

# Independent

Member APNS & CPNE

Chief Editor: Syed Farooq Shah

Quetta

Ph: 2841470/2841473 REG: No. BC-116 B/ID-445 V& XXIV No. 277, Zee'qad 07, 1444 AH Sunday May 28, 2023 Pages 12, Price Rs.15

## Nation sets a red-line against intolerable May 9 attitude: PM

Says Govt: ensuring benefits of oil price slide to common man; Provision of equal opportunities to youth among top priorities

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Saturday said that together they set a red-line that the attitude reflected on May 9 was intolerable.

"Living nations uphold the honour & dignity of their benefactors and heroes who render the supreme sacrifice of their life so that their countrymen & women can live peacefully," the prime minister posted on his Twitter

handle. The prime minister also thanked the people of Pakistan for their active participation in the solemn observance of Youm-e-Takbeer Shuhada-e-Pakistan on May 25.

The prime minister said that it was a collective outpouring of gratitude for their Shuhada and Ghazis by the whole nation.

Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Saturday said that the government was taking

steps to pass on the effects of the reduction in prices of oil to the common man. He said that efforts were afoot to ensure public relief in the upcoming fiscal budget.

The prime minister was talking to Minister of State for Finance Ayesha Ghous Pasha who called on him, PM Office Media Wing said in a press release.

The prime minister reiterated that they had steered the country out of the difficult times and ap-

preciated the economic team for striving and continuously making efforts to stabilize country's economy.

The government had provided huge relief package to the flood affected people with financial and rehabilitation assistance in the aftermath of historic floods.

Meanwhile Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Saturday

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Rescue team busy in extracting people from beneath the snow as 11 people were killed during snow avalanche which swept through the Shounter top area of district Astore in Gilgit Baltistan



LAHORE: Leader of the Opposition in National Assembly Raja Riaz Ahmad and MNA Nawab Sher Waseer call on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif.

## Mariyum rules out talks with elements which 'attacked state institutions'

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Information and Broadcasting Mariyum Aurangzeb on Saturday ruled out negotiations with Imran Khan, stating talks could not be held with those who attacked the state, rather were

brought to justice. She ruled out talks with those who attacked sensitive installations and buildings which were symbols of national pride including General Headquarters, those who desecrated the memorials of martyrs and Ghazis, who attacked ambulances, hospitals and schools and were involved in vandalism.

She said talks cannot be held with those who poisoned the minds of the youth.

The minister said that negotiations could not be held with the leaders of the criminals and terrorists.

She said while his party crumbled like a castle of sand, Imran was pleading for talks, recalling how electables were brought in planes to join the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf.

Mariyum Aurangzeb opined that parties not formed on any political ideology were disintegrated like the PTI.

## Attack on military assets an act against integrity of Pakistan: Yousafzai

ISLAMABAD (APP): The spokesperson for the Chief Minister of Balochistan, Babar Yousafzai, on Saturday issued a statement condemning the events of May 9 and expressing solidarity with the Pakistani military during a press conference held at Quetta Press Club.

Speaking in front of the protesters, Babar Yousafzai stated, "The attack on military properties by terrorist groups claiming to be associated with the Tehreek-e-Insaf party is an act against the integrity of Pakistan."

"Our longstanding enemies could not conspire against us in the past 75 years as they have under

Imran Khan's leadership. It is astonishing to see that after the incident, former special representative Zalmay Khalilzad is expressing support for Imran Khan. This proves that behind Imran Khan, there is Modi and the Zionists. However, we will not allow this conspiracy to succeed, and we will not remain silent. We will go to the extremes to ensure that they face the full extent of the law, and we will not present their actions before the public. We will not stay silent; we will stand up against this plot until they are completely defeated, and their misdeeds will not go unnoticed," Yousafzai added.

## PTI leaders continue quitting party

ISLAMABAD (INP): Many more leaders of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf have announced to part ways with the party.

In separate news conferences, former Governor Sindh Imran Ismail, PTI Sindh President Ali Haider Zaidi, Former Federal Minister Khuro Bakhtiar, former MPA Hashim Dogar, former MNA Raja Khurram Nawaz announced to quit the party following the May 9 vandalism and violent protests across the country. Other PTI leaders who announced to leave party include Taimur Bhatti and Chaudhry Ikhlaq. They said our army is our pride and the entire nation stands by Pakistan's armed forces.

Meanwhile, PTI leaders Dr Akhtar Malik and Mian Tariq Abdullah have also announced quitting PTI and strongly condemned the violent incidents on 9th May. Addressing a joint press conference in Islamabad on Saturday, they said May 9 will always be remembered as a black day in the history of Pakistan.

## PM congratulates newly elected officials of CPNE

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Saturday congratulated the newly elected officials of Council of Pakistan Newspapers Editors (CPNE).

In his message, the prime minister conveyed his heartfelt congratulation to Irshad Arif, Anwar Sajidi and Ejaz ul Haq on their election as President, Senior Vice President and Secretary General of CPNE respectively.

Expressing best wishes for the newly elected officials, Shehbaz Sharif said CPNE was a beautiful collection of distinguished names of writers and journalists.

## CM Congratulates CPNE Newly Elected body 'Govt. to extend support, cooperation to develop newspaper industry'

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chief Minister of Balochistan, Mir Abdul Qudoos Bizenjo, on Saturday has congratulated the successful candidates in the annual elections of the CPNE (Council of Pakistan Newspaper Editors).

In his congratulatory message, the Chief Minister commended the elected

President, Arshad Arif, Secretary General Ejaz-ul-Haq, Deputy Secretary General Abid Hussain, Finance Secretary Ghulam Nabi Chandio, Senior Vice President Anwar Sajidi, Vice President Arif Baloch, and Joint Secretary Munir Baloch on their successful

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## Complete report of miscreants involved in May 9 incidents sent to federal govt

ISLAMABAD (Online): The details of all miscreants involved in May 9 incidents have come to open with complete and solid evidence.

A detailed report from intelligence agencies and police have been received by federal government wherein the data of every miscreant involved in attack on military and government properties is available with complete details, pictures and videos. The state itself will become respondent in the cases against the miscreants.

Sources told Online intelligence agencies have

completed investigation in respect of the miscreants involved in attacks on sensitive institutions in May 9 incident.

A detailed report has been sent to federal government. Report includes name of miscreants, their family bio data, their contacts, mobile phone numbers, identity card numbers and their affiliation with party.

The native towns and party responsibilities and all others about the miscreants have been exposed. CCTV footages and clips of pictures have also been attached with these documents.

## Langau vows stringent legal action against violators of law

Independent Report

ZHOB: The Home Minister and Tribal Affairs Minister, Mir Zia Langau, along with DG PDMA Jahanzeb Khan, Tariq Javed Mengal, and other officials, arrived in Zhub district, on Saturday.

Upon their arrival in Zhub, Commissioner Zhub Division, Saeed Ahmed Umrani, Additional Deputy Commissioner Zeeshan Panezai, and Assistant Commissioner Zhub, Hafiz Muhammad Tariq, warmly welcomed the



guests. Mir Zia Langau held discussions on peace, security, and other matters with Commissioner Zhub and other officials. He stated that ensuring peace and security is a top priority of the provincial government and administration.

Stringent legal actions will be taken against those who violate the law. Our forces are employing every possible means to restore peace and security, and they are sacrificing their lives to protect the lives and property of the people. We cannot forget the invaluable sacrifices they have made. Today, we are sleeping peacefully due to their sacrifices, and their sacrifices cannot be forgotten.

## Imran Khan says will give a 'surprise' soon

Says if he gets arrested or disqualified, PTI senior vice chairman Shah Mehmood Qureshi will lead the party.

LAHORE (INP): Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Chairman Imran Khan on Saturday appeared optimistic about the future of his party and political situation, saying that he would soon give 'a surprise'.

Talking to senior journalists and lawyers at his residence in Lahore's Zaman Park, the former prime minister said that some of PTI lawmakers have been forced to quit the party while others have been exposed.

As the exodus from the party continues,

Imran Khan noted that if he gets arrested or disqualified, PTI senior vice chairman Shah Mehmood Qureshi will lead the party. Responding to a question, the former premier praised his party's leader Murad Saeed as the 'future leader'. He also clarified that there is no conflict with the army, stating, "This army is mine."

He appeared optimism about the future of his party, mentioning that times are about to change and promising a significant surprise in the future.

## Tragedy strikes: Snow avalanche claims 11 lives, leaves 13 injured in Gilgit Baltistan

ISLAMABAD (APP): In a devastating incident on Friday evening, a snow avalanche swept through the Shounter top area of district Astore in Gilgit Baltistan, resulting in the loss of at least 11 lives and leaving 13 others injured.

The Deputy Inspector General of Police for the Diamer-Astore Division, Tufail Mir, confirmed the casualties and informed that a control room has been established in the district to coordinate rescue efforts and aid in the recovery of individuals trapped under the debris.

Rescue teams swiftly mobilized to the site and are currently engaged in the

challenging task of extracting people from beneath the snow.

As per the latest report from the Gilgit Baltistan Disaster Management Authority (GBDMA), eight bodies have been recovered by Rescue 1122, the district administration, and local volunteers. The search for the remaining victims is still underway.

The injured individuals, described as being in critical condition, have been evacuated to DHQ Hospital Astore for urgent medical treatment.

According to the GBDMA, the unfortunate incident occurred when a group of 25 people from

the Gujjar family, accompanied by their livestock, were en route from Kashmir to Astore and were caught in the path of the avalanche.

Meanwhile Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Saturday expressed deep sorrow and grief over the loss of precious lives in an incident of avalanche in Shuntar Top area of Astore.

At least 10 people have lost their lives, and 26 others sustained injuries in a snow avalanche that hit Astore district, Gilgit Baltistan on Saturday.

The prime minister directed the relevant authorities to provide best medical treatment to the injured.



QUETTA: A delegation led by Central Chairman All Pakistan Flour Mills Association Asim Raza Ahmed meeting with Governor Balochistan Malik Abdul Wali Khan Kakar

## Death toll increases to 6: Another falls prey victim to Congo virus in Quetta

Independent Report  
QUETTA: Another person died of the Congo virus in Fatima Jinnah Chest Institute and Hospital here on Saturday.

According to the hospital sources, the patient was brought from Lorail and admitted in the Fatima Jinnah Hospital with critical condition. The patient was diagnosed with Crimean-Congo haemorrhagic fever (CCHF) virus. While he was being provided necessary medical assistance, but he died due to severity of the disease.

With his death, the toll of casualties due to Congo virus has increased to six during the current season, the hospital sources confirmed. In addition to this, over 18 persons have also been diagnosed with the Congo virus in Fatima Jinnah hospital since January 2023.

## Coal worker killed, 4 injured in Duki mine blast

DUKI (APP): A coal worker was killed and four were injured in a methane gas blast inside a coal mine in Balochistan's Duki district on Saturday.

Police sources said that the coal miners were working deep inside the mine when there was a blast.

One coal miner was died on the spot whereas four coal miners suffered burn injuries. The injured miners coal miners were referred to Quetta for medical treatment.

## Inflation causing severe distress among poor: Governor

Independent Report

QUETTA: Governor of Balochistan, Malik Abdul Wali Khan Kakar, has stated that the current inflation, particularly due to hoarding of wheat and flour and smuggling, has further exacerbated the difficulties faced by the poor.

He further added that in this regard, the chairpersons and officials of All Pakistan Flour Mills Association from all four provinces can play an important role in facilitating the lives of ordinary people, adding

that they have assured that they will continue to cooperate with us at the federal and provincial levels to resolve the issues of the owners of the Pakistan Flour Mills Association and to ensure unrestricted transportation at interprovincial level.

He expressed these views during a meeting with the chairpersons and officials of All Pakistan Flour Mills Association from all four provinces, led by Central Chairman Asim Raza Ahmed, on Saturday.

## Youm-e-Takbeer to be observed today

Independent Report

QUETTA: Youm-e-Takbeer is being observed with national zeal and fervor today (Sunday) all over the country and so in Quetta and other parts of Balochistan.

Different programmes have been arranged to mark the Youm-e-Takbeer that commemorates historic nuclear tests at Chagai in 1998.



A ceremony is being organized by the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) Balochistan at Quetta Press Club.

The President PML-N Balochistan, Sheikh Jaffar Khan Mandokhail and other provincial leaders of the party would participate and address the Youm-e-Takbeer ceremony.

On this day, Pakistan became the seventh nuclear power of the world with a demonstration of nuclear capabilities and the first in the Muslim world after conducting nuclear tests at Chagai in Balochistan on 28th May 1998 as a response to India's nuclear bomb tests on 11th and 13th May of the same year at Pokhran in the Rajasthan state of India.



QUETTA: Spokesman CM Balochistan Baber Khan Yousafzai speaks during a rally in favor of Pak Army



## CM Sindh vows to provide equal opportunities to persons with disabilities

KARACHI (APP): Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah has said that his government was committed to providing equal opportunities to the people, including those with disabilities.

"I announce here that my government will provide job opportunities to the persons with disabilities, particularly the amputees who have gone under treatment and rehabilitation process here at SIP&R", he said while speaking at the Awareness Day program for the people with disabilities organized by the Sindh Institute of Physical and Rehabilitation (SIPMR) on their premises here Saturday. The chief minister was accompanied by his Advisor Murtaza Wahab. The program was attended by CM's Special Assistant for Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities, Sadiq Memon, Secretary Health Zulfiqar Shah, Secretary Department of Empowerment of Persons with Dis-

abilities (DEPD) Taha Farooqi and others.

The chief minister said that the SIPMR successfully illuminated the path towards the inclusivity and empowerment with its highly anticipated Awareness Day for people with disabilities. He said that the day also reflected a commitment to improving the lives of people with disabilities with the help.

The chief minister said that the momentous occasion offered attendees a plethora of enriching experiences. He said that the cornerstone of the event was the provision of on-the-spot assessments, which were available across various departments, including Physiatry Consultation, Occupational Therapy, Physiotherapy, Speech Therapy, Psychological Services, and the Prosthetic and Orthotics Department.

Recognizing the importance of joyful engagement, Murad Ali Shah said that

the SIPMR thoughtfully arranged a multitude of activities, creating an inclusive environment for all. He also appreciated the children in attendance delighted in the presence of a Jumping Castle, providing endless hours of laughter and excitement.

The chief minister said that the stage hosted the captivating 'Sharing Success Stories' event, where patients and their family members graciously shared personal accounts of how the SIPMR's transformative services had forever changed their lives or the lives of their loved ones. "These inspiring narratives aim to instill hope, break down barriers and inspire others to embrace the power of rehabilitation," he said.

Shah said that in an unprecedented moment of advancement, the SIPMR proudly unveiled "The Bionic Arm" during this prestigious occasion. He said that the cutting-edge

prosthesis symbolized a significant breakthrough in assistive technology. "With the provision of this state-of-the-art arm to deserving amputees, the SIPMR reaffirmed its commitment to facilitating independence, restoring dignity and transforming lives," he concluded.

Earlier, the chief minister was received by his Special Assistant Sadiq Memon and the Executive Director SIPMR Dr Nabila Soomro. The chief minister visited the stalls and interacted with the persons and children with disabilities and their families.



LAHORE: Minister of State for Interior Abdul Rahman Kanju and Ex. MNA Saddique Baloch call on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif

## May 28, a red-letter day in Pakistan's history which ensures invincible defence, regional stability

ISLAMABAD (APP): The nation is fervently celebrating 25th anniversary of Pakistan's nuclear tests conducted on May 28, 1998 which was a historic day that led to achievement of invincible defence capabilities and ensured regional stability through power equilibrium.

The day brought a revival for the entire Pakistani nation and became a moment of pride for the Muslim Ummah.

