossad saying the unnamed agent's

remains had been returned to Israel for burial. The Foreign Ministry had previously confirmed that a retiree from the Israeli security forces was killed but didn't provide a name or age or give details on his professional background. Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's office said that because of the agent's work in the agency, further details could not be disclosed and extended condolences to his family. Italian police released no information on the identities or professions of the 19 survivors, but local news reports said they included other members of the Italian and Israeli intelligence services.

India asks protesting wrestlers to wait for police probe outcome

Monitoring Desk
NEW DELHI: India's sports minister on Wednesday urged wrestling champions who have staged protests accusing their federation chief of sexual harassment to await the outcome of investigations into the allegations before deciding their next course of action. Minister Anurag Thakur said the national capital's police is investigating the case, following directions from the Supreme Court. He asked the wrestlers to have faith in the probe. Thakur was speaking a day after Olympic medalist Bajrang Punia and Sakshi Malik and Asian Games champion Vinesh

Phogat said they would toss their medals into the river Ganges as part of their demand for the arrest of their federation chief. A prominent farmers' leader convinced them to call off that action, promising a solution within five days. The athletes had been camping in New Delhi since April 23 demanding action against Wrestling Federation of India (WFI) President Brij Bhushan Sharan Singh, who has denied allegations of sexually harassing female athletes. "Dear players, wait for and have faith in the Delhi Police investigation. It has registered the FIR on the Supreme Courts direction."

Ex-UN head Ban calls for more diplomatic pressure on Myanmar's military leaders

Monitoring Desk
SEOUL: Former U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon said Wednesday that he was communicating with authorities in military-run Myanmar as well as members of the armed resistance following a surprise visit to the country last month, and called for more diplomatic pressure on the ruling generals to end the violence. Ban did not specify the nature of those communications and declined to disclose the details of his conversations with military leaders during their April meetings. He was speaking at a Seoul news conference along with other members of the Elders, a group of senior

statesmen engaging in peacemaking and human rights initiatives around the world. "I am in close contact with all those people to do as much as we can do to help them democratize Myanmar," Ban said. He said he was still communicating with Myanmar authorities, the president of Indonesia — who holds the rotating chair of the 10-member Association of Southeast Asian Nations — and Myanmar's National Unity Government, which is leading an underground civilian administration following the military takeover in 2021 that toppled the elected government of Aung San Suu Kyi.

Sudan's military says it has suspended its participation in talks with paramilitary rival

Monitoring Desk
CAIRO: Sudan's military suspended its participation in talks with a paramilitary force it's been battling for weeks for control of the northeastern African country, a military spokesman said Wednesday. The development was a blow to the United States and Saudi Arabia, who have been mediating between the two sides. The conflict has plunged Sudan into chaos. Brig. Nabil Abdalla, a spokesman for the Sudanese armed forces, told The Associated Press that the move is a protest against the Rapid Support Forces' "repeated violations" of the humanitarian cease-fire, including their continued occupation of hospitals and other civilian infrastructure in the capital, Khartoum. Sudan descended into chaos after fighting erupted in mid-April between the military, led by Gen. Abdel-Fattah Burhan, and the RSF, commanded by Gen. Mohammed Hamdan Dagalo. The fighting has

killed at least 866 civilians and wounded thousands more, according to the Sudanese Doctors' Syndicate, which tracks civilian casualties. The toll could be much higher, the medical group had previously said. Abdalla, the spokesman, said the military wants to ensure that the terms of a U.S.-Saudi-brokered truce "be fully implemented" before discussing further steps. He did not elaborate. On May 21, both sides signed a cease-fire agreement allowing for the delivery of humanitarian assistance and the restoration of essential services destroyed in the clashes. They also agreed to stop the looting of residential properties and humanitarian aid, as well as the taking over of civilian infrastructure such as hospitals and power plants. There was no immediate comment from Saudi Arabia or the United States. So far, there have been seven declared cease-fires, all of which have been violated to some extent.

