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dailyindisb@gmail.com

Chief Editor: Syed Farooq Shah

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'Govt has presented historical, youth oriented budget': PM

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Tuesday said the government has presented a historical budget 2023-24 specifically designed for youth to help start their entrepreneurship activities that would also create more jobs in the country.

He said that the confidence and the hope could be restored by eliminating disappointments and ensuring socio-economic development of the country. "By the will of Allah Almighty, the upcoming year will be the year of increased income generation of the people and the country," he said in a statement issued by the Prime Minister Office.

This was the budget



QUETTA: Deputy Consul General of Japan in Pakistan Nakagawa Yasushi meeting with Balochistan Governor Malik Abdul Wali Khan Kakar

Governor expects Japan's enhanced cooperation in different welfare projects

QUETTA: The Governor Balochistan, Malik Abdul Wali Khan Kakar has stated that Pakistan and Japan enjoy pleasant relations and there are chances of expanding existing bilateral relations in different sectors further.

He said that Japan has always cooperated with us in every difficult time, whether it is any natural calamity or matter of development of human resource, Japan has always extended wholehearted cooperation to us.

The Governor expressed the hope that Japan would extend its cooperation and support in investment and different welfare projects in the province.

The Governor was speaking to Deputy Consul General Mr. Nakagawa Yasushi who called on him here on Tuesday.

The Governor on the occasion said that Japan is a developed country, which

for economic stability and quick development in various sectors including industry, agriculture, information technology and energy, he said adding that the budget would also provide the youth with the opportunity to create jobs for others by starting their own entrepreneurship.

"Youth are the country's future and saving their future has always been my top priority," he added.

PM Shehbaz said with the help of initiatives announced by the government in the budget 2023-24, the youth would become the architects of Pakistan's development by starting their own businesses in IT, industry and agriculture sectors.



SUJAWAL: Pakistan Army Emergency Response Teams officials evacuating local populace from Coastal areas due to tropical extremely severe cyclone storm named Biparjoy, during relief operation in various Goths of Golarchi area in Sujawal.

Tariq Malik resigns as NADRA Chairman

ISLAMABAD (INP): National Database and Registration Authority (NADRA) Chairman Tariq Malik on Tuesday stepped down from his post.

Malik tendered his resignation in a meeting with Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif at the PM's House. The chairman is under investigation by the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) for alleged involvement in a corruption scandal.

As per reports, the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) and the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) are divided over whether the chairman should stay in office.

This was Malik's second stint as NADRA chairman, with the first having ended in 2013.

The PML-N government had initially removed him from the post, but the court had reinstated him. He later resigned himself, citing pressure and threats.

According to a private TV channel, Malik's name has also been added to the no-fly list because of the ongoing investigation against him.

After the "revelation" of alleged corruption in the NADRA contract, the FIA obtained the details of its assets of Malik.

BA's budget session summoned on June 16

QUETTA: The budget session of Balochistan Assembly is scheduled to be held at 04:00 PM on June 16, 2023. According to an official notification issued here by the Secretary Balochistan Assembly on Tuesday, the Governor Malik Abdul Wali Khan Kakar has summoned the budget session.

As per the agenda, the budget for the financial year 2023-24 would be presented in the session of assembly. The budget session would remain continued till June 24, 2023.

Coordinator to CM GB, his family die in traffic accident

GILGIT (Online): Coordinator of Chief Minister (CM) Gilgit-Baltistan and his parents have died while his sister has been injured after their vehicle has plunged into deep ravine in Gilgit. According to Rescue-1122 media coordinator the incident took place in the areas of Shangooos on Baltistan highway. Their vehicle on its way from Gilgit to Skardu fell into deep ravine.

Muzammal Hussain advocate, coordinator to CM GB and his mother and father died on the spot.

Cyclone Biparjoy threat: CM appeals to public, fishermen of coastal areas to cooperate with local administration

Independent Report

He urged the people to follow the directives and guidelines of the local administration and other concerned departments to avoid any mishap in this regard.

Meanwhile, Director General PDMA, Jahanzaib Khan has stated that all necessary preparations have been made ahead of the cyclone and tackle any emergent situation in coastal areas of the province.

He also said that the required relief items have also been made available in Hub, Lasbela and Gwadar districts to provide relief to the dwellers.