The day, now remembered as Youm-e-Takbeer is being celebrated every year across the country as a day of national pride and thanksgivings which made Pakistan the seventh nuclear nation of the world and the first Muslim state, having the nuclear arsenal in its defense stockpile to

exercise maximum deterrence for peaceful purposes.

The tests not only demonstrated the resolve of the Pakistani nation to safeguard Pakistan's territorial integrity, independence and sovereignty, but also the desire to preserve strategic balance in South Asia.

The historic statement of former Prime Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto that they would starve but transform the country into a nuclear power, led to achievement of this milestone.

On that day, the Pakistani leadership, notwithstanding external pressures and Indian hegemonic designs to tilt power balance through its nuclear tests, opted courageously to

1998 to respond, and restored the power balance in South Asia by conducting nuclear tests.

With such tactical and sagacious response by Pakistan on May 28, 1998, it became "a red letter day" in the country's history, silencing the belligerent ruling junta in its neighbourhood that was clamouring with ill-conceived expansionist designs.

Youm-e-Takbeer, which literally means "the day when Allah's name was exalted" regularly infuses new verve into the high soaring spirits of a nation which refused to cower down by the repeated threats of war mongering mindset in its neighbourhood.

The history of acquir-

ing the modern nuclear technology for exercising maximum restraint and for purely peaceful purposes, entails commitment, patriotism and strong obligation on the part of Pakistani leadership, for territorial integrity of the country.

India had tested its "device" for the first time in 1974 which compelled Pakistan to expedite its nuclear programme with renewed commitment.

Amid slogans of "Allah-o-Akbar", Pakistan conducted its first test on May 28, 1998, at the Raskoh hills in the Chagai District of Balochistan.

But resisting the mounting external pressures to restrain and not to respond in kind, the then

Prime Minister of Pakistan Muhammad Nawaz Sharif went for the bold decision to test the Pakistani nukes and thus balancing the strategic slanting power in the region.

Pakistan is committed to the promotion of environment of peace and stability in South Asia, while preserving its capability to ward off aggression or adventurism in any form.

It is a partner in international efforts to strengthen the global non-proliferation regime based on the principles of non-discrimination and equal security for all states.

It adheres to the latest international standards on export controls and maintains highest standards of nuclear safety and security.



LAHORE: Members of Markazi Jamiat Ahle Hadith are holding rally to expressing their solidarity with Pakistan Armed Forces, held at Mall road

## Mariyum grieved over demise of Dr Seemin Jamali

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Information and Broadcasting Mariyum Aurangzeb on Saturday expressed grief over the death of former executive director of Jinnah Hospital Karachi, Dr Seemin Jamali.

She, in a condolence message, prayed to the Almighty to rest the departed soul in eternal peace and grant courage and fortitude to the bereaved family to bear the irreparable loss with equanimity.

The minister said she was saddened by hearing news of the sad demise of Dr. Seemin Jamali. She said Dr. Seemin

Jamali had rendered valuable services in medicine field by showing bravery and courage.

Mariyum said her services were also appreciated at the international level. Dr. Seemin Jamali was the pride of Pakistan.

The minister said the inclusion of her name in the list of 9 global heroes, who bravely fought against the global Coronavirus Pandemic, was a source of pride for Pakistan.

Despite suffering from a deadly disease like cancer, Dr. Seemin Jamali performed her duties to the best of her ability, the minister remarked.

## Opposition leader calls on PM

LAHORE (APP): Leader of Opposition in the National Assembly Raja Riaz Ahmad and Nawab Sher Waseer, a member of the National Assembly, Saturday called on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif.

During the meeting, the overall current political situation in the country was discussed, PM Office Media Wing said in a press release.

## Maulana Fazl leaves for London

ISLAMABAD (Online): PDM chairman Maulana Fazlur Rehman has left for London.

According to JUI-F sources Maulana Fazlur Rehman will stay in UK for some days.

He will meet PML-N supremo Nawaz Sharif as well in London.

Sources told Maulana Fazlur Rehman will meet party workers in different cities in UK.

## Mariyum rules... Continued from page 1

The entire leadership of the PML-N including Nawaz Sharif, Shehbaz Sharif, Hamza Shahbaz, Maryam Nawaz spent hundreds of days in jails and detention centres, she said adding they faced false cases but stood firm and finally emerged victorious.

She said Imran Khan refused to negotiate with his political opponents on the economy, Kashmir and security issues.

Imran was not ready to sit with the opposition parties on critical issues like corona pandemic and the FATF issue, she said.

She maintained that dialogue could not be held with those who set the country on fire, create chaos and anarchy, fills the minds of masses with hatred, and harbour armed groups.

## Imran crosses red line on May 09: Ahsan Iqbal

ISLAMABAD (Online): Planning minister Ahsan Iqbal has said Imran Khan crossed red line on May 09 which cannot be allowed.

"Imran Khan and his workers attacked on sensitive military installations. Now allied parties are in power. These parties have real political history, they have rendered unprecedented sacrifices for democracy, they have opposed martial law in the past, he said this in an interview with a foreign news agency.

He held Imran Khan was the only Prime Minister (PM) in the history of Pakistan who was removed through no trust move. When Imran Khan saw his defeat then he incited his people to violence. Government has not arrested Imran Khan and any of his supporter. Imran Khan and his supporters crossed red line on May 09. No democratic country allow such attitudes, he added.

Imran Khan continued his political activities freely for one year, he staged protests and long march but no one said anything to him and when red line was crossed on May 09, it cannot be allowed.

He said Imran Khan and his followers attacked military installations. Pakistan constitution is very clear that those involved in attacking military installations will be tried in military courts. This way if some one commits crime or causes harm to civil institution then one's case will run in civil court. Imran Khan instituted false cases against political rivals during his rule. We faced all cases in courts. We never staged protests on roads to avoid cases. Imran Khan sent Nawaz Sharif, Shebaz and PML-N leadership in jail. But we never fomented violence.

## Imran has committed political suicide: Reeham

LONDON (Online): Reeham Khan former wife of Imran Khan has said accountability of Imran Khan has started.

"Imran Khan accountability has started. Escaping from it not only difficult but also next to impossible, she said this in an interview here.

Commenting on leaving the party by PTI leaders and workers she said one who leaves others after using them for the sake of his personal interest, there is no strange thing therein if people quit him.

People who joined PTI like blowing wind left it like blowing wind, she observed.

There is no future of Imran Khan politics ahead,

she stated. Hurting the sentiments of mothers of martyrs is tyrannical.

The reality of PTI stood exposed due to attack on Jinnah House, she added.

What I had said a year before has proved true, she said. A person who makes decision on the basis of ego and conceit always takes wrong decision.

Imran Khan refused to identify his party workers. In may view Imran Khan politics has come to end, she said adding Imran Khan has committed political suicide.

She claimed that AJK former prime minister Sardar Ilyas Tanvir is also going to form his party in addition to Jahangir Tareen.

## Nation sets a red-line against...

Continued from page 1

said that provision of equal opportunities to the country's youth to excel in different fields and get respectable jobs was among the top priorities of the government.

He said that provision of international standard educational and skills facilities was being ensured for the young people, besides arrangements were also made for holding of different games.

The prime minister expressed these views during a meeting with his Special Assistant on Youth Affairs Shaza Fatima Khawaja, PM Office Media Wing said in a press release.

The prime minister also expressed his pleasure over the youth taking part in the positive activities during the ongoing 34th National Games in Quetta.

Their objective was to provide opportunities to the young segment of society so that they could utilize

their complete energies for positive activities and save them from the negative effects of propaganda.

SAPM Shaza Fatima Khawaja apprised the prime minister of the progress achieved on the youth programme.

She informed that 60,000 youth had been imparted different professional training in different skill sets under the youth programme which was initiated during the last year.

A free training programme to 40,000 young people would be initiated soon, she added.

The special assistant further said that a total of Rs 13.5 billion loans on affordable terms had been extended to the young people in business and agriculture sectors while Rs 16.5 billion worth loans would be provided in the next few months.

The prime minister appreciated the progress on the youth programme.

## Mushaal for safe release of Yasin as India seeks death penalty

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chairperson Peace and Culture Organisation Mushaal Hussein Mallick has urged the Pakistan government to raise the issue of senior Hurriyat leader and her husband Yasin Malik's detention at all fora globally because of the notorious

Narendra Modi fascist regime was hell-bent to silence the most powerful voice of the Kashmir freedom movement forever.

According to a press release received here, Mushaal, after visiting Jinnah House Lahore spoke to media and expressed her alarm that the fascist government would eliminate him, as India's top anti-terrorism investigation agency again sought the death sentence for Yasin Malik, chief of the Jammu Kashmir Liberation Front (JKLF), after he was given life in prison

Mushaal expressed fear that Modi's actually hanging his entire political career down the drain. However, she vowed that the no-

torious Indian authorities should not think this would ever silence the brave Kashmiris.

She warned that Yasin was not an ordinary leader and if anything happened to him the entire region would be engulfed in war flames for which the Indian notorious government would be responsible.

The Chairperson recalled that Kashmiri people had been struggling peacefully to break the shackles of Indian slavery and always discourage violence; however, she warned that if they approved his death sentence, then the situation might go out of control; hence the Indian authorities should not only reconsider their decision of life imprisonment but should set him free because he was incarcerated in fake and fabricated cases.



Pakistani cultural event showcasing music, cuisines, textile, handicrafts held in Beijing

## Taimoor Khan: Pakistan's boxing champion aims for OPBF heavyweight glory

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistani professional boxer Taimoor Khan, who is currently the World Boxing Council (WBC) Continental Champion, has set his sights on winning the Oriental and Pacific Boxing Federation (OPBF) heavyweight title this year for Pakistan.

In an interview with APP, Khan expressed his desire to defeat top-notch boxers and stated that the OPBF title is a crucial stepping stone towards the world heavyweight title. However, he mentioned that the main obstacle in accomplishing his goals is securing sponsorship.

Khan had a scheduled fight with Justis Humi, an Australian professional boxer ranked 54th in the world, in August. Unfortunately, due to visa issues, he was unable to seize that opportunity. Nevertheless, Khan remains determined to become the first Pakistani to win the OPBF heavyweight title.

When discussing his boxing idols, Khan mentioned Ukrainian professional boxer Oleksandr Usyk and British professional boxer Anthony Joshua. He admired their exceptional skills, movements, stamina, and cardio.

Regarding his training regimen, Khan revealed that he undergoes two to three months of rigorous exercise, and strength training, and adheres to a focused and healthy diet before stepping into the ring.

He emphasized the need for even more intense training for his upcoming challenging fights. If he were not a boxer, Khan stated that he would have chosen to be a Mixed Martial Arts (MMA) fighter or a rugby player.

Recounting his favourite victory against Vedant Agarwal, where he won the Asian Heavyweight title for the first time, Khan praised his opponent's experience and toughness but expressed his satisfaction with knocking him out easily. He added that defeating an Indian boxer on Pakistan's Independence Day was a particularly joy-

ous moment for him. Khan believes that Pakistani sportsmen should be given opportunities similar to neighbouring countries such as Iran, India, and Thailand in order to uplift sports in the country.

Reflecting on his boxing career, he revealed that his initial dream was to obtain the World Boxing Council (WBC) belt, but now he aims even higher, aspiring to achieve success similar to Tyson Fury. Khan also expressed confidence in the extensive talent present in Pakistani boxers, stating that with the right support, they can bring Olympic medals to the country.

He advised young boxers to step out of their comfort zones and work harder to achieve their goals.

In April of this year, Taimoor Khan won the WBC Continental Championship title by knocking out Thai boxer Panya Chomphopphuang in the sixth round, bringing his overall fight record to eight wins, including seven knockouts.



QUETTA: Chairman Tehreek-e-Jawan Pakistan Muhammad Abdullah Hamid Gul addressing a press conference



## PTI's opposition leader condemns May 9th vandalism

ISLAMABAD (APP): Leader of the Opposition in the Senate of Pakistan from Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Dr. Waseem Shahzad on Saturday strongly condemned the incidents of May 9th and demanded an arrest of all the culprits involved in attacking Jinnah House in Lahore including General Headquarters (GHQ).

Addressing a press conference with heavy heart, Dr. Waseem Shahzad glorified the role of Pakistan's army and the martyrs who sacrificed their lives in defending the motherland.

"My grandfather is martyr, my uncle fought along with Aziz Bhatti Shaheed till his last breath, my brother has been fighting for the motherland and today our children defending the country", he said.

The PTI leader said that our valiant forces won the war on terrorism whereas the most powerful nations lost battle against terrorism, adding the real strength of Pak army is an unbreakable bond of love and trust between the masses and the army.

"Any step or narrative to break this relation is

meant to weaken the motherland", he said and added that Dawn Leaks, Memo Gate scandal and irresponsible statements were made in the past but what happened on May 9th was totally unacceptable.

He said that the political leadership of the country should come forward to end the uncertainty and strengthening democracy and to ensure the supremacy of rule of the constitution and rule of law.

Senate of Pakistan is symbol of unity of federation and I am its member in the role of opposition

leader, said Waseem adding, I will play my parliamentary role as opposition leader for the strengthening of institutions and I hope my honorable senator colleagues will help me for greater cause.

He said, he is not in contact with PTI chief Imran Khan but he will not resign from his senatorship will continue to play his parliamentary role in the senate.

Responding to question, the opposition leader said that the role of political leadership is to find a way forward in political crises through dialogue.



ISLAMABAD: A group photo of the participants with the experts of a seminar on China's new paradigm of development organized by Devcom Pakistan at COMSATS University.

## Seminar held on China's Global Development Initiative

ISLAMABAD (APP): China Pakistan Study Centre (CPSC) at the Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad (ISSI), organized a seminar here on China's "Global Development Initiative" aimed at development cooperation for achieving sustainable development goals.

The chief guest at the seminar was Senator Mushahid Hussain Sayed, Chairperson Senate Defense Committee. Former Ambassador to China Masood Khalid was the keynote speaker.

World was currently experiencing both transformation and turmoil. Different leaders were describing this decade in different ways.

President Macron accurately stated that this decade marked the end of 300 years of Western dominance.

The current era was witnessing the rise of China and the 'Asian Century.' Despite global conflicts, climate change, poverty, and energy-related challenges, China had shown impressive leadership.

China's global strategy included the Global Development Initiative, Global Security Initiative, and Global Civilization Initiative, which shared many similarities.

This initiative reflected that Chinese values were all about cooperation, peace and respect.

He noted that Chinese strategic culture without a second thought was an embodiment of cooperation, peace and respect for all.

He concluded by saying that Pakistan and China shared a long-standing, all-weather and time-tested strategic relationship. Therefore, both should work together to build an Asian century of progress, prosperity and cooperation.

In his welcome remarks, Director General ISSI Ambassador Sohail Mahmood said that GDI was a critical initiative launched by China at a time when the world was deeply affected by the health and economic effects of Covid-19 pandemic and the deficit in the achievement of SDGs was growing.

President Xi Jinping presented the GDI at the 76th Session of the UN General Assembly in September 2021 to pool efforts to tackle the challenges of the world and to facilitate the post-pandemic recovery.

He noted that Pakistan was one of the first countries to lend its strong support to the GDI. Pakistan was also among the first countries to become a member of the GDI's 'Group of Friends' at the United Nations.

A lot of progress had since been achieved from that platform. He underscored that at a time of global food, fuel, and financial crises, initiatives like GDI were essential for the developing world.

He also highlighted the contribution of BRI's flagship project, CPEC, to Pakistan's continued progress and prosperity.

He concluded by expressing the hope that GDI would be perceived in its right perspective by all and it would help advance the noble cause of achievement of SDGs by 2030.

Earlier, in his introductory remarks, Dr. Talat Shabbir stated that GDI aimed to accelerate the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 2030 agenda by focusing on people-oriented development.