Blast in east Lebanon kills 5 in base controlled by Palestinian faction, Israel denies role

Monitoring Desk
DAMASCUS: A blast early Wednesday at a military base controlled by a Syria-backed Palestinian faction in eastern Lebanon killed five Palestinian militants and wounded 10 others, according to two Palestinian officials with the group. The faction said an Israeli airstrike caused the blast, but that account was disputed by an Israeli official, speaking on condition of anonymity, who denied the country had any role in the incident. Israel does not typically respond to foreign reports. In Beirut, a Lebanese military official said the explosion was the result of a blast within the base, adding that there was no airstrike. An official with a regional group allied with the Syrian government, said the explosion

was the result of a "human error" that occurred when militants were handling ammunition. Both officials spoke on condition of anonymity. Anwar Raja of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command, told The Associated Press in Damascus that the Israeli strike hit positions in the eastern Lebanese town of Qusaya near the border with Syria. He said two of the wounded were in critical condition. Another PFLP-GC official, Lebanon-based Abu Wael Issam, told the AP that his group will retaliate "at the suitable time." He added that the strike will not deter his group from "escalating the fight against the Israeli enemy."

Italy bets on quietest of places to host world leading telescope

Monitoring Desk
LULA: Italy is proposing a disused mineral mine in a remote corner of Sardinia to house one of the world's most advanced telescopes, hoping that the uncommon stillness of the spot will clinch European Union approval and funds. The Sos Enathos lead and zinc mine, extending 300 metres underground below lush vegetation, has been picked by the Rome government as its candidate to host the so-called Einstein Telescope (ET). The breakthrough EU-financed project aims to explore deep space through the study of gravitational waves, and it can only work with when ground vibrations are minimal. "It will allow us ... to see events very close to when the Big Bang happened" around 14 billion years ago, 2021 Physics Nobel Prize winner Giorgio Parisi told Reuters. Parisi and other scientists say the mine is ideal due to the area's low seismic activity and the absence of settlements nearby, but Italy faces a ri-

val bid from a site in Meuse-Rhine, a region divided among the Netherlands, Germany and Belgium. The tender will be officially awarded no sooner than the end of next year. Italy is betting that its 1.9-billion-euro (\$2.09 billion) project can bring much-needed investment to the island of Sardinia, one of the country's poorest regions. The government has already invested 50 million euros of EU post-pandemic recovery funds in its bid, including a feasibility study. Gravitational waves, the ripples in space and time predicted by Albert Einstein, are caused by the collision of celestial entities like black holes. The telescope is expected to capture the waves and observe a volume of the universe much larger than is seen by the tools currently used, known as interferometers. The Italian project's design envisages a triangle-shaped underground facility with 10-km-long arms.

Three accused of harassing Chinese fugitive in US head to trial

Monitoring Desk
NEW YORK: Three men accused of acting as illegal agents of China will face trial on Wednesday in the United States, part of an escalating crackdown on Chinese state-backed intimidation of dissidents and fugitives overseas. Federal prosecutors in Brooklyn say Michael McMahon, Zheng Congying and Zhu Yong pressured a New Jersey resident to return to China to face bribery and embezzlement charges, one example of what they describe as a global repatriation campaign by Chinese law enforcement known as "Operation Fox Hunt."

ECNEC approves project for estab. of 48MW Shounter Hydropower Project

ISLAMABAD (APP): Special Initiatives Ahsan Iqbal, SAPM on Finance Tariq Bajwa, Senator Nisar Ahmed Khulro, Federal Secretaries and other senior officers from Federal Ministries and Provincial departments participated in the meeting in the meeting. The ECNEC also considered and approved in principle a project of the Ministry of Kashmir Affairs and GB for the Establishment of a 48MW Shounter Hydropower Project in Neelam Valley District, AJK at an updated cost of Rs. 14,985 million including FEC of Rs. 12, 736.90 million. The project is to be financed 85% from the Saudi Fund for Development (SFD) and 15% of the cost will be met through AJK ADP. Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar chaired the meeting of the ECNEC, said a press release issued here. Federal Minister for Planning, Development and