Those who burnt Jinnah House & pictures are not patriots: Marriyum



LAHORE: Minister for Information and Broadcasting Marriyum Aurangzeb visiting Jinnah House.

LAHORE (APP): Minister for Information and Broadcasting Marriyum Aurangzeb on Tuesday said those who had burnt the house and pictures of Quaid-i-Azam Ali Jinnah on May 9 could neither be regarded as responsible citizens nor patriots.

"A rioter, Fitna, and mastermind spearheaded the armed groups vandalizing the Jinnah House from his home," the minister said while talking to the media during her visit to the Jinnah House.

She regretted that not only the house of Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah was burnt by the armed groups on the directives of the PTI chairman

but his invaluable and historic pictures and portraits displayed in the corridor were also set on fire.

A mosque on the premises of the Jinnah House was also burnt in the regrettable incident, she added.

The minister said on May 9, schools, ambulances, memorials of martyrs, the iconic fighter jet of M M Alam, and the statue of martyred Captain Sher Khan were put on fire and vandalized by the unruly mobs, she recalled, rejecting the notion that vandalism was part of a political protest. No patriot could even think of such heinous acts which were unacceptable and unforgivable, she remarked.

CM directs IGP to lift ban imposed on business of Iranian petrol in Balochistan

Independent Report

QUETTA: The Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Abdul Quddus Bizenjo has taken notice of the ban on business of Iranian petroleum products in Quetta and its surrounding areas and directed the Inspector General of Police to lift it immediately.

According to an official handout issued here on Tuesday, the Chief Minister said that the people are earning livelihood for them and their families by doing small business of Iranian products because of lack of opportunities of the employments.

The Chief Minister maintained that provincial government is providing jobs to the youth of province, however, it can't give jobs to all the unemployed people, he added. He also said that there are least factories and private sector in the province and if this business of the people would also be closed, then most of the people would be deprived of their livelihood.

Amid nearing Pakistan's coastlines Biparjoy weakens into 'Very Severe Cyclonic Storm' - Cat 3

PM directs utilizing all-out resources for people's protection amid Biparjoy cyclone; Evacuation underway from potentially under threat coastal areas; NDMA directs provincial authorities to ensure additional measures to manage TC Biparjoy; Sindh govt puts hospitals on high alert, appoints focal persons in 20 districts; Biparjoy poses no major risk to power infrastructure, measures ready for unimpeded power supply: Dastgir

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Tropical Cyclone 'Biparjoy' has weakened into a "Very Severe Cyclonic Storm" (VSCS)-Category 3, with sustained windspeeds of approximately 140-150 kilometers per hour (km/h) and gusts up to 170 km/h after it started reaching closer to the coastline of the country.

According to the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA), the current location was near Latitude 20.7° N and Longitude 67.1° E, roughly 460 km south of Karachi and 450km south of Thatta and 565km southeast of Ormara.

According to the latest forecast, tropical cyclone Biparjoy was expected to maintain a northward trajectory until the morning of June 14 and then it was likely to recurve eastward and would make landfall between Ketri Bandar (Southeast Sindh Coastline) and the Indian Gujarat Coastline in the afternoon of June 15, as a Very Severe Cyclonic Storm (VSCS).

The areas likely to be affected included Thatta, Badin, Sajawal, Tharparkar, Karachi, Mirpurkhas, Umerkot, Hyderabad, Ormara, Tando Allah Yar Khan and Tando Mohammad Khan. These findings have been developed by the National Emergencies Operation Centre (NEOC) Technical team using international and national models (PMD-NWPM, NASA, PDC & UKM, IMD, BOM-A, and ECMWF).

Meanwhile Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Tuesday directed the Sindh provincial government, National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) and other relevant organisations to utilise all-out resources to ensure people's protection keeping in view the Biparjoy cyclone.

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ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif chairing a meeting regarding preparedness and measures taken for the approaching "Biparjoy" Cyclone.

PM to visit Azerbaijan from 14-15 June

ISLAMABAD (Online): At the invitation of President Ilham Aliyev, Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif will undertake an official visit to Azerbaijan from 14-15 June 2023. Ministers representing the priority areas of cooperation with Azerbaijan will be part of the Prime Minister's entourage.