It sought to promote stronger, greener, and healthier global development partnerships by revitalizing global development partnerships.



ISLAMABAD: Famous Actor Nayer Ejaz and actress Laila Zuberi are posing for a group photo along with other artists during ceremony of newly casting movie "Raja Rasalu", in Federal Capital.

## IHC issues written order on nullification of arrest of Senator Ijaz Chaudhry

ISLAMABAD (Online): Islamabad High Court (IHC) has issued written order regarding nullification of arrest of PTI senator Ijaz Chaudhry under 3 MPO.

Justice Miangul Hassan Aurangzeb issued 6-page written order.

The release of senator Ijaz Chaudhry was linked to affidavit.

It has been said in written order the petitioner requested the court to declare arrest of his uncle Ijaz Chaudhry illegal.

According to police Ijaz Chaudhry created law and order situation after

Imran Khan was arrested. State counsel presented record of Ijaz Chaudhry tweets in the court. Record of any tweets which create law and order situation was not presented in the court.

According to police report PTI leadership delivered speeches against armed forces which led to create political instability in the country.

As per police report military installations were damaged after Imran Khan detention. Ijaz Ahmad was involved in provocation.

## 5,000 umbrellas distributed to Grand Mosque visitors

ISLAMABAD (APP): Saudi Arabia's General Presidency for the Affairs of the Grand Holy Mosque and the Prophet's Holy Mosque distributed 5,000 umbrellas for the visitors to the Grand Mosque under the "Your Umbrella is in Your Hands" initiative.

The presidency handed the umbrellas to the Grand Mosque visitors as part of numerous social initiatives that its social-affairs agency has launched to serve the visitors of the two holy mosques and attain the best social services, Saudi Press Agency reported.

## Secy info, PIO felicitate newly elected office bearers of CPNE

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Secretary for Information and Broadcasting Sohail Ali Khan and Principal Information Officer (PIO) Mobashir Hasan congratulated the newly elected office-bearers of the Council of Pakistan Newspaper Editors (CPNE).

Both the senior government officers expressed good wishes for newly elected office-bearers of CPNE including President Irshad Arif, Senior Vice President Anwar Sajid, Secretary General Ejazul Haque and others.

The secretary of information said the ministry of information and broadcasting had always given

foremost priority to media freedom in the country. The journalistic values and media institutions in Pakistan had significantly improved and became more responsible compared to the past, he added.

He said the role of media gained more importance during the current era of information technology.

The PIO extended heartfelt felicitation to the newly elected office-bearers of CPNE which was an organized body.

He hoped that the newly elected body would play its due role in solving the problems of journalists and maintaining standards of journalism.

## Death anniversary of renowned film actress Rani observed

ISLAMABAD (APP): The death anniversary of renowned film actress Nasira Begum known as Rani was observed on Saturday. Born on December 8, 1946 in Lahore, Rani made her screen debut in the film Mehboob in 1962. For the next few years, Rani appeared in supporting roles. She obtained tremendous success in the late 1960s.

## Timely assistance, law enforcement hallmarks of NHMP: DIG

ISLAMABAD (APP): Deputy Inspector General National Highways and Motorway Police, North Zone Muhammad Yusuf Malik said on Saturday that good manners, timely assistance and law enforcement without discrimination were hallmarks of the Motorway Police.

On the occasion of his visit to sector M-2 North, operational issues were discussed, inspection of pa-

trolling vehicles and residential facilities of officers were reviewed.

DIG Motorway instructed the Sector Commander and DSP to ensure all possible assistance to the road users without any delay by utilizing all the resources.

He took notice of the problems being faced by the NHMP staff and issued orders for their resolution.

## Drive for registration of house servants, tenants data in full swing

ISLAMABAD: According to details, following the special orders of Inspector General of Police (IGP) Islamabad Dr. Akbar Nasir Khan, the Islamabad Capital Police "Knock the Door" campaign for the registration of employees and tenants is in full swing, a police public relations officer said.

He said that, during this campaign, various

about the problems faced by the citizens.

In this regard, the Counter Terrorism Department (CTD) Islamabad has registered a data of 173 house servants of 291 houses from Karachi company police station jurisdiction. The purpose of this campaign is to avoid any untoward incident by maintaining law and order in the federal capital Islamabad adding that the registration

## JKLF flays NIA's move against Yasin

ISLAMABAD (INP): In Indian illegally occupied Jammu and Kashmir, the Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front (JKLF) has strongly denounced the Indian nefarious move to ask the Delhi High Court for death sentence against its Chairman, Muhammad Yasin Malik, in fake and concocted cases filed against him by dreaded National Investigation Agency (NIA).

According to Kashmir Media Service (KMS), the JKLF in a statement issued in Srinagar said in order to regain the declining political situation of the ruling extremist party of India, the BJP government is hell-bent upon punishing Yasin Malik for his peaceful and non-violent political beliefs.

## Pardon time is over, seeing Imran in trouble, predicts Manzoor Wasan

ISLAMABAD (Online): Senior leader of PPP Sindh Manzoor Wasan has said that now the time for forgiveness has passed and I am seeing Imran Khan in trouble.

In one of his statements, Manzoor Wasan said that no one will stay with Imran Khan now, neither at the public level nor

at the leadership level.

He said that Imran Khan will try to go out but he will not be allowed to go, maybe Imran Khan will keep quiet for some days.

Manzoor Wasan said that I am seeing disintegration in PTI and new parties coming into being in the country, the new parties will be led by others.



ISLAMABAD: Laborers are installing gas pipe line at Sector I-10 during high temperature, in Federal Capital.



of tenants and domestic workers could not only keep a close watch on miscreants but also prevent the elements involved in any kind of suspicious activity.

## Banners against Imran, his associates displayed in twin cities

ISLAMABAD (Online): Banners along with big pictures and Panaflex have been displayed against Imran Khan and his associates by unidentified persons in twin cities.

According to details, posters have been displayed against Imran Khan and his associates outside Judicial Complex and police station.

The pictures of several leaders including Imran Khan have been displayed on broader poster.

The pictures of Jhalo Gherao and attack on army vehicles are also put on poster. Few persons had made claw with black color on few pictures.

## APHC concerned over victimization of Hurriyat leaders by Modi regime

ISLAMABAD (APP): The All Parties Hurriyat Conference in Indian illegally occupied Jammu and Kashmir has expressed grave concern over the victimization of Hurriyat leaders by the Narendra Modi-led Indian government to suppress the Kashmiris' freedom struggle.

According to Kashmir media service, the APHC spokesman in a statement issued in Srinagar deploring that the Modi regime is targeting the Hurriyat leaders to force them to give up their just cause.

He said India's dreaded National Investigation Agency (NIA) has moved the Delhi High Court seeking the death penalty for illegally detained Chairman of Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front (JKLF), Muhammad Yasin Malik, who was awarded life sentence in a false case by an Indian court, last year.

## IRSA releases 180,100 cusecs water

ISLAMABAD (APP): Indus River System Authority (IRSA) on Saturday released 180,100 cusecs water from various rim stations with inflow of 209,600 cusecs.

According to the data released by IRSA, water level in River Indus at Tabela Dam was 1428.84 feet and was 30.84 feet higher than its dead level of 1,398 feet. Water inflow and outflow in the dam was recorded as 76,100 cusecs and 68,000 cusecs respectively. The water level in River Jhelum at Mangla Dam was 1121.50 feet, which was 71.50 feet higher than its dead level of 1,050 feet.

## Islamabad Police transitions Police Stations to solar energy, saved Rs74m

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad capital police has embarked on a groundbreaking initiative to shift various police stations to solar energy as part of the austerity campaign launched by the Government of Pakistan and change management unit project. The move aims to promote sustainability, reduce costs, and contribute to a greener environment, a police public relations officer said.

He said that, following the vision of Prime Minister Mian Muhammad Shahbaz Sharif, the Islamabad capital police has made significant strides in embracing renewable energy sources. As part of the austerity campaign, all police stations and buildings of the Islamabad police will be transitioned to solar energy, marking a major step towards energy efficiency and environmental preservation.

In the last three months alone, this initiative has resulted in remarkable achievements. The implementation of solar energy systems in seven police stations including Golra, Sihala, Women, Bhara Kahu, Shahzad Town, Sabzi Mandi, and Tarnol has led to substantial savings. The Islamabad Capital Police has successfully saved an impressive 68,648

## Long Covid affects 10pc of people infected with Omicron variant

ISLAMABAD (INP): At least one in 10 people infected with the highly contagious Omicron Covid-19 variant experienced the effects of long Covid in the six months following infection, an expansive study has found.

That is lower than the 30 percent most researchers cited throughout the pandemic, suggesting that long Covid was more common and severe in those infected with earlier variants.

The study, supported by the National Institutes of Health and published in Jama, involved about 10,000 people in the US

and focused on the symptoms of long Covid with the aim of better defining it and potentially treating those suffering from long-term effects.

"Americans living with long Covid want to understand what is happening with their bodies," Rachel Levine, US assistant secretary for health, said in an NIH news.

Out of 9,764 participants - including 8,646 infected with Covid-19, and 1,118 uninfected - more than 30 symptoms were identified within six months or longer after infection, the National UAE reported.

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The spokesman said almost all Hurriyat leaders have been implicated in politically motivated cases under a deep-rooted conspiracy and now the Indian authorities are preparing grounds to eliminate them one by one to render the Kashmir freedom movement leaderless. He said that these leaders have committed no crime other than demanding the right to self-determination for their people and seeking resolution of the Kashmir dispute through dialogue.

The spokesman, however, maintained that Indian brutalities and atrocities have failed in the past to subdue the resolve of the Kashmiri people and their leadership to pursue their freedom struggle and will meet the same fate in the future as well.

He urged the UN Human Rights Council and other world bodies including Amnesty International,

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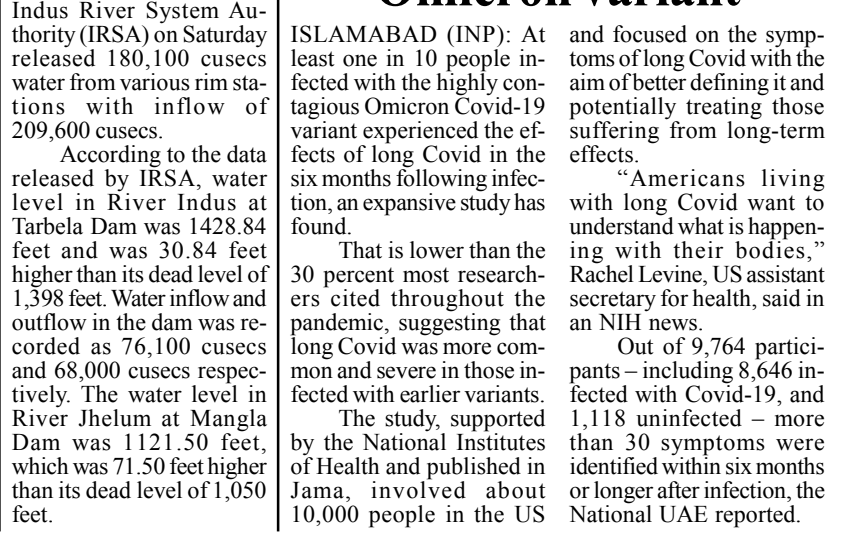
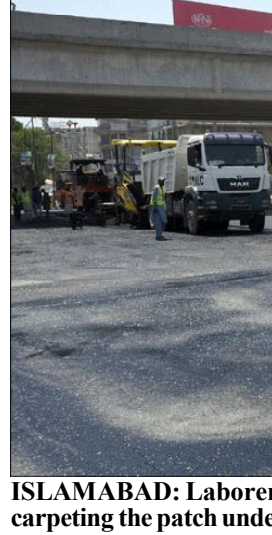
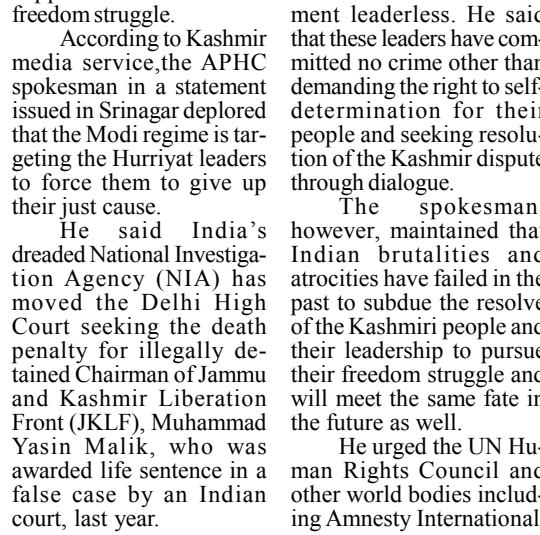
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ISLAMABAD: Laborers are busy in spraying Coal-tar on the road before carpeting the patch under newly constructed flyover at IJP Road.



Daily Voice of Masses  
**Independent**  
Sunday May 28, 2023

### Election uncertainty

As the nation remains bitterly divided, with certain forces strengthening their already suffocating grip over national life, the only hope lies in the prospect of timely elections. But, as it emerged in the Supreme Court on Thursday, there are no concrete indications that polls will actually be held in October.

While hearing the ECP's petition appealing the apex court's directives that provincial polls be held in Punjab on May 14, the chief justice observed that as per the Election Commission, there was no sign of polls being held in October.

He also questioned how much of a delay in elections was tolerable, and how caretaker governments could continue in office after their 90-day constitutional validity had expired.

The PDM administration needs to dispel these clouds of uncertainty and assure the nation that there will be no delay in general elections.

The administration and the ECP cannot use the post-May 9 situation — specifically political uncertainty, violence and polarisation — as excuses to indefinitely delay polls. If anything, the situation demands that a new government with a fresh mandate from the people take the reins to steer the nation out of stormy waters.

Moreover, the excuses of lack of funds and unavailability of security personnel to safeguard the election process do not hold up to scrutiny.

As the PTI noted in a separate petition to the apex court, while the government had claimed that security personnel could not be committed to election duties due to the fragile law and order situation nationally, a sufficient number were deployed to control the security situation in the aftermath of Imran Khan's arrest.

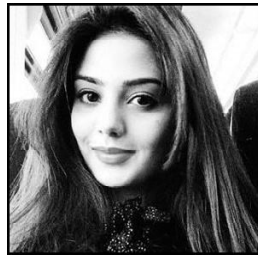
Further, as the CJP observed, while the administration apparently did not have the money to finance the Punjab polls, the government had just doled out Rs20bn to its allied lawmakers in development funds.

Indeed, Mr Khan's gambit to force early polls by dissolving the Punjab and KP assemblies failed miserably in its objective. But the fact remains that elections, both to the national and provincial assemblies, are the only democratic answer to Pakistan's constitutional and political crises.

Therefore, the PDM needs to announce that polls will be called early, or that there will be no delays beyond the scheduled date in October. Promoting an ambiguous stance about polls will only fuel further uncertainty.

The PTI head has said that an "undeclared" martial law is in place, while the chief justice has pointed out that "negative forces" will spring into action and deprive the people of their rights if polls are delayed.

To prevent these grim scenarios from becoming a reality, all political actors must call a ceasefire and agree to hold polls on time, while the establishment needs to let the political process proceed unhindered.



Reema Omer

On Thursday, the administrative judge of Anti-Terrorism Courts, Lahore, directed handing over the custody of 16 people arrested in relation to the May 9 riots to the military for trial under the Pakistan Army Act (PAA), 1952, and Official Secrets Act, 1923. The order was made on the request of a commanding officer of the military, stating an initial investigation prima facie found the accused involved in various offences under the OSA.