QUETTA: Governor Balochistan Malik Abdul Wali Khan Kakar in a group photo with participants of a seminar on the role of Ombudsman in safeguarding public rights and good governance

Environmental sampling for Polio underway as per WHO protocols

Independent Report LASBELA: Lasbela district and Hub polio-free zones have been established since 2007. However, as per the WHO protocol, polio risk has been declared in areas with sewerage water through environmental sampling routine. After a polio case was reported in Qila Abdullah district in 2021, the World Health Organization (WHO) has initiated environmental sampling throughout Balochistan. This was announced by the Stop Polio Immunization Officer of Balochistan, Dr. Aftab, during a meeting with Deputy Commissioner Hub Zahid Khan. The meeting was attended by Deputy Commissioner Hub, Dr. Shaikat Jabani, WHO's Polio Surveillance

Officer, Dr. Nazir Ronjha. They praised the District Administration for the excellent results of the polio campaign and achieving 103% vaccine coverage. Deputy Commissioner Hub emphasized that environmental sampling in the routine, including sewage water, is necessary for the polio vaccination campaign along the border areas of Sindh and Balochistan. He stated that there are transit points along the border where migrant populations reside in temporary settlements. As per the WHO protocol, it is essential to assess the polio vaccination campaign in the first instance in these settlements to ensure that no child from any marginalized family is deprived of the polio vaccine.



ISLAMABAD: Security personnel with ballistic shields escort former Pakistan's Prime Minister Imran Khan as he leaves from Islamabad High Court.

Balochistan's LG polls 871 contesting on 430 reserved seats

QUETTA (APP): As many as 871 candidates are contesting election of district councils on 430 reserved seats for women, farmers, labourers and non-muslims in local government, scheduled to be held in 35 districts of Balochistan on June 22. According to the source, 522 candidates submitted their nomination papers on women's quota of District Council. There are 289 seats allocated for farmers as dis-

trict council in the local government system of the province. Around 190 people submitted their nomination papers for 47 seats of farmers and 196 people would contest elections on 47 reserved seats for labourers. Around 93 non-muslims will contest local government election on 47 seats of general council. The polling for the reserved seats in 35 districts of Balochistan will be held on June 22 except Quetta district.

Islam a religion of peace, harmony: Masood

WASHINGTON (Online): Pakistan's Ambassador to the United States Masood Khan says Islamic Circle of North America (ICNA) has raised awareness about the tenets and practices of Islam anchored in humanitarianism. Addressing the 'Scholars and Community Leaders Recognition Lunch' hosted by ICNA in Washington, he said Pakistan would always remember ICNA for generating 15 million dollars to help victims of floods and its leaders for visiting flood areas during the height of the catastrophe. Paying rich tribute to Dr. Mohsin Ansari, President ICNA, Masood Khan

said that this organization had advocated protection of rights of Muslims and non-Muslims alike to create a harmonious society. The Ambassador said that all Muslims living in United States should be thankful to rich ambiance and integrative environment provided by its people which assimilates people of all faiths and diverse ethnic backgrounds. He all Muslims living in United States should be thankful to rich ambiance and integrative environment provided by its people which assimilates people of all faiths and diverse ethnic backgrounds.



Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif chairs a meeting on budget 2023-24 proposals regarding the Agriculture sector in Lahore

PM Shehbaz says: Govt to enhance rural economy thru value addition of agri-produce

LAHORE (APP): Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Wednesday stressed upon taking practical and permanent steps over the agriculture reforms during the previous one year. Due to PM's special Kisan Package, the provision of loans to farmers on affordable terms was not only ensured but due to supply of timely fertilizers and quality seeds, the country also achieved the bumper wheat crop, exceeding the previous production in the last ten years. Under the prime minister's directive, the best-supporting prices over different crops led to the prosperity of farmers which would also boost the upcoming crops, it was added. The prime minister also directed for direct provision of subsidy to farmers on fertilizers. He said that the provision of quality seeds, latest machinery, extension services and for agriculture research, resources would be allocated in the fiscal budget. The prime minister said that practical steps should be incorporated in the fiscal budget for complete conversion of agriculture tube wells on solar energy. The prime minister was also informed about the international quality seeds, import of semen for animals breeding, functioning of the agriculture institutions and implementation over Kisan package. The meeting was briefed over the National Oil Seed Policy whose objective was to reduce de-