Prime Minister will hold wide-ranging talks with President Ilham Aliyev on key areas of cooperation including trade, investment and energy. Regional and global issues of mutual concern and cooperation in multilateral forums will also be discussed.

Pakistan-Azerbaijan relationship is embedded in commonalities of faith, culture and history, and strengthened by mutual trust and convergence of views on regional and global matters.

Frequent leadership level exchanges highlight the bonds of friendship between the two countries and contribute to closer multifaceted cooperation for the mutual benefit of the people of Pakistan and Azerbaijan.

Imran failed to provide evidence of assassination claim before JIT: Sana

ISLAMABAD (APP): Interior Minister Rana Sanaullah Tuesday said the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) chairman had confessed during investigations that the allegation he had leveled against the prime minister and him for planning his murder were baseless and unfounded.

Addressing a press conference, he said when the PTI chief was asked about the basis of his accusations, he simply stated, "I was informed by someone," without nominating anyone.

Similarly, the minister added, the PTI leader also admitted that the derogatory comments about the armed forces and the army chief were baseless.

All the confessions he had made in the written

statement, clearly showed that no one could match him in propagating lies and unfounded accusations, he added.

Rana Sana further said the PTI leader misled the public about the concocted plot for his assassination and brainwashed the youth in that regard. The rioting and vandalizing witnessed by the nation on May 9 was the outcome of the so-called Tiger Force of one million people raised by the "Dar of Sialkot" on the behest of his leader, he added.

He said public resources were ruthlessly used for the Tiger Force, and even funds allocated for combating the coronavirus were also spent for the purpose, and details regarding that would be made public soon.



QUETTA: On the directives of Chief Minister Balochistan, Additional Chief Secretary Development Hafiz Abdul Basit, Principal Secretary to Chief Minister Imran Ghichki and secretaries of concerned departments attending a meeting to review public schemes for upcoming financial year

PAC recovers Rs. 1trln in year, exposes corruption in mega projects

ISLAMABAD (APP): Public Accounts Committee (PAC) successfully recovered around one trillion rupees over the past year, with a commitment to taking decisive action against individuals who have harmed the national exchequer.

These revelations were made by Chairman PAC MNA Noor Alam Khan during the budget debate on Tuesday in the National Assembly. As the Chairman of PAC for the past year, Noor Alam Khan emphasized the committee's efforts in recovering the substantial amount, clarifying that it was a collective accomplishment, not solely his own. He emphasized that he did not witness any prefer-

ential treatment or bias among the Members of the National Assembly (MNAs) during the recovery process and functioning of PAC.

He further declared that he draws a monthly salary of Rs. 168,000 as an MNA and an additional Rs. 20,000 as Chairman of the PAC. He said that individuals engaged in corrupt practices should face the consequences of their actions.

During his speech, Chairman Khan exposed instances of corruption amounting to billions of rupees in programs such as the Ten Billion Tree Tsunami, the BRT project in Peshawar, the health sector, and the police department.



QUETTA: Home Minister Mir Ziaullah Lango presiding over a meeting of Commissioner for Missing Persons

5.6 magnitude earthquake jolts Lahore, other parts of country

LAHORE (Online): An earthquake measuring 5.6 on the Richter scale struck eastern Kashmir on Tuesday, setting off tremors that were felt in Islamabad, Lahore and other parts of the country. The Pakistan Meteorological Department said the earthquake originated at 1:04pm with its epicentre in Eastern Kashmir at the depth of 10 kilometres. It recorded the earthquake's longitude at 75.97 E and latitude at 33.32 N. Tremors were also felt in Rawalpindi, Jhelum, Hafizabad, Azad Kashmir and other areas.



LANDIKOTAL: First consignment of Russian LPG reaches Pakistan, at Torkham Border in Landikotal

First consignment of Russian LPG reaches Pakistan

By M.Ilyas PESHAWAR: The first shipment of liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) from Russia reached Pakistan through Torkham border.

The LPG cargo consists of 10 tankers, 100,000 Tons of LPG purchased from Russia is a part of the Pakistan-Russia agreement. The first rail of LPG from Russia was delivered to Uzbekistan, while the LPG of Russian gas entered Pakistan through Afghanistan through tankers from Uzbekistan. Clearance process is ongoing.