This development came days after the military leadership expressed "firm resolve" that those involved in "heinous crimes against military installations and personnel/equipment" — including civilians — will be "brought to justice through trial under relevant laws" including the PAA

and the OSA. The government, too, endorsed this decision.

Allowing military courts to try civilians — including certain members/supporters of the PTI — for their alleged involvement in the May 9 riots is a glaring assault on fundamental freedoms and democracy in the garb of "accountability" and the "rule of law". Section 2 of PAA allows civilians to be tried by military courts (courts martial) who are accused of: 1) "Seducing or attempting to seduce any person subject to this Act from his duty or allegiance to government"; or 2) having committed an offence under the OSA "... in relation to the ... military of Pakistan."

The OSA relates to offences such as spying, taking photographs of notified "prohibited" places, "harbouring spies", and attempting/abetting such offences. It carries harsh penalties — including the death penalty — for some crimes. Claims by the government and military that allegations of "attacking military installations" by civilians in itself is sufficient for military trials under the Army

Act or the OSA, therefore, are misleading and not supported by the law.

Further, how offences under the OSA are prima facie made out against those whose transfer of custody to the military has been allowed remains unclear.

More importantly, even if the authorities frame charges against the accused under the OSA to bring their cases within the Army Act's ambit, such trials would be in blatant violation of Article 10A of the Constitution that guarantees fair trial, as well as Pakistan's human rights obligations under international law.

Pakistani military courts are not independent and the proceedings before them fall far short of national and international fair trial standards for a number of reasons.

First, military court judges are military officers who are a part of the executive branch and do not enjoy independence from the military hierarchy. They are not required to have judicial or legal training, and do not enjoy any security of tenure, which are prerequisites of judicial competence and independence.

Second, military courts do not give detailed, reasoned judgements and are not required to hold open trials. A duly reasoned, written judgement is an essential component of a fair trial. Even in cases in which the public may be excluded from the trial, the judgement, including the essential findings, evidence and legal reasoning must be made public (except in certain cases such as for the respect of privacy of the parties).

Third, the PAA bars civilian courts from exercising appellate jurisdiction over decisions of courts martial. Courts have held they may use their extraordinary writ jurisdiction to hear cases related to military courts where "any action or order of any authority relating to the Armed Forces of Pakistan is ... either coram non iudice, mala fide, or without jurisdiction."

Contrary to claims made by the government, under Pakistani law the scope of such review is severely limited. Courts too have also interpreted their review jurisdiction narrowly. In the context of review petitions filed by fam-

ily members of civilians convicted by military courts, the Supreme Court held the circumstances in which people were arrested, even if they were forcibly disappeared and kept in secret detention for years, was not relevant to its review jurisdiction. Similarly, the Peshawar High Court in another case held the manner of the "confessions made by the accused, under the ordinary criminal jurisprudence would seriously diminish the evidentiary value" but in view of the limited scope available to the high courts, they could not interfere in the convictions handed down by military courts on this basis.

UN human rights bodies too have raised serious concern about military trials of civilians in Pakistan. In May 2017, the UN Committee against Torture said the military trials of civilians were concerning in view of "the lack of independence of military court judges, which are within the military hierarchy, and practices of such courts including holding closed trials".

In July 2017, the UN Human Rights Committee

too recommended Pakistan "review the legislation relating to the military courts with a view to abrogating their jurisdiction over civilians and their authority to impose the death penalty" and "reform military courts to bring their proceedings into full conformity with Articles 14 and 15 of the covenant in order to ensure a fair trial."

Gross miscarriage of justice by military courts is evident in the case of Idrees Khattak — a prominent human rights defender — who was forcibly disappeared in November 2019. His whereabouts remained unknown until June 2020, when military authorities informed the Commission of Inquiry on Enforced Disappearances he was being tried by a military court under the PAA and OSA. On Dec 2, 2021, it was reported in the media Idrees Khattak had been convicted and sentenced to 14 years' imprisonment under the PAA and OSA for offences related to spying. The military court's judgement against him has not been made public. The Peshawar High Court has declined to intervene. -- Courtesy Dawn

## Justice, not vengeance

## The admissions game



Dr Ayesha Razaque

International applicants to post-graduate (PG) programmes (doctoral programmes in particular) at universities in developed countries have long understood that having even a single research paper to one's name gives them a big leg up on the competition.

For universities, admitting international students that already have experience with the research, peer-review, and publishing process greatly reduces the risk of failure that they and professors take on. It also improves applicants' odds of finding funding opportunities with research labs that can cover the cost of their education and living.

A few days ago, The Chronicle of Higher Education reported on the newest way to buy an advantage in college admissions in North America ("The Newest Ad-

missions Ploy," May 18, 2023). The trend of being a published author of a peer-reviewed paper even before entering grad school is trickling down to undergraduate (UG) admissions as well. One manifestation of that is a service named "Scholar Launch". The service's website claims it connects high-school students to professors at some of the world's most prestigious universities, who hand them off to a research assistant and guide them through writing and publishing a "research paper," all for a fee, of course.

As a result, students have their names added to the author list of a research paper. The real scholarly contribution by high-school students paying thousands of dollars to the conduct of any research is a question mark. Closing the loop of this ecosystem is a new crop of journals like the International Journal of High School Research which charges students (\$250) to see their name in print — which means essentially that deep-pocketed parents are buying their children (co-)authorships on "research papers" that badge them "peer-reviewed authors."

Admissions processes to universities in Pakistan have not changed much over the last three or four decades and are still largely based on scores achieved at the prior education level. More recently, they are coupled with test scores on standardized tests. We prefer to make decisions using point-based metrics because they are seen as fair, transparent, and more difficult to challenge than criteria that leave space for subjective judgment. Of course, this comes at the cost of eschewing a more holistic evaluation of applicants. But at a time when everyone fears being accused of corruption and having their reputation publicly dragged through the mud for tipping the scales in favor of some candidate at the cost of another long before any investigation even begins, no one is willing to take the responsibility of defending even minimally subjective decisions.

None of this is news, of course. Every year, a growing number of young Pakistanis is opting to move abroad for university programmes, both UG (Bachelor's) and PG (Master's and Doctoral). Fueled by the economic uncertainty at home, the torrent of emigrants from Pa-

kistan has multiplied over the last few years. For many of them, getting an education in a foreign country is a first step towards legal immigration to their host country. Holding a qualification that is recognized and understood in their host country makes it easier to find employment and, in time, settle and start a life.

Universities in the developed world evaluate admission applications very differently from what we are used to, something aspiring international students from Pakistan ought to be aware of. The headline is that admissions criteria to universities in many developed countries allow admissions teams a lot more leeway in their decisions. Past success remains the best predictor for future success, which is why a preference for a track record of high achievement in high school/university is given.

Being a graduate of a high-school system that admissions teams are familiar with makes it easy for them to arrive at a fair decision. Unfortunately, Pakistan's higher secondary school certificate (HSSC) is not sufficiently well known. This is where those who

graduated from Cambridge and IB school systems have an advantage, one that is critical in applications to UG programs. UG programmes are often around four years in duration, generally offer fewer opportunities for scholarships to international students, and come with a high price tag. That is why the number of Pakistani students applying to UG programmes tends to be small.

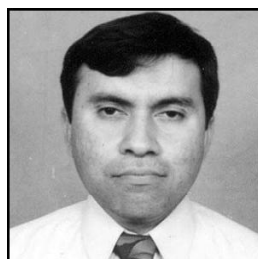
Master's programmes are shorter in duration — often between one and two years — and many universities have more financial support or campus work opportunities available for graduate students. For applicants with a bachelor's degree applying to a PG programme, the importance placed on high-school systems is replaced by the reputation of the university they earned their previous degree from. A top-grade from a university providing a steady stream of students that successfully graduate is viewed very differently from a top-grade from a university that is unknown and one the admissions team has never encountered before.

However, admissions teams go beyond this and

consider a holistic picture of applicants. The applicant's personal statement is a key piece of the application that provides the narrative, the big picture of who the applicant is, what motivates them, what their goals for the future are, and how the educational programme they are applying to will enable them to achieve those goals. It walks the reader through the applicant's portfolio and weaves their influences, experiences, achievements, and choices into a coherent tale.

I recently talked to members of a foreign university's admissions team about applications they see coming out of Pakistan. What I learned was that, although the requirement of a personal statement is well-known in applicant circles, they continue to underestimate its importance to admissions decisions. It is an opportunity for applicants to demonstrate their ability to reason, convince, and communicate with clarity of thought, abilities that are highly valued in all programs of study, both STEM and non-STEM. -- Courtesy TheNews

## Quetta's challenge



Dr Noman Ahmed

When torrential rains struck the country last year, Quetta was practically cut off as rail and road links were devastated. It was only after several weeks that Balochistan's capital was reconnected with the rest of the country. This raises questions about the status of development in a city of over two million. A trip to various neighbourhoods and to the outskirts of the city revealed that Quetta requires a serious planning and development response to enable its population to live a decent life.

Like other Pakistani cities, Quetta faces the challenges of urban sprawl. Between 1998 and 2017, many new locations in the north and south of the city have evolved as real estate choices. A prominent addition has been DHA Quetta. After overcoming a few judicial hurdles, DHA Quetta is poised to become a reality. Many people appear to be investing in this potentially lucrative option.

A much smaller housing scheme by the Quetta Development Authority is in the offing along Sibi Road. There are many people with no or insufficient shelter in the city. As one drives through the Eastern Bypass and its allied locations, one finds many shanty settlements. The people here are from varied backgrounds. Many Afghans sell fruit and other items of daily use. Along the roadside, Pakhtun and Baloch people are also visible in the informal marketplace. Much of the road has been washed away by the rains, thanks to poor-quality construc-

tion. The shortage or absence of water supply is a major challenge. The city gets its supplies from groundwater resources through tube wells. According to Water and Sanitation Agency officials, over 500 tube wells draw a little over 20 million gallons per day against a demand of over 30MGD. The shortage is met partly by the emerging tanker operations. As seen elsewhere, tankers in Quetta are largely an informal service overseen by powerful interest groups.

Water recharging in the Quetta valley is an important environmental process. Haphazard housing and other construction, paved surfaces that prevent water recharging, alteration in the natural levels of the terrain, and unabated sand-mining constrain this function. Reportedly, groundwater levels have fallen to below 360 metres. If, because of extraction and other reasons, they drop further, accessing water will become a huge challenge, especially for the urban poor.

While the government is working to bring water from sources outside Quetta, such options are expensive. An integrated plan is needed to ensure a well-functioning water-recharging regime. Very few households are connected to a proper sewerage system. Meanwhile, water users must be asked to pay water and sanitation charges. A culture where people are willing to pay for urban services is required to improve the finances of the water utilities.

It is worth mentioning that when most of the country is in the grip of scorching heat, Quetta posts bearable temperatures, thanks to its relatively higher altitude. The green cover provided by the surrounding forests and northern orchards is also of note. However, real estate projects have meant the

cutting down of trees, the unavailability of sufficient groundwater for orchards, and the spread of unplanned settlements — all threaten the local ecology.

Quetta has grown fast. From a sleepy town and serene cantonment location during the Raj, the city has become a relatively dense settlement in an otherwise sparsely populated province. Overlapping phases of development have led to problems in planning and managing the city. Disorderly commercialisation, congestion around the city centre and narrow roads inside the older city sections are some of the challenges. Wea-p-ns abound in this city, and varying tribal identities and ethnicities with in-tersecting interests can spell tension. Moreover, the memories of tragic sectarian attacks remain.

There are visible signs of the helplessness shown by the administration whenever there is disturbance and disorder. Muharram processions, political rallies, tribal rivalries and even intra-clan feuds often rupture daily life. A coordinated effort by federal, provincial and local agencies is needed to manage urbanisation.

Quetta needs effective interventions to control and plan population densities, which would involve altering routes to facilitate movement, regulating commercial centres and providing open public spaces. Complex squatter settlements such as Kharotabad and Ghausabad are often seen as criminal hideouts. Devising a digital street-monitoring system at an expanded scale and strictly controlling exit-entry points can, among other measures, help lessen urban violence and reduce terrorism attempts. Elected and empowered local governments must also be revived in Quetta as elsewhere in the province. -- Courtesy Dawn

## Reading culture



Neda Mulji

The love of reading isn't something that develops in a vacuum. Avid readers or "bookworms" are a product of their environmental influences. It is remarkable how much children can learn on their own once they acquire the ability to read fluently and are curious about learning new things. Many teachers try extremely hard to help children read. However, very few are successful in encouraging children to choose reading on their own. Learning to read is very different from becoming a reader.

When we cannot manage to encourage children to read voluntarily, we often choose to blame the widespread obsession with screens, with their many distractions. Whilst it's true that screen time has taken away hours in the day that students previously spent poring over books, it is essential to incentivize reading to help students retain the skills of processing, evaluating and analysing information.

There's also much benefit to reading fiction. 'A flight of fancy' in a chaotic world can help the imagination escape to new heights and provide many a coping mechanism. Reading also helps cultivate self-expression — from learning new words to encountering a variety of characters, children get to experience a world far removed from their own, providing them with much-needed exposure. Just like walking can do wonders as a physical exercise, reading exer-

cises and develops the mind in fascinating ways. It trains the mind to focus and maintain concentration, retain information, form opinions and articulate thought.

If children have had an adult reading to them from an early age, they often learn to mirror reading habits. Those who haven't had that exposure can be incentivized by reward and recognition for reading and responding to texts, senior students at schools can be sent to read to the younger classes or — in the spirit of healthy competition — students can quiz each other on the books they have read.

Schools can host reading festivals where parents and the wider community such as school alumni are invited to come and read to students, have panel discussions or present book reviews. Some schools foster a healthy reading environment by inviting students and teachers from other schools to a reading or poetry event. This becomes a community-wide celebration of reading and recognition for children who choose to focus time and effort on developing reading habits.

The love of reading is inculcated gradually but consistently. A short burst of effort is not sufficient to create a culture of reading in schools. There are schools where reading habits are integrated into the environment. Quiet rooms are provided for those students who wish to curl up on bean bags with a book during recess. Book exchange programmes ensure students have access to used books owned and read by their peers. Much like 'sports days', students can thrive on 'reading days' that involve competitive activities and celebrate achievement.

Some schools successfully run after-school book clubs in collaboration with a local organisation, university or the school

parent body. This creates a culture of reading which is not just a skill in itself — it comes with the benefits of being able to understand, accept and develop new perspectives, question one's own conclusions. There are many advantages to reading in groups.

Children also enjoy agency in the decision-making process. One of the biggest demotivators for a child is to have an adult pick the book for them. Rather than policing the titles and the number of chapters read, adults can provide access to books and show interest in the choices of the children.

With summer holidays coming around, schools can also leverage students' interest in interactive digital activities and integrate reading into their screen time. Digital reading programmes provide readers with pronunciation help, visuals to stimulate imagination, games for competitive engagement, and comprehension questions to prompt critical and creative thinking. Digital reading can be an excellent tool to monitor how much time has been spent on reading and the progress made by each child.

Digital reading programmes make assessing and benchmarking easier so that no child falls through the cracks. Many of these programmes record reading achievement in the form of reward badges or certificates of completion, which motivate readers to continue the effort. With digital support, students learn to read and comprehend faster than ever before.

Reading habits are all the more essential today, in our demanding and fast-evolving world where reading is not only therapeutic, but also holds the promise of planting seeds of discovery, innovation and inspiration. -- Courtesy Dawn





LAHORE: Governor Punjab Muhammad Baligh-ur-Rehman addressing a ceremony organized by Nazaria Pakistan Trust eve of Silver Jubilee Youm-e-Takbeer.

## Naqvi visits Walk and Shop Arena at Johar Town, Akbar Chowk flyover project

**Independent Report**  
LAHORE: Caretaker Chief Minister Punjab Mohsin Naqvi visited walk and shop arena at Johar Town and Akbar Chowk flyover project on Saturday.