Balochistan Finance Minister Zamrak Khan Achakzai in a group photo with delegations during International Software exhibition in Morocco

To save his politics Imran taking U-turn from 'absolutely not' to 'absolutely yes': Dastgir

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Power Engr. Khuram Dastgir Khan on Wednesday said that Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) chief Imran Khan had a terrible history of taking U-turns and quipped him as the champion in this regard. Addressing a news conference here, the minister said the former prime minister was ousted from power through a vote of confidence, adding he (Imran) first accused the U.S. was behind the toppling of his government, but now the PTI chief was purportedly seeking help from the same country. "Imran Khan raised slogans of 'absolutely not' during his regime and now he chants absolutely yes. There is a contradiction in his action, speech and character," he slammed. "Ironically, Imran, who once asserted that the slavery of the USA would not be tolerated, is seeking the US assistance to save his political career," he alleged. "The PTI is attacking Pakistan's integrity with lies since last year, which started with the issue of a cipher, blaming the US for dislodging Imran's government," he added. Condemning the May 9 riots, he said that no leniency would be shown against the miscreants and all the lawbreakers would be taken to task as per the law and the Constitution.



QUETTA: Chairman Pashtoonkhwa Milli Awami Party Mehmoood Khan Achakzai in a group photo with members of organizing committee of Pashtoonkhwa Students Organization District Quetta

Two active terrorists killed in S. Waziristan IBO: ISPR

RAWALPINDI (APP): The security forces on Wednesday killed two terrorists, actively involved in hostile activities against the forces and killing of innocent civilians during an Intelligence Based Operation (IBO), conducted in general area Dossal of South Waziristan District on reported presence of terrorists. According to the Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR), during conduct of the operation, intense fire exchange occurred between security forces and terrorists. Weapons and ammunition were also recovered from the killed terrorists who remained actively involved in terrorist activities against security forces and killing of innocent citizens. The sanitization of the area was being carried out to eliminate any terrorists found in the area. The locals of the area appreciated the operation and expressed their full support to eliminate.



QUETTA: Chief Secretary Balochistan Abdul Aziz Uqaili presiding over meeting of Provincial Selection Board

Naval Chief calls for dev. of new technology

LAHORE (Online): Chief of Naval Staff Admiral Muhammad Amjad Khan Niazi says development of new technology and artificial intelligence requires that traditional war tactics be replaced by innovation. He said this while addressing the 52nd convocation ceremony of Pakistan Navy War College held in Lahore on Wednesday. The Naval Chief was the Chief Guest of the ceremony. Speaking on the occasion, the Naval Chief said that promotion of awareness regarding the maritime sector is a distinction of the Pakistan Navy War College. APP adds: The Convocation ceremony of 52nd Pakistan Navy Staff Course was held here on Wednesday at Pakistan Navy War College (PNWC), where Chief of the Naval Staff Admiral Muhammad Amjad Khan Niazi graced the graduation ceremony as Chief Guest. During the Convocation Ceremony Degrees were conferred upon 95 graduates, comprising 54 officers from Pakistan Navy, Army & Pakistan Air Force and 41 officers from friendly countries including Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Indonesia, Iraq, Jordan, Malaysia, Myanmar, Nigeria, Oman, Palestine, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Sri Lanka and Yemen, a Pakistan Navy news release said. While addressing the ceremony, the chief guest highlighted the complexities and wide variety of threats and challenges confronting the world impacting almost all regions. He underlined that wide ranging challenges in 21st century coupled with advancements in disruptive technology, proliferation of weapons.



QUETTA: First Lady Samina Alvi visits the Skill Center established by the Social Welfare Department in collaboration with the NAVTTC under the PM Youth Skills Program.