According to Pakistani customs authorities, for the first time, the supply of Russian gas tankers has been made possible through Pak Afghan Torkham border.

On Sunday, the first shipment of Russian crude oil reached Port Qasim which was later transported to Pakistan Refinery Limited (PRL) for processing. The second shipment of Russian crude oil is likely to reach Pakistan during the next week. Pakistan has planned to take the Russian crude oil to one third of its total oil import. On achieving the target, petrol prices could drop significantly that would be a much-needed relief for the inflation hit people.

Daily Voice of Masses Independent

Looking east

The PDM coalition may have failed to set a direction for the flailing economy in its rather unimaginative second budget, but trade and industry leaders have been quite clear about how they believe Pakistan can chart a way out of its present crisis.

They have been pointing out some common-sense measures that successive governments have failed to implement, which include steps like fixing the country's justice system, improving education delivery, reforming the bureaucracy, enforcing contracts, rightsizing the bloated machinery of the state, and forcing it to divest from businesses that have become a burden on the public exchequer.

The right interventions in these areas, most experts agree, can help create more wealth for both the citizenry and the government. Unfortunately, as the past year has shown, the country's managers have seemed clueless about where to begin despite finding themselves in the midst of a major crisis.

The chairman of one of the largest conglomerates in the country, in a recent interview to Dawn, pointed to India as a case study. New Delhi implemented tough reforms following its last IMF programme some three decades ago, and is now reaping the rewards for its labours. He also echoed what many have been urging for a while now — that the revitalisation of trade with India, along with other regional economies, is a prerequisite to Pakistan's long-term economic stability.

Unfortunately, Pakistan seems to have shut itself off to importing both good ideas or cheap goods from its eastern neighbour. Urging the government to reconsider, many have reasoned that when other countries with historical rivalries do not refuse to engage economically with each other, why should Pakistan and India? It is difficult to disagree.

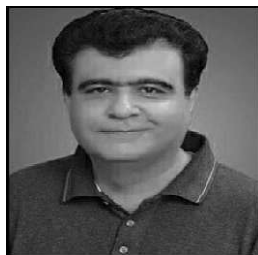
Indeed, if one were to thoroughly account for the costs and benefits of Islamabad's decision to suspend trade with India, the bottom line would reflect a net loss for our people. Perhaps it is time for our foreign policy pundits and decision-makers to reconsider their stance and decouple trade from geopolitical disputes.

From food to pharmaceuticals, Pakistan can import much from India and at far cheaper rates than from anywhere else in the world. Yet, we refuse to do so. With inflation crushing our citizens, the question 'why' must be revisited.

The state can keep pursuing its principled differences with New Delhi even while the two countries trade. It did so, for most of the two countries' history.

Meanwhile, goods that can be bought for cheaper than the options available in the market should be allowed in so that the inflationary pressure can be relieved. Trade and geopolitics should be treated as independent components of international policy. Politicking on the matter is selfish and does no service to our people. Both our state and our politicians need to agree on this.

Aborting democracy



Dr Niaz Murtaza

We have failed to democratise since 1947 thanks mainly to the security establishment as well as all major political parties. True, we are no North Korea — small buds of democracy do sometimes bloom in a desert of autocracy. But a closer look reveals an odd fact: they have bloomed mainly due to the PPP and PML-N. Both have done much harm to, but also more good for, democracy than other big parties.

Politics emerges societal realities. Ours is a patronage-driven politics, with clans and tribes running social, economic and political processes. There is no escaping societal realities till they change slowly. The corrupt, dynastic politics of the PPP and PML-N emerges from this reality. More oddly, non-dynastic parties — BJP, JVP (Sri Lanka), MQM, TLP, Jamaat-i-Islami and PTI — are worse on violence, bigotry and populism indicators. Even dynasties within them are replaced with cronyism, not merit.

The PTI possesses the sleaze of the PPP and PML-N, plus cultist hero worship that aims to replace laws and institutions with Khan's fiat; the social extremism and xenophobia (towards the West) of religious parties; TLP- and MQM-type violence; and one-party autocracy goals. Besides it has spread falsehoods via social media as a strategy to silence the truth. So, Khan is a danger both as a ruler and opposition leader. But the party should have been nixed politically.

Unlike the 1990s, the

PPP and PML-N deepened