Mohsin Naqvi inspected different sections of walk and shop arena and reviewed pace of work on the flyover project. Mohsin Naqvi witnessed Italian, American, Chinese, Spanish and Mughal style pavilions. Mohsin Naqvi directed early auction of the walk and shop arena adding that this state-of-the-art project should be auctioned in a transparent manner. Mohsin Naqvi stated that walk and shop arena located at Johar

Town, Khayaban-e-Firdousi will become a matter of interest for the investors adding that investment worth billions of rupees can be made on this project. National and foreign companies will be contacted for making an investment. Commissioner Lahore/DG LDA while giving a briefing to the Caretaker CM Mohsin Naqvi apprised that the walk and shop arena has been constructed on 130 kanals. The walk and shop arena has been constructed on the international pattern.

Business opportunities of 84 units of different sizes along with roof top restaurants are available in the arena. It was further informed

during the meeting that parking facilities of more than 500 vehicles is available in the walk and shop arena.

Children recreation, zepline, roller coaster, amusement park and other facilities will be available in the arena. Caretaker CM Mohsin Naqvi directed to complete the Akbar Chowk flyover project in August adding that the residents of Model Town, Faisal Town, Johar Town, Township, Peco Road, Canal Road, Kotlakhpat and Quaid-e-Azam Industrial Estate will be benefitted with the completion of this project. Excellent transport facilities will be provided to 2 lakh 50 thousands vehicles daily.

## Khuhro calls for simultaneous general elections, criticizes Imran's political acumen

HYDERABAD (APP): Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) Sindh President Nisar Ahmed Khuhro has urged for the general elections for the National and provincial assemblies to be held on the same day.

During a media interaction at PPP Hyderabad's President Sagheer Qureshi's residence, Khuhro emphasized that the assemblies are set to complete their five-year term on August 12, and he proposed conducting the elections within 60 days thereafter.

Khuhro expressed his disappointment with Imran Khan, Chairman of the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI), stating that he was saddened by Khan's lack of political acumen and his perceived rudeness.

Khuhro alleged that Khan had already attempted to create

divisions within Pakistan by dissolving the assemblies of Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KPK) and focusing on conducting elections solely in those provinces. This approach, he claimed, would lead to transparency issues for the elections in Sindh and Balochistan.

Expressing concern, Khuhro noted that the demand for elections seems to be focused solely on the seats of the Punjab assembly, with little mention of the KPK elections. Khuhro highlighted that a coalition government is currently in power at the center, with political parties from all provinces represented.

Khuhro celebrated PPP's victory in the local government elections in Hyderabad and expressed hope that the process of electing local government representatives

## Police recovered stolen vehicles worth millions, three held

RAWALPINDI (APP): Police have arrested three member gang involved in street crime and recovered luxury stolen vehicles worth millions of rupees from their possession here on Saturday. Police have also recovered weapons used in the crime.

According to police spokesman, Bani police held Abar gang operating in the area with two accomplices who were involved in robberies and vehicles lifting by recovering four stolen rickshaws and luxury vehicles. Police have registered separate cases against all of them and further investigation was in progress. The SHO Bani police station said that the accused have been shifted to the jail for an identification parade on the recoveries of stolen goods in several incidents.



LAHORE: Caretaker Chief Minister Punjab Mohsin Naqvi visiting State of the Arts Walk & Shop Arena in Johar Town.

## Secretary education to launch cleanliness drive in schools

PESHAWAR (APP): Secretary Education Mohtasim Billah Shah, is gearing up to kick-start a drive, to improve cleanliness and promote hygiene conditions across 34,000 schools in the province.

The campaign has garnered significant support from administrative officers, hundreds of teachers, and staff members from the education department who will participate in the drive, an official statement on Saturday said.

The statement added that schools and institutions hold a prestigious status similar to our homes, demanding unwavering attention to cleanliness, tidiness, and aesthetic appeal.

Additionally, a stern warning was issued,

cautioning any teaching faculty or staff member affiliated with the Department of Education against spreading false or derogatory posts on social media regarding this noble cause. Legal consequences were indicated for those found violating this directive.

Instead, all teachers and staff members were encouraged to actively support and contribute to the campaign by organizing various events and activities that promote cleanliness and hygiene.

To demonstrate their commitment to providing students with a conducive and hygienic learning environment, the Secretary of Education, along with the Special Secretary, Additional Secretaries, Deputy Secretaries, Section Officers.

## Gang busted, 340 phone sets recovered

FAISALABAD (APP): Superintendent Police (SP) Iqbal Town Irtiza Kumail said on Saturday that the police had busted a mobile-snatching gang and recovered 340 mobile phones from their possession.

Addressing a press conference at Police Lines Complex here on Saturday, he said that special teams were constituted after receiving rampant complaints about mobile phone snatching and its pilferage. These teams used technical resources and succeeded in nabbing a mobile phone pilferer gang.

Initially, the police recovered 340 stolen mobile phones which have value of millions of rupees in the market. Further investigation was under progress, he added.

DSP Factory Area Usman Warraich and other police officers were also present in the conference.

# Interpretation of 63(A) raises questions Legislators, Judges take oaths to protect Constitution: CM Sindh

KARACHI (APP): Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah has said that the parliamentarians, the executive-prime minister, chief ministers, ministers, and the judges take an oath to protect, defend and preserve the Constitution but the way the Supreme Court interpreted Article 63 (A) was questionable.

This he said while speaking at the Oath Taking Ceremony of the newly elected body of Karachi Bar Association

here at Jinnah Hall of the City Courts, according to a communique here on Saturday.

He was accompanied by his Advisor Law Murtaza Wahab. Mr. Shah said that being part of the parliament and executive, he has taken an oath to protect, defend and preserve the Constitution twice – once in the Parliament and then as chief minister.

Similarly, the judges also take oaths for the purpose. "But the

interpretation of the Supreme Court made of Article 63(A) of the Constitution [that deals with the disqualification of legislators on the grounds of defection] has not been accepted by anyone.

"The review filed against the verdict has not been taken up almost from last year," he surprised. Murad Ali Shah said that every citizen has to follow the Constitution but as far as its protection, defense, and preservation are concerned the Parliament,

the executive, and the judges were bound.

The chief minister assured the bar members that his government would resolve their issues on a priority basis. The chief minister warned the bar members to protect their Jinnah Hall. "People of a party [PTI] have started attacking the building named after the father of the nation, Quaid-e-Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah. Advisor Law Murtaza Wahab speaking on the occasion said that Karachi,

## Leaders of various parties joining PPP; says State Minister

PESHAWAR (APP): PPP Khyber Pakhtunkhwa President and Minister of State Muhammad Ali Shah Bacha said the process of joining the Pakistan People's Party will continue and we will form the next government.

In a statement issued here Saturday, Muhammad Ali Shah Bacha said that there would be more great news soon under the leadership of Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari. PPP is the only political party which is representing the people step by step,

he said. Leaders and personalities of various political parties are in touch to join the Pakistan People's Party, President PPP Khyber Pakhtunkhwa said, adding that the end to public problems, difficulties and deprivations was guaranteed in the PPP's manifesto, which is being implemented.

The involvement of political figures is a confirmation that the slogans of the Pakistan People's Party are not hollow, he added.



HYDERABAD: PPP Sindh President, Nisar Ahmad khoro addressing a press conference at Qureshi house.

## KP govt stressed to keep girls' education among top priorities in next fiscal year

PESHAWAR (APP): A pre-budget seminar on girls' education has laid stress on Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government to keep the education sector among its top priorities in preparation of plans for the upcoming fiscal year 2023-24.

The seminar was organized by Blue Veins, a non-governmental organization, in collaboration with Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Commission on the Status of Women (KPCSW) and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Child Protection and Welfare Commission.

The objective of the seminar was to engage all governmental and non-governmental stakeholders to expand their agendas for girls' education and gather inputs and demands regarding education

financing priorities.

"The recent floods in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province of Pakistan have had a significant impact on public sectors including education while the socio-economic and political crises have exacerbated the problems and caused widespread challenges to many areas with an additional burden on education," observed Amina Durrani, Director Programme KPCSW.

In her welcome address Amina Durrani said the state of girls' education in KP is dismal as out of 4.7 million out-of-school children in the province around 66 per cent are girls. Around 23 per cent of girls cannot reach the level of 10 grade (Metric) due to different reasons including lack of schools in their respective areas.

## PPP leader flays Imran for inciting youth to violence

LAHORE (APP): Pakistan People's Party (PPP) Central Punjab General Secretary Syed Hassan Murtaza has criticised Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf Chairman Imran for inciting the youth to violence and pushing them to jails, while his own sons are enjoying life elsewhere.

Addressing a press conference at the PPP Punjab Secretariat here on Saturday, he said Imran Khan was not a genuine leader, as he used courts and his party workers as a shield to protect himself. He alleged that Khan had given matches and batons in the hands of children of the nation and asked them to burn the country.

Addressing former premier, he said: "You have pushed the country into anarchy." He asked Khan why he did not call his

sons, Qasim and Salman, to lead the party. He said Khan wanted to use others' children as a prey and he himself wanted to enjoy Naran and Kaghan along with his sons. Hassan said he was standing with the state despite having some reservations. He said the PPP never raised slogans against Pak Army and it never weakened the forces. He alleged that minds were prepared for almost one year before staging May-9 terrorism. He said the nation was isolated by injecting anti-state narrative. He said that the foreign policy was weakened and friends like China, UAE and Iran were forced to distance from Pakistan. "Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari defended Pakistan and Kashmir in the United States," he added.



KARACHI: Jamate-Islami (JI) Karachi Chief, Hafiz Naeem-ur-Rehman addresses to media persons during press conference held at Idara-e-Noor-ul-Haq in Karachi.



PESHAWAR: Central Chairman Qaumi Watan Party Aftab Ahmed Khan Sherpao and Provincial Chairman Sikandar Hayat Sherpao meeting with Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Hajji Ghulam Ali.

## PMC's students visit Hamza Foundation

PESHAWAR (APP): Students of Peshawar Medical College (PMC) here Saturday visited Thalassemia Hospital of Hamza Foundation and inspected its various sections.

Medical Director of the hospital, Dr. Tariq Khan briefed the students about facilities being provided to patients suffering from various blood-related disorders. He told that 1457 patients are registered in the hospital and being provided screened blood on a regular basis.

## Amir Muqam says: May 9 riots expose PTI's negative agenda

PESHAWAR (APP): Adviser to the Prime Minister (PM) for Political and Public Affairs and National Heritage Engr Amir Muqam here on Saturday said that May 9 riots had exposed the negative agenda of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI).

He said, "PTI government has deprived the people of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) of development during its nine years of rule and failed to deliver on all fronts."

Addressing a public gathering here, Engr Amir Muqam said that gas projects started by the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) government during 2013-18 in Swat, were halted by the PTI's government which resulted in the suffering of people.

He said the development process in KP was badly affected during nine years of the rule of PTI while the entire Malakand division

including Swat was also deprived of economic progress and people welfare programs.

Engr Amir Muqam said that attacks on civil, and government buildings and defence installations on May 9-10 exposed barbaric mindsets of the attackers. He said destruction to public, government and defence installations caused by May 9-10 vandalism was beyond imagination and culprits could not escape from the clutches of law.

Engr Amir Muqam claimed that a horde of the so-called champions of "change" did so much colossal damage to public and private properties on May 9-10 that could not do by the enemy during the country's 75 years of history. The PM's adviser said, "PML-N's agenda is to serve the masses, the party and would work day and night to address the old and core issues of people of KP."

## Anti-Polio drive from May 29, targeting 364,422 kids

DERA ISMAIL KHAN (APP): An anti-polio campaign is scheduled to commence on May 29, targeting a total of 364,422 children below the age of five.



GILGIT: Speaker Gilgit-Baltistan Assembly Syed Anjad Ali Zaidi in a meeting with the coordinator to CM Sabbir Hussain at Assembly Secretariat.

## 10 killed, 1,176 injured in 1,147 accidents in Punjab

LAHORE (APP): At least 10 people were killed while 1,176 injured in 1,147 road traffic accidents in Punjab during the last 24 hours.

As many as 612 seriously injured people were shifted to different hospitals, while 564 with minor injuries were treated at the incident site by the rescue medical teams, said a spokesman for Rescue 1122, here on Saturday.

The analysis showed that 560 drivers, 46 underage drivers, 118 pedestrians, and 508 passengers were among the

victims of the road traffic crashes. The statistics showed that 264 accidents were reported in Lahore, which affected 269 persons, placing the provincial capital at top of the list, followed by 90 in Gujranwala with 84 victims, and at third Faisalabad with 88 accidents and 84 victims.

As many as 996 motorcycles, 64 rickshaws, 115 cars, 14 vans, nine buses, 24 trucks and 107 other vehicles and slow-moving carts were involved in traffic accidents.

## PO killed, two injured in encounter

SARGODHA (APP): A proclaimed offender was killed while his two accomplices were injured in an encounter with police on Saturday.

Police said the accused, including Zeeshan, Khalid and Akhtar, opened firing on a police team when the officials raided a house in Sanda area. In retaliation, the proclaimed offender, Akhtar, died on the spot while his accomplices received injuries.

Police took the body in its custody and shifted the injured to a local hospital.

## Teaching License Policy to set new standards for quality education: Sardar

KARACHI (APP): Sindh Education and Culture Minister, Syed Sardar Ali Shah has said that the Sindh government was taking revolutionary steps for reforms in the field of education. He said that after the approval of the Teaching License Policy, the teachers would now have to pass an exam and obtain a license, similar to doctors and engineers. This will benefit the entire education system, he said while addressing a press

conference at the Committee Room-1 of the Sindh Assembly here Saturday. Secretary School Education Sindh, Ghulam Akbar Laghari, renowned social figure Shahzad Rai from Zindagi Trust, Dean Farid Panjwani from Agha Khan University's Institute of Education Development and others were also present. Syed Sardar Ali Shah said that hiring over 60,000 teachers on merit in Sindh was a significant challenge.



## Call for devising strategy to promote intra SAARC trade

LAHORE (APP): Lahore Chamber of Commerce and Industry (LCCI) President Kashif Anwar said on Saturday that a comprehensive strategy should be evolved to remove the obstacles hindering intra SAARC (South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation) trade.

He expressed these views while presenting the address of welcome for SAARC Chamber of Commerce and Industry Vice President Mian Anjum Nisar here at the LCCI, while Senior Vice President Zafar Mahmood Chaudhry and Vice President Adnan Khalid Butt also expressed their views. Muhammad Ali Mian, Irfan Iqbal Sheikh, Fahim-ur-Rehman Saigol, Khawaja Shahzeb Akram, Tahir Manzoor Chaudhry and LCCI Executive Committee Members were present.

Kashif Anwar said that SAARC outgoing President Iftekhar Ali Malik rendered matchless services for the cause of business commu-

nity, trade and industry in SAARC countries. He hoped that the new management of SAARC would follow his footprint that grow the trade and economic relations of SAARC states.

Kashif Anwar greeted Mian Anjum Nisar for being elected as Vice President of SAARC Chamber of Commerce and Industry. He hoped that Mian Anjum Nisar would play his role in creating an atmosphere of trust among the member countries. He said that SAARC share in global exports was 1.9 percent as compared to ASEAN's 8 percent. From 2017 to 2022, SAARC's total exports increased by 26 percent from \$372 billion to \$468 billion, while ASEAN countries' total exports increased by 54 percent from \$1.3 trillion to \$2 trillion.

He said, "If we want to highlight the importance of SAARC region, we have to remove the obstacles in the way of obtaining visas for the general public, es-

pecially businessmen, in addition to easy transportation of goods, investment and services in our respective countries."