Govt delegation attends GITEX Africa 2023 in Morocco

Independent Report MORROCO: A government delegation from Balochistan, led by Provincial Minister of Finance and Food Engineer Zamarak Khan Achakzai, has arrived in Casablanca, Morocco, to participate in GITEX Africa 2023. GITEX Africa 2023, a comprehensive technology research and exhibition, is taking place from May 31 to June 2, 2023, where the Pakistani government has also established its presence. The event aims to bring together technology operators, government institutions, small and medium-sized businesses, startups, investors, where the Balochistan government launched its e-procurement software. Federal Minister for IT and Telecommunication, Syed Aminul Haque, briefed Provincial Minister Engineer Zamarak Khan Achakzai about the Digital Pakistan vision, current challenges, and future goals of the government in Pakistan Pavilion. Pakistan Pavilion is also hosting the Pakistan Software Export Board and All Pakistan Software Houses Association. During the visit, Minister of Finance Engineer Zamarak Khan Achakzai, accompanied by officials, visited the Pakistan Pavilion.

Court approves Imran bail in 19m pounds case

ISLAMABAD (Online): Accountability Court (AC) Islamabad has approved bail of Imran Khan till June 19 in 190 million pounds case. The bail of Imran Khan has been approved against surety bonds of Rs 5 lac. Chairman PTI Imran Khan came to rostrum. Judge Muhammad Bashir said you have filed petition today. Imran Khan while expressing concern over the matter of rule of law in the country said that Pakistan was on 129 number among 140 countries in rule of law index.

Chairman PTI Imran Khan came to rostrum. Judge Muhammad Bashir said you have filed petition today. Imran Khan while expressing concern over the matter of rule of law in the country said that Pakistan was on 129 number among 140 countries in rule of law index.

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QUETTA: A delegation led by President All Umra Group Balochistan Naem Ahmed Madni photographed with General Manager PIA Abdul Ghaffar Miankhal after a meeting

PML-Q decides to invite PTI in all-party conference

ISLAMABAD (Online): In view of current situation of country Pakistan Muslim League-Q (PML-Q) has announced to convene all-party conference comprising all political parties. According to PML-Q spokesperson, all political parties will be invited in APC. It has also been decided to invite PTI to participate in APC. According to the spokesperson, the aim of APC is to bring together the political parties at one table and solve the problems through dialogue.

First lady for facilitation, resources to make DAPs productive citizens

QUETTA (APP): First Lady Samina Alvi on Wednesday emphasized providing maximum resources and facilities to the differently-abled persons (DAPs), orphans and widows to make them productive citizens of society. The first lady, during her visit to Vocational Training Center, Physiotherapy Institute and Darul Aman here, expressed the hope that the social welfare department of Balochistan would continue taking measures for the needy and the DAPs. Secretary Social Welfare Imran Khan apprised

Bogie of passenger train derailed near Hyderabad

HYDERABAD (APP): A passenger train heading towards Mirpurkhas from Karachi derailed while entering Hyderabad railway station on Wednesday. A bogie of Shah Latif Express derailed near Makki Shah railway crossing as a result of which railway traffic suspended for several hours. The Railway officials informed that no casualty was reported due to the derailment of a passenger train while railway track had been restored within the hours of the incident.

Health secretary vows to improve health facilities

QUETTA (APP): Health Secretary of Balochistan Asfandyar Kakar has reiterated the government's resolve to improve the healthcare system and provide the best health facilities at the doorstep of the people. He was addressing a meeting of the officers of the health department soon after taking charge of the office here on Wednesday. Additional Secretary of health Dawood Bazzi, deputy secretaries, and sections officers of the health department attended the meeting, said a statement issued by the health department. Secretary Health Isfandyar Kakar said, "Any individual who comes to the health department shall be respected." "Administrative powers of the health officers will be trickled down to the lower level to make the district health committee including DG Health, DHOs, MS more effective," he said adding that reforms in health department will help improve health care in the province.