On this occasion, Mian Anjum Nisar said that the lack of banking connectivity among SAARC member states was a major hurdle which was stopping the potential trade to reach its intended heights. He added that Pakistan would have to control the issues of rupee devaluation, inflation and cost of doing business to ensure a mentionable share in intra SAARC trade. He said that rupee devaluation had increased in Pakistan external debts manifold.

He said, "We need to enhance our productivity and also have to indigenize our raw materials to bring down the cost of doing business."

Kashif Anwar also stressed the need for improving connectivity among SAARC countries not only through railway and road corridors.



LAHORE: Members of Traders Community are holding rally to expressing their solidarity with Pakistan Armed Forces, held at Lahore press club.

## PFVA presents budgetary proposals to improve trade in horticulture products

PESHAWAR (INP): All Pakistan Fruits and Vegetables Exporters, Importers and Merchants Association (PFVA) in its budget proposals submitted with federal government to improve trade in horticulture products, has demanded reservation of Rs. 100 million for extensive Research and Development to explore new varieties of Kinnow.

The kinnow industry's worth is of Rs. 130 billion and its export from USD 220 million has declined to USD 110 million (50 percent), since the variety of Kinnow in Pakistan is 60 years old while the global practice is to change variety after 25 years, said Waheed Ahmad Patron in Chief of PFVA on Saturday.

In the budgetary proposals of PFVA, Waheed Ahmad submitted that the existing variety of Kinnow was engulfed with various diseases leading to

reduction in its shell life and therefore it could not withstand longer transit time of 15 to 45 days. Of the total export of fruits and vegetables, the kinnow contributes 30 percent, he added.

Currently, there are 250 kinnow factories and 0.25 Million workforce is employed and if we can manage to develop new varieties then our export can be enhanced to USD 350 million within four years, Waheed estimates, he said and added, the PFVA proposals also included withdrawal of 10 percent Federal Excise Duty (FED) on juice industries to increase its sale from Rs. 43 billion to projected Rs. 70 billion.

"The decline in sale after enforcement of 10 percent FED has led to the industry being unable to utilize its installed production capacity, with no new investment made or planned for 2023-2024," Waheed added.

## President ICCI calls for long-term policies to tackle economic crisis

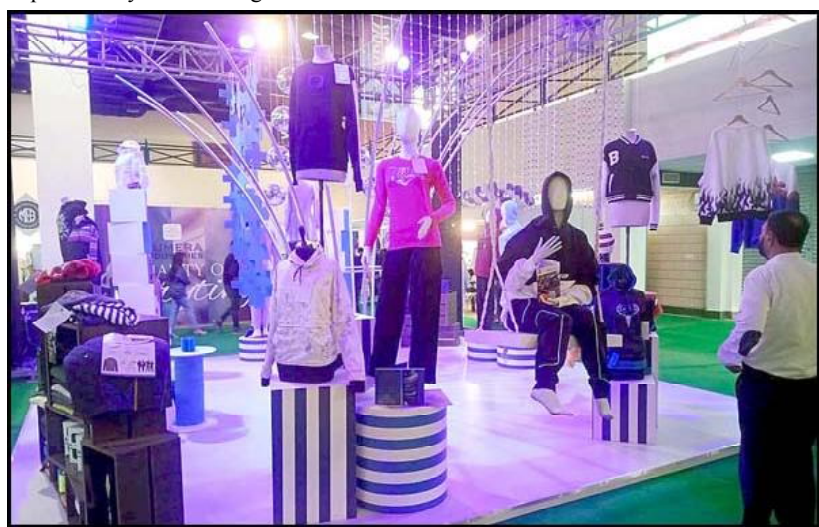
ISLAMABAD (INP): President Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari has said that the government needs to focus on formulating long-term sustainable policies to tackle the prevailing economic crisis and upcoming budget 2023-24 holds key importance in this regard.

He said, "Business community is the biggest stakeholder in Pakistan's economy. The proposals of the country's Chamber of Commerce and FPCCI should be given ample space in the budget."

These views were expressed by him during

his meeting with President Lahore Chamber of Commerce and Industry (LCCI) Kashif Anwar, who visited the ICCI along with his delegation. During the meeting, the cooperation between the two chambers, budget 2023-24, the current economic situation of the country and the problems of the business community came under discussion. It was emphasized that the government should include the suggestions of the business community in the budget. In difficult economic conditions, policies should be formulated by taking the business community into confidence.

The meeting was chaired by UAF Vice Chancellor Prof Dr Iqbal Ahmad Khan, Agriculture University Peshawar Vice Chancellor Prof Dr Jehan Bakht, Chairman Four Brothers Engineer Jawed Salim Qureshi, ED ALP PARC Arshad Farooq, Acting Executive Director EFS Prof Dr Jafar Jaskani, Treasurer UAF Umar Saeed Qadri, Registrar Tariq Mehmud Gill, Deputy Director Amir Saeed and other notables.



KARACHI: People visit stalls during TEXPO-2023 at the Expo Centre.



LAHORE: Minister of State for Finance, Ayesha Ghous Pasha calls on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif.

## Portuguese keen to explore business opportunities in Pakistan: Ambassador

LAHORE (APP): Ambassador of Portugal Manuel Frederico Pinheiro Silva said on Saturday that businesspeople of his country were keen to explore business opportunities in Pakistan.

During his visit to Lahore Chamber of Commerce and Industry (LCCI) on Saturday, he quoted a Portuguese saying that "the best parts should be visited at the end", and that was why he concluded his tour by visiting Punjab and Lahore.

The ambassador expressed his intention to introduce Portugal's contributions to global culture, economy and international relations.

LCCI President Kashif Anwar, Senior Vice President Zafar Mahmood Chaudhry, Vice President Adnan Khalid Butt, Honorary Consul of Portugal Iftekhar Firoz and Executive Committee Members also spoke on the occasion.

Drawing attention towards Portugal's remarkable history, the ambassador highlighted the 15<sup>th</sup>-century voyages of Portuguese explorers, which left lasting influences in Gwadar, India and other parts of Asia, where Portuguese families continue to reside. He emphasised Portugal's strong maritime tradition and extensive

maritime jurisdiction, portraying the sea as an integral part of their identity.

The ambassador provided an overview of Portugal's population of 11 million, making it the 40<sup>th</sup> largest economy in the world with a per capita GDP of \$14,000. He highlighted Portugal's active role in the Community of Portuguese Language Countries (CPLP), stressing the potential for shared learning and cooperation between Portugal and Pakistan, particularly in overcoming financial challenges based on Portugal's experiences from 2010 to 2014.

## Pakistani cultural event showcasing cuisines, textile, handicrafts held in Beijing

BEIJING (APP): Pakistan's traditional music, mesmerizing cultural performances and exquisite flavors cuisine as well as textiles and unique handicrafts were showcased at a cultural event held here on Saturday.

The two-day cultural event titled "Phenomenal Pakistan" was jointly organized by the Embassy of Pakistan, and the JinShang Group at the JinShang Garden Theatre in Beijing.

In his remarks, Pakistan Ambassador to China, Moin ul Haque said that as part of the series of activities planned by the Embassy to celebrate the ongoing Year of China-Pakistan Tourism Exchanges, this cultural event was an endeavor to let everyone indulge in a cultural retreat and discover Pakistan, its heritage and immense beauty.

Talking about China and Pakistan's strong bonds of friendship, he highlighted the importance of people-to-people exchanges and cultural cooperation between the

two countries.

He invited Chinese travelers to visit and explore Pakistan, where they would receive a warm welcome. Welcoming the guests, Eric Peter Gibb, Managing Director of JinShang Group said that we have gathered here to immerse ourselves in the vibrant and diverse culture of Pakistan, which was a treasure trove of tourist attractions.

Over the course of two days, we would be treated to a glimpse of Pakistan's traditional music, mesmerizing cultural performances, and the exquisite flavors of its cuisine and also have the opportunity to explore the craftsmanship of Pakistani artisans through their beautiful textiles and unique handicrafts.

He added that this event signifies the strong relationship between China and Pakistan. Together, we share a commitment to promoting cultural exchange and understanding. A number of stalls were set up at the event showcasing Pakistani traditional dishes, calligraphy.



ISLAMABAD: Vendor are busy in bidding to buy sugar canes at Fruit and Vegetables Market, in Federal Capital.

## RDA issues notice to Moreno Enclave, illegal housing scheme

RAWALPINDI (APP): Rawalpindi Development Authority (RDA) on the directives of Director General, Muhammad Saif Anwar Jappa here on Saturday issued a notice to an illegal housing scheme namely Moreno Enclave.

According to a RDA spokesman, the Metropolitan Planning and Traffic Engineering (MP&TE) Directorate RDA issued notice to the owner of illegal private housing located near M-1 Motorway.

He informed that the sponsors had also been warned of strict action and directed to immediately stop the marketing of

unapproved and illegal housing schemes.

They had been asked to contact RDA for getting NOC and approval of the scheme as per law, otherwise, strict legal action would be taken, he added.

He said the DG had directed the Director MP&TE to take strict action against illegal advertisements and marketing of illegal housing projects besides lodging FIRs against the rules violators.

He said that on the directives of the DG, the citizens had also been advised not to invest in illegal housing schemes.

## Gold prices increase by Rs.450

ISLAMABAD (APP): The per tola price of 24 karat gold increased by Rs 450 and was sold at Rs 236,200 on Saturday against its sale at Rs. 235,750 the previous day, All Sindh Sarafa Jewellers Association reported.

The price of 10 grams of 24 karat gold also increased by Rs 385 to Rs 202,503 from Rs 202,118, whereas the price of 10 grams 22 karat gold went up to Rs 185,628 from Rs 185,274. The price of per tola silver and that of ten gram silver remained unchanged to close at Rs 2900 and Rs 2486.28 respectively. The price of gold in the international market decreased by US\$ 6 to \$1946 against its sale at \$1952.

## OGRA holds webinar on LNG

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Oil & Gas Regulatory Authority (OGRA) conducted its second knowledge-sharing Webinar to increase understanding about Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG).

The webinar was attended by Pakistan State Oil, Pakistan LNG Limited, SSGCL, SNGPL, CNG Association, LNG Virtual Pipeline licensees (LNG Easy, LNG Flex, Gawadar Gasport Limited) and Department of Explosives and they have given presentations on the global as well as the local scenarios relating to LNG supply chain.

Chairman OGRA Masroor Khan highlighted that out of 48 FSRUs operating worldwide, two were in Pakistan, however, the utilization of one of them is below the desired level and needs to be augmented.

Important topics were covered in the

presentations by the participants which included: present and future global LNG market trends, LNG contracts, global imports, market and pricing mechanisms, trends in LNG contracts and challenges for Pakistan, the current state of Pakistan Gas market and its liberalization, impact of natural gas market liberalization on energy security, challenges of implementing natural gas market liberalization in Pakistan, virtual pipeline infrastructure and its equipment and technology, regulatory safety technical and logistical challenges of LNG virtual pipelines, Code and standards adopted by Department of Explosives for LNG related infrastructure. A large number of participants which included eminent professionals from the petroleum industry of Pakistan participated in the webinar.



QUETTA: Chairman Pakistan Flour Mills Association Asim Raza addressing a press conference.

## Muqam inaugurates SNGPL supply network for different villages in Swat

SWAT (INP): Advisor to the Prime Minister on Political, Public Affairs and National Heritage, Engr Amir Muqam here on Saturday inaugurated Sui Northern Gas Pipelines Limited (SNGPL) supply network for different villages of the district.

The gas network was inaugurated for different villages including Kokari, Mashoki, Mera Gari, Shangu Ganori, Garasa in Swat.

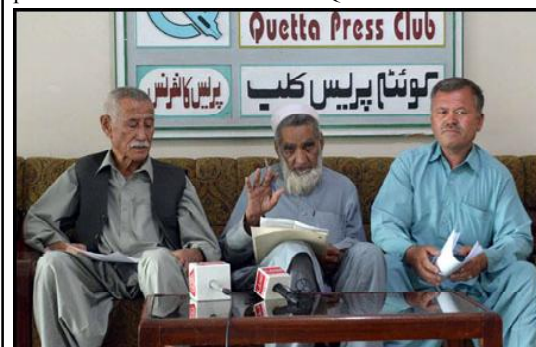
Speaking on the occasion, Engr Amir Muqam said that Pakistan Muslim League (N) has made the country's defence impregnable after conducting successful nuclear explosions at Chagai Balochistan on May 28, 1998. He said that former

Muhammad Nawaz Sharif had overlooked international pressure and made Pakistan atomic power. He said Pakistan is the first Muslim country in the world that achieved the status of nuclear power.

Muqam said attacks on government and military installations on May 9 exposed the negative policies of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI).

He said that the PTI government had failed on all fronts to deliver in its nine-year rule in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

Amir Muqam claimed that Imran Niazi's corrupt practices were exposed before the masses which was evident from foreign funding, Tostha Khana and Al Qadar Trust cases.



QUETTA: Vice President of National Labor Federation Abdur Rahim Mirdadkhel addressing a press conference along with others at Press Club, in Provincial Capital.

## Anjum Nisar's election as VP SAARC CCI beneficial for businessmen: Sehgal

LAHORE (INP): Chairman Pakistan Industrial and Traders Associations Front (PIAF), Fahimur Rehman Sehgal has greeted Pattern-in-Chief of PIAF and Businessmen Panel (BMP) Chairman Mian Anjum Nisar for being elected Vice President of SAARC Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

In a statement issued here on Saturday, he said that Mian Anjum Nisar, who is also FPCCI former president, is entitled to this position in the true sense due to his long services for the cause of business community. In recognition of his 25 years of service to the business community, he has been honoured with the post of Vice President of the SAARC Chamber of Commerce, he added. It is to be noted that Mian Anjum Nisar was elected as the Vice President in the meeting of SAARC Chamber of Commerce, which consists of eight countries of South Asia, including Pakistan, India, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Bhutan, Nepal, Maldives and Afghanistan, held in Dhaka recently. Fahimur Rehman Sehgal, along with Chairman PIAF Nasrullah Mughal and Vice Chairman PIAF Tahir Manzoor Chaudhary, said that the

appointment of Mian Anjum Nisar to the position of Vice-President is an honor for PIAF, Lahore Chamber, Federation of Pakistan Chambers of commerce and industry and the entire business community of Pakistan. He has spent his entire life serving the business community.

He said that the credit of this historic achievement goes to the top leadership of PIAF Group who have worked day and night for the welfare of the business community and are still active in solving the problems. The entire industrialist and business community of Pakistan is always with Anjum Nisar, which clearly reflects the confidence of business community in judicious policies being followed by this group leadership. Fahimur Rahman said that it is imperative for all countries of the SAARCH to draw lessons from the successes achieved by other regional agreements, and channel their experiences of regional identity and solidarity into our efforts to propel SAARC towards new heights. It is our responsibility to find innovative and sustainable solutions to these challenges.



## Ukraine says Russia plans to simulate accident at nuclear power plant

**Monitoring Desk**  
KYIV: Ukraine's defence ministry said Russia was planning to simulate a major accident at a nuclear power station controlled by pro-Moscow forces to try to thwart a long-planned Ukrainian counteroffensive to retake territory occupied by Russia.

The Zaporizhzhia plant, which lies in an area of Russian-occupied southern Ukraine, is Europe's biggest nuclear power station and the area has been repeatedly hit by shelling that both sides blame each other for.

The defence ministry's intelligence directorate said Russian forces would soon shell the plant and then announce a radiation leak. This would force an investigation by international authorities,

during which all hostilities would be stopped.

The directorate statement, posted on Telegram, did not provide any proof. It said Russia had disrupted the planned rotation of inspectors from the International Atomic Energy Agency, who are based at the plant.

## EU condemns Russian deal to station nuclear warheads in Belarus

**Monitoring Desk**  
BRUSSELS: The European Union condemned an agreement between Russia and Belarus to allow the deployment of Russian nuclear warheads in Belarus.

"This is a step which will lead to further extremely dangerous escalation," EU foreign policy chief Josep Borrell said in a statement.

Russia moved ahead on Thursday with its plan to deploy tactical nuclear weapons in Belarus, whose leader said the warheads were already on the move. The plan was announced by Russian President Vladimir Putin in March.

On Thursday, Russian Defence Minister Sergei Shoigu said he was signing documents in Minsk on the process for storing such weapons in Belarus.



Assistant Texas state Attorney General Christopher Hilton makes a statement at his office in Austin, Texas.

## Black Sea grain deal slow to get moving after extension

**Monitoring Desk**  
UNITED NATIONS: A deal allowing the safe wartime export of grain and fertiliser from Ukrainian Black Sea ports has not yet resumed full operations, the United Nations said on Friday (May 26), having come to a halt before Russia's decision last week to extend it.

The pact called the Black Sea Grain Initiative, brokered by the United Nations and Turkey last July with Russia and Ukraine to try to ease a global food crisis aggravated by Moscow's invasion of Ukraine, covers three ports, but no ships have been authorised to travel to Pivdennyi port since Apr 29, the UN said.

The United Nations and Turkey "are working closely with the rest of the parties with the aim to resume full operations ... and

lift all impediments that obstruct operations and limit the scope of the initiative," the UN said in a statement.

Ukraine accused Russia on Tuesday of effectively cutting Pivdennyi port out of the Black Sea deal as Russia complained that it had been unable to export ammonia via a pipeline to Pivdennyi under the agreement.

The UN said on Friday that the Black Sea deal also provides for the exports of fertiliser, including ammonia, but "there have been no such exports so far".

Under the Black Sea grain export agreement, a Joint Coordination Centre (JCC) in Istanbul - made up of officials from Ukraine, Russia, Turkey and the UN - authorises ships and conducts inbound and outbound inspections of the vessels.

## India again seeks death penalty for Yasin Malik

**Monitoring Desk**  
SRINAGAR: India's top anti-terrorism investigation agency again sought the death sentence for Yasin Malik, chief of the Jammu Kashmir Liberation Front (JKLF), after he was given life in prison, official sources said.

The JKLF leader had pleaded guilty last year to funding the separatist movement after refusing to accept a government-appointed lawyer or to defend himself against the charges.

The court turned down a plea by the National Investigation Agency (NIA) for a death sentence, saying capital punishment was for a crime that "shocks the collective consciousness" of society. The NIA petitioned the High Court again seeking death sentence for Malik, a senior official in Srinagar said. The petition is due for hearing on Monday.

## Passenger detained in S. Korea after opening plane door mid-air

**Monitoring Desk**  
SEOUL: South Korean police detained a man who opened a door of an Asiana Airlines plane minutes before it was due to land in the city of Daegu, causing panic among the passengers, officials said.

The Airbus A321-200 plane landed safely at around 12:40pm (0340 GMT). It had set off from the holiday island of Jeju an hour earlier, the airport's flight schedule showed.

Nine passengers, all teenagers, were sent to hospital after suffering breathing issues, a Daegu fire department official said.

"I thought the plane was going to explode ... It looked like passengers next to the open door were fainting."



Addison Beer and Jaylin Wilson prepares for summer campers arriving next week at the Virginia G. Piper branch of the Boys & Girls Club.



Minister Wang Wentao met US Trade Representative Katherine Tai on the sidelines of an Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation trade meeting in Detroit, a day after he saw his counterpart Gina Raimondo in Washington.

## NATO struggles in the shadows to find new leader

**Monitoring Desk**  
BRUSSELS: The race to be the next NATO boss is heating up. But it is a race run largely in the dark, with no sign of a winner yet.

Jens Stoltenberg, the transatlantic military alliance's Norwegian secretary-general, is due to step down at the end of September after nine years in post.

Many alliance members would like his successor settled at, or even before, a NATO summit in Lithuania in mid-July.

That does not give NATO's 31 nations, spanning from the United States through new member Finland to Turkey, much time to forge the consensus

needed to pick a new leader. They could also ask Stoltenberg to extend his term for a fourth time.

Whoever takes the reins will do so at a critical time, facing the twin challenges of keeping allies together in supporting Ukraine while guarding against any escalation that would draw NATO directly into a war with Russia. British Defence Secretary Ben Wallace declared last week that he would like the job. But, as some governments push for a first female NATO secretary-general, Danish Prime Minister Mette Frederiksen is also emerging as a serious contender.

Though a very public role, the contest is extremely opaque, played out mainly in consultations among leaders and diplomats. Those consultations continue until all NATO members agree they have reached a consensus. Jamie Shea, a former senior NATO official who served with the alliance for 38 years, said leaders will be looking for a highly skilled politician, communicator and diplomat. "Keeping the family together, keeping everybody on board constantly, being in touch with all of the allies to make sure that you're addressing their concerns, is an important part of the job," said Shea.

## Boat carrying 500 migrants disappears

**Monitoring Desk**  
ROME: A boat carrying about 500 migrants, including a new born baby and pregnant women, has disappeared in the central Mediterranean, two charities said.

Alarm Phone, a group that picks up calls from migrant vessels in distress, said it lost contact with the boat on Wednesday morning.

At the time, the boat was adrift, with no working engine, in high seas about 320 km (200 miles) north of the Libyan port of Benghazi and more than 400 km away from

Malta or Italy's southern island of Sicily.

Italian NGO Emergency said on Thursday its Life Support ship and the Ocean Viking, another charity vessel, had unsuccessfully looked for the missing boat for 24 hours, but found no sign of any shipwreck.

A spokesperson for Emergency said on Friday the search was still on, adding that the migrants might have been picked up by another boat or may have managed to fix their engine and continue sailing towards Sicily.

## US, China wrangle on trade in rare talks

**Monitoring Desk**  
WASHINGTON: The United States and China sparred over trade issues but promised to keep lines of communication open as Beijing's commerce minister paid a rare visit after a period of soaring tensions.

Minister Wang Wentao met US Trade Representative Katherine Tai on the sidelines of an Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation trade meeting in Detroit, a day after he saw his counterpart Gina Raimondo in Washington.



A child is hoisted up as participants take part in the Piu Sik Parade at the Bun Festival in Cheung Chau Island in Hong Kong.

## Hong Kong's colorful Bun Festival returns after COVID-19 cancellations

**Monitoring Desk**  
HONG KONG: Hong Kong's colorful Bun Festival is back after three years of COVID-19 restrictions.

Visitors packed the tiny island of Cheung Chau to watch children parade in costumes and to eat buns stamped with the Chinese characters for "peace" and "safety".

The festival's highlight is a midnight "bun-scrambling" competition in which climbers race up a tower covered with plastic buns, trying to grab as many as possible. It was suspended for decades after an accident in 1978 when a collapse injured many, and only restarted in 2005.

After COVID-19, the bun scramble has returned, but for this year, it's limited to one smaller tower.

The festival's comeback is a sign that normal life is returning to Hong Kong after its tight pandemic restrictions.

During the parade, children dressed as legendary deities or historic characters are carried on stands above the heads of the crowd through the island's narrow lanes.

## Teen workers are in high demand for summer and commanding better pay

**Monitoring Desk**  
BOSTON: Teens have long been vital to filling out the summertime staffs of restaurants, ice cream stands, amusement parks and camps.

Now, thanks to one of the tightest labor markets in decades, they have even more sway, with an array of jobs to choose from at ever-higher wages.

To ease the labor crunch, some states are moving to roll back restrictions to let teens work more hours and, in some cases, more hazardous jobs — much to the chagrin of labor rights groups, who see it as a troubling trend.

Economists say there

are other ways to expand the workforce without putting more of a burden on kids, including by allowing more legal immigration.

At Funtown Splashtown USA, an amusement park in southern Maine, teens play a critical role in keeping the attractions open, which isn't as easy as it used to be. General Manager Cory Hutchinson anticipates hiring about 350 workers this summer, including many local high schoolers, compared with more than 500 in past summers. "We literally do not have enough people to staff the place seven days a week and into the evenings," he said.

## Always wanted a lighthouse US is giving some away selling others at auction

**Monitoring Desk**  
BOSTON: Ten lighthouses that for generations have stood like sentinels along America's shorelines protecting mariners from peril and guiding them to safety are being given away at no cost or sold at auction by the federal government.

The aim of the program run by the General Services Administration is to preserve the properties, most of which are more than a century old. The development of modern technology, including GPS, means lighthouses are no longer essential for navigation, said John Kelly of the GSA's office of real property disposition.

## UK man gets life for trying to join IS

**Monitoring Desk**  
LONDON: A UK court jailed a British man for life for travelling to Syria to join the militant Islamic State group nearly a decade ago.

Judge Mark Lucraft handed Shabazz Suleman, from High Wycombe north-west of London, the prison term for making his way to Syria to enlist in the group, which is illegal under English law.

"You went to Syria in order to join IS. You understood IS was a proscribed organisation in English law," the judge said as he passed sentence at London's Old Bailey criminal court.

## Brazil: UN regional group has endorsed Amazon city to host 2025 climate conference

**Monitoring Desk**  
SAO PAULO: Brazil's government announced that a U.N. Latin America regional group has endorsed a Brazilian city in the Amazon region to host the 2025 U.N. climate change conference, though the world body has not yet publicly confirmed the venue.

President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva initially said Brazil will hold the conference, known as COP 30, in the city of Belem, state of Para, in the heart of the Brazilian rainforest, reflecting his intention to bring attention to the Amazon.

A statement from the Brazilian government later clarified that the region's support was merely a step in the selection process.

The "support for the Brazilian candidacy demonstrates the region's confidence in Brazil's capacity to advance the agenda in the fight against climate change," the statement read.

The latest U.N. climate conference was hosted by Egypt in Sharm el-Sheikh, and this year's will take place in Dubai.

The U.N. has not yet announced the 2024 venue, let alone the 2025 one, but the locations tend to rotate among regions, and the Brazilian government statement Friday indicated that a Latin American working group was choosing the 2025 venue, and had endorsed Belem. The final decision won't be made until COP 29 next year.

## Turkey's bitter election battle nears decision day

**Monitoring Desk**  
ISTANBUL: Turkey entered the final stretch of a bitter presidential campaign that has seen Recep Tayyip Erdogan and his secular rival exploit fears about migrants and Kurdish militants.

Erdogan appears on course to extend two decades of his Islamic style of rule until 2028 in Sunday's runoff.

His victory would preserve the key NATO member's reputation as a problem child that plays off rivalries between Moscow and Washington while pushing its own course in the Middle East.

Secular opposition leader Kemal Kilicdaroglu presented a clear alternative to Erdogan in the first round on May 14. The former civil servant ran an inclusive campaign that pledged to mend ties with Western allies and cure Turkey's economic problems with orthodox prescriptions rejected by Erdogan.

Kilicdaroglu created a six-party alliance that grouped some of Turkey's most irreconcilable forces and received the crucial support of Kurds.

It was the type of coalition that Erdogan excelled at building while repeatedly winning at the polls. But Kilicdaroglu still lost by nearly five points in what was widely seen as Erdogan's toughest election - and the most consequential in Turkey's post-Ottoman history.

The 74-year-old opposition leader vanished from view for four days and then reappeared as a transformed man.

He dropped his appeals for social cohesion in the sharply polarised country and instead turned his focus on expelling millions of migrants and fighting militants. "As soon as I come to power, I will send all the refugees home," Kilicdaroglu said in his first post-election address.

Erdogan responded along the same lines. He doubled down on his attempts to cast Kilicdaroglu as an ally of outlawed Kurdish militants and scoffed at the opposition's attempts to talk tough on security issues.

## Venice exhibition shines light on Africa's forced urbanisation

**Monitoring Desk**  
VENICE: From nomads to deforestation, this year's Venice Architecture Biennale focuses on Africa and the impact of colonisation on the development of a continent undergoing the most rapid urbanisation in the world.

Away from the national pavilions, the main exhibition put together by Biennale curator Lesley Lokko shines a light on the enduring impact of the colonising Europeans who upended traditional ways of life.

Mounir Ayoub, a 40-year-old Tunisian architect based in Geneva, has long been interested in the phenomenon in Tunisia of forced settlement.

Before being colonised by France in 1881, the North African country of his birth "was mostly a country with a nomadic population — 600,000 nomads and 400,000 sedentary (settled) people", he told AFP.

But through his collection of photos, documents and video testimony from the few remaining nomad families, he argues that France initiated a policy that eventually left the Tunisian desert depopulated.

"The desert was not empty, it was a rich ecosystem with a huge culture. The desert was populated, it was a place of immense civilisation," he told AFP at the exhibition at Venice's former shipyards.

But "France created new cities with oases where water was extracted deep in the desert in order to settle the nomads, to control them, in fact, to start setting up borders", said Ayoub.

The policy continued even after Tunisian independence in 1956, he said, with Tunisian nomads definitively settled by the 1970s and 1980s.

## EU official says Twitter abandons bloc's voluntary pact against disinformation

**Monitoring Desk**  
LONDON: Twitter has dropped out of a voluntary European Union agreement to combat online disinformation, a top EU official said.

European Commissioner Thierry Breton tweeted that Twitter had pulled out of the EU's disinformation "code of practice" that other major social media platforms have pledged to support. But he added that Twitter's "obligation" remained, referring to the EU's tough new digital rules taking effect in August.

"You can run but you can't hide," Breton said. San Francisco-based Twitter responded with an automated reply, as it does to most press inquiries, and did not comment. The decision to abandon the commitment to fighting false information appears to be the latest move by billionaire owner Elon Musk to loosen the reins on the social media company after he bought it last year. He has rolled back previous anti-misinformation rules, and has thrown its verification system and content-moderation policies into chaos as he pursues his goal of turning Twitter into a digital town square.

Google, TikTok, Microsoft and Facebook and Instagram parent Meta are among those that have signed up to the EU code, which requires companies to measure their work on combating disinformation and issue regular reports on their progress.

There were already signs Twitter wasn't prepared to live up to its commitments. The European Commission, the 27-nation bloc's executive arm, blasted Twitter earlier this year for failing to provide a full first report under the code, saying it provided little specific information and no targeted data.

Breton said that under the new digital rules that incorporate the code of practice, fighting disinformation will become a "legal obligation."



## Pakistani soldiers rendering excellent services in UN Peacekeeping: PM

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister (PM) Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Saturday said that Pakistani soldiers had rendered excellent services in the UN Peacekeeping, including the sacrifice of life in the most complex and dangerous conflict zones.

In a tweet, the PM said as the eight Pakistani peacekeepers were honoured posthumously on the completion of 75 years of the United Nations (UN) Peacekeeping Mission, Pakistan was proud of being one of the largest contributors to the peace missions under the UN's umbrella.

"We are proud of our peacekeepers for their unprecedented commitment to duty," he added.

On May 25, the UN honoured at a solemn ceremony 103 military, police and civilian personnel from around the world, including eight Pakistani peacekeepers, who lost their lives serv-

ing under the UN flag last year.

The special ceremony was presided over by Secretary-General (SG) Antonio Guterres which marked the 75th anniversary of UN peacekeeping.

In the ceremony, the Dag Hammarskjöld Medal was awarded posthumously to the peacekeepers, who made the ultimate sacrifice for the cause of peace, during the preceding year.

According to the Associated Press of Pakistan (APP) foreign correspondent news report, Pakistan's Deputy Permanent Representative to the UN Ambassador Aamir Khan accepted the awards on behalf of the families of the fallen Pakistani peacekeepers — Havildar Muhammad Ismail, Major Faizan Ali, Lt. Col Asif Ali Awan, Naib Subedar Sami Ullah Khan, Major Muhammad Saad Nomani, and Lance Havildar

Muhammad Jamil Khan—the six martyred while serving with the UN Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO) when their helicopter crashed on March 29, 2022.

Moreover, Havildar Babar Siddique lost his life while also serving in MONUSCO and Corporal Rana Muhammad Tahir Islam, who was working with the UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA).

It is worth mentioning here that Pakistan is currently the fifth largest contributor to UN peacekeeping with nearly 4,200 military and police personnel serving in Abyei, the Central African Republic, Cyprus, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Mali, South Sudan and Western Sahara.



LAHORE: SAPM, Shaza Fatima Khawaja calls on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif.

## Talha urges implementation of Islamic economic models for harmonious development

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Religious Affairs and Interfaith Harmony Senator Muhammad Talha Mahmood on Saturday emphasized the need to explore alternative economic models that align with Islamic principles.

Addressing a seminar on Interest-Free Economy, organized by the Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry, he further emphasized the importance of adopting Islamic economic principles.

Senator Talha shed light on the Islamic perspective on trade and usury, drawing from the Holy Quran saying that Allah Almighty had declared

trade as halal (permissible), while usury (riba) was declared as haram (prohibited).

He further reminded the audience of the vision of Quaid-e-Azam, who expressed his determination to replace the usury system of the West with an Islamic economic system during the opening ceremony of the State Bank of Pakistan on July 1, 1948.

"Usury is a declaration of war against Allah and His Messenger," stated Senator Talha.

He urged the attendees to reflect on the consequences of engaging in usury, questioning whether economic prosperity could

truly be attained while defying the commandments of Allah Almighty.

The Senator also highlighted the legal stance on usury, referencing rulings from the Federal Shariat Court and the Supreme Court of Pakistan. Both courts had previously declared usury as contrary to the clear commandments of Allah Almighty, he added.

He said the highest court of Pakistan had explicitly ordered the cleansing of the national financial system from usury, deeming it illegal and prohibited even according to the Constitution of Pakistan.

## ALIC stops its further proceedings in light of SC orders

ISLAMABAD (Online): Audio Leaks Inquiry Commission (ALIC) constituted under Supreme Court (SC) judge Justice Qazi Faez Isa has halted its further proceedings in the light of SC orders.

The second meeting of ALIC started in SC court room No 2 on Saturday.

The commission inquired from Attorney General (AG) AG Sabh I think some order of court has come. Have you copy of court's order.

The AG while providing copy of court's order to commission read out the SC May 26 order before the commission.

Upon it Justice Qazi Faez Isa inquired no notice was given to inquiry commission before hearing then how it was stopped from working. As per SC rules any order is issued after hearing the respondents.

Justice Qazi Faez Isa inquired from AG on the occasion why he was in court room on yesterday (May 26).

AG told he was asked verbally to appear in the court. Notice was issued to him after the hearing.

Justice Qazi Faez Isa remarked "I want to know

the constitution a little or more. Why did you tell the court we have already explained the points related to their objections. Abid Zubairi and Shoaib Shaheen even did not bother to come today.

Were they not told that what order was issued yesterday. Did Shoaib Shaheen say this yesterday that "send the matter of the respective judge to Supreme Judicial Council (SJC) if video of any one comes. Dozens of such complaints come. Is it correct that these all should be sent to SJC. Should we ruin some one's life without ascertaining the authenticity of audio.

He remarked as per SC rules advance notices have to be issued to the respondents. No applicant sent notice to commission. Implementing SC rules is must. Affidavit is submitted in the court with reference to notice. No one among the petitioners has appeared before the commission today.

Press conference is held outside but no one appeared before us. Neither Abid Zubairi nor his counsel Shoaib Shaheen bothered to appear before commission.



QUETTA: Traffic Police Officials are offering Dua in memory of martyrs of Pakistan during ceremony in connection of the Pakistan Martyrs Day.

## Pakistan's integrity harmed on May 9 Appeals CJ SC to form court bench for probe: Abdullah Gul

Independent Report QUETTA: While strongly condemning the May 9, 2023 incidents of violence and sabotage all over the country, the Chairman Tehreek-e-Jawan Pakistan, Abdullah Gul has stated that the integrity of the country was harmed on that very day.

Those attacked the General Headquarters (GHQ) Rawalpindi, Radio Pakistan Peshawar building, Jinnah House Lahore on May 9, 2023 or those who had attacked and torched Quaid-e-Azam Residency Ziarat in year 2013 were same and done the same act, adding Abdullah Gul asserted.

The Chairman Tehreek-e-Jawan-e-Pakistan appealed to the Chief Justice Supreme Court to form a full court bench for probe into the incidents of attack and destroying the

national buildings and sensitive installations.

The Supreme Court may also take suo moto notice of the incidents of May 9, 2023, Mr. Gul pleaded.

The Chairman of youth activists movement also went on to say that there's no difference between the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) and Tehreek-e-Taliban.

On the occasion, he also criticized Zalmay Khalilzad, former US ambassador to the United Nation, saying that he (Khalilzad) is interfering into the internal matters of Pakistan. Referring the arrest of the former militant and commander of banned outfit, Abdullah Gul congratulated the high command of armed forces on his arrest. He termed it a big achievement of the armed forces and intelligence agencies.

## Hamdullah says: Why mastermind of attack on CC House not been arrested yet

ABBOTABAD (Online): Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM) spokesperson Hafiz Hamdullah said that Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) is not a political party.

On May 9, Imran Khan told PTI goes to attack domestic and national institutions. Military installations were attacked as planned. More than 2 thousand persons were killed.

While holding press conference in Abbotabad, Hafiz Hamdullah has said, when the state is attacked, the state will definitely react. He said that if those who resigned from Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) are involved in the events of May 9, they should also be arrested and punished according to the constitution.

## Mengal monitors development schemes in Wadh

Independent Report QUETTA: Sardar Akhtar Jan Mengal, the head of the Balochistan National Party (BNP), visited several projects and schemes in Wadh during the week, including a detailed tour of the THQ Hospital Wadh and the examination of various buildings, including laboratories.

Building designer Muhammad Ali briefed Sardar Akhtar Jan Mengal about the buildings. On this occasion, DHO Khuzdar Bashir Ahmed and MS Dr. Saifur Rahman Mengal were also present.

Member of the National Assembly Sardar

Akhtar Jan Mengal visited Girls Degree College and Sports Complex and instructed to expedite the work on the construction of the Girls Degree College building and ensure the completion of the work by the contractors.

The head of the Balochistan National Party emphasized that all projects should be transparent and clean, stating that all staff members in the hospital should fulfill their responsibilities and no negligence will be tolerated. Further constructions are underway in the hospital, and the staff has been increased to make the hospital more active.

## Mariyum says: Govt fully committed to media freedom

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Information and Broadcasting Mariyum Aurangzeb on Saturday said the coalition government was actively taking measures to promote media freedom under the leadership of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif who fully believed in freedom of expression.

"Journalism and freedom of expression are essential constitutional requirements for strengthening democracy," the minister said in a news statement while felicitating newly elected office-bearers of Council of Pakistan Newspaper Editors (CPNE).



QUETTA: Deputy Commissioner Quetta Shehbaz Baloch and Administrator Quetta Metropolitan Corporation Jabbar Baloch meeting with Secretary Hafiz Abdul Basit

## CM approves appointment of members of Health Care Commission

Independent Report QUETTA: Chief Minister of Balochistan, Mir Abdul Qadoos Bizenjo, on Saturday has approved the appointment of members for the Balochistan Health Care Commission. The approval came based on a summary sent by the Health Department.

It should be noted that the Balochistan Provincial Assembly passed the "Balochistan Health Care Commission Act, 2019" on November 18, 2019, to enhance the quality of healthcare services, impose restrictions on clinical governance and grants related to the field of medicine, and establish arrangements for the provision of healthcare services.

The establishment of the Balochistan Health Care Commission aims to regulate private and public healthcare services. According to the Act, the Commis-

sion is empowered to utilize the powers given by the Code of Civil Procedure 1908 to ensure the examination of standards.

As per Section 5 of the Act, the Commission consists of nine members. Among these members, seven have been nominated based on the recommendations of the Search Committee (a panel of two for each position). The remaining two members will include a retired High Court judge and a financial expert.

As per Section 5(3), a person will not be eligible for nomination as a member until they have a minimum of twenty years of experience. Among all the members, at least three will be from the field of health, and one member will have federal/provincial administrative services, preferably from the healthcare sector, who will not be below the rank of Grade 20 officer.



KARACHI: Former Governor Sindh, Imran Ismail announce to quit Pakistan Tehreek e Insaf (PTI) during a press conference at Karachi Press Club.

## Army tops National Games medal table with 129 gold, 90 silver & 43 bronze medals

Independent Report QUETTA: Pakistan Army continued to maintain top position in the medals' table of 34th National Games continued in Quetta and five different other places in the country.

According to the summary of medal table released by the Pakistan Olympic Association (POA) by 06:30 PM on Saturday, Army topped the medal table of the National Games with total 262 medals including 129 gold, 90 silver and 43 silver medals.

Then comes Pakistan WAPDA, which has grabbed 191 medals in different sports. They are included 74 gold, 62 silver and 55 bronze medals.

Similarly, Navy stands third on the medal table with total 98 medals. It has so far secured 27 gold, 28 silver and 43 bronze medals.

On the position table, the fourth position is occupied by Higher Education Commission (HEC) with six gold, 13 silver and 67 bronze medals.

Pakistan Air Force

(PAF) and Punjab athletes are on fifth and sixth positions respectively with 53 and 39 medals.

While PAF could secure five gold, 19 silver and 29 bronze medals, Punjab has succeeded to win three gold, seven bronze and 29 bronze medals.

Moreover, Railways could grab two gold, six silver and 21 bronze medals so far to secure seventh position on the medal table.

Among provinces, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa is on the top with 35 medals including two gold, three silver and 30 bronze medals. At the outset, KP is at eighth position on the medal table.

Then comes Balochistan, which has obtained one gold, 11 silver and 27 bronze medals. With total 39 medals, Balochistan is at ninth position on the medals table till ours going to the press.

Sindh has secured total 23 medals including one gold, eight silver and 14 bronze medals to get 10th position at the table.

## US senator expresses concern over HRs violations in Pakistan

WASHINGTON (Online): US senator Bob Menendez while expressing his grave concern with reference to prevailing instability and human rights violations in Pakistan has stressed upon basic importance of maintaining human rights values in the country.

According to official tweet of PTI US, the senator while talking to Congress Democratic candidate Dr Asif Mehmood, laid emphasis on importance of the stability besides respecting human rights and implementing principles of rule of law in Pakistan.

## Measures afoot to improve irrigation system: Lehri

Independent Report QUETTA: Provincial Minister of Irrigation, Haji Muhammad Khan Lehri, has stated that measures are underway for the improvement of the irrigation system in the province.

"In the future, outside protection will be constructed for the Pat Feeder Canal to ensure that it remains safe during flood situations, eliminating any threat to the canal and preventing the people from facing the consequences of flooding," he said.

He added that immediate actions have been taken to address the damages caused to the Pat Feeder Canal during the recent spring season, which witnessed a record wheat harvest in the Nasirabad Division, adding that abundant wheat production in Balochistan has made the province self-sufficient.

"Those who criticize should remember their past. We do not believe in false and deceptive political struggles. By upholding all the promises made to the

people, we are fulfilling our responsibilities," Haji Muhammad Khan Lehri expressed these views while interacting with public delegations at Lehri House, Dera Murad Jamali, on Saturday.

Former Provincial Ministers Mir Abdul Ghaffar Lohar, Haji Fareed Al-Haq Lohar, Dera Abdul Qadir Pindrani, Mir Abdul Wahid Pindrani, and Muhammad Murad Pindrani, along with other political and tribal leaders, were present on this occasion.

## Pakistan Navy, ANF seized narcotics in joint operation

KARACHI (PR): Pakistan Navy and ANF seized huge quantity of narcotics in Counter Narcotics Operation.

Former Provincial Ministers Mir Abdul Ghaffar Lohar, Haji Fareed Al-Haq Lohar, Dera Abdul Qadir Pindrani, Mir Abdul Wahid Pindrani, and Muhammad Murad Pindrani, along with other political and tribal leaders, were present on this occasion.

Kgs narcotics (Hashish) worth approximately US \$ 65.148 Million in international market.

The successful counter narcotics operation by Pakistan Navy reaffirms Pakistan Navy's resolve to deny illegal activities at sea as well as along the coast.



QUETTA: Balochistan Think Tank Network's 25th anniversary of successful nuclear tests

## BTTN holds webinar to commemorate 25th anniversary of successful nuclear tests

QUETTA (APP): Balochistan Think Tank Network (BTTN) organized a webinar on "25 Years of Pakistan Nuclear Tests: Strategic Objectives and Peaceful Uses of Nuclear Technology" here Saturday to commemorate the 25th anniversary of Pakistan's successful Nuclear Tests.

According to the press release, the webinar was moderated by Associate Director Research Miss Hananah Zarrar.

While discussing the "Backdrop of Pakistan's Nuclear Tests and its Strategic Objectives", Dr. Nasir Hafeez, Director Research SVI, explained the idea of Nuclear Diplomacy and Nuclear Discourse and stated that both ideas are inter-linked.

He said that nuclear diplomacy was the art of conducting nuclear strategy. While referring to the nuclear debate between In-

dia and Pakistan, Dr Hafeez elaborated that whenever this debate remained conceptual in nature, the very existence of these weapons was effectively preventing the war in South Asia. India claims to be a responsible nuclear state. But, it was India that introduced nuclear weapons in South Asia even though India was involved in drafting the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), whereas Pakistan's stance remained that of

supporting the establishment of a nuclear-free South Asia until 1998, he expressed.

Dr. Ansar Parvez, Former Chairman PAEC and Advisor (Nuclear Power) National Command Authority, apprised the session about both peaceful and military uses of Nuclear Technology and highlighted the different realms where peaceful Nuclear Technology is doing wonders for the better-

ment of humanity, including providing clean energy, increasing crop health and productivity, and mitigating deadly diseases and illnesses with its medical applications.

He emphasized on how nuclear technology was one effectively working towards achieving the sustainable development goals (SDGs).

Elaborating on Emerging Technologies and Integration with Nuclear Weapons, Air Cdre Khalid Banuri, Former DG ACDA told that new and emerging technologies were carrying opportunities for better efficiency, but also posed challenges that were enormous and unavoidable.

He further added that on the strategic level, we used to hear of whoever controlled the heartland or the rimland would rule the world. But today, whoever masters the Artificial Intelligence will rule the world.



QUETTA: Balochistan Think Tank Network's Chief Brigadier Retired Agha Gull leading the rally regarding Youm-e-Takbeer.

## Pakistan's defense become impregnable due to nuclear test: Naem

QUETTA (APP): Pakistan Muslim League-N (PML-N) Balochistan central leader Chaudhry Naeem Karim Saturday said that the whole nation was proud of being a nuclear power and the country's defence has become impregnable due to the nuclear test. In his message on the occasion of Youm-e-Takbir, he said former Prime Minister Muhammad Nawaz Sharif, ignoring international pressure, made a historic decision to make Pakistan a nuclear power on May 28, 1998.

He said that by acquiring nuclear capability,

Pakistan's geographical borders were secured and no one can even think of any hostility against it, he said adding that the atomic capability put the adversary just to hollow threats.

He said that May 28 was the pledge renewal day and congratulates the entire nation and armed forces on the occasion of this important day. He said that under the auspices of Pakistan Muslim League (N) Balochistan, a program would be held on May 28 at Press Club Quetta regarding Youm-e-Takbir which would be addressed by PML-N Balochistan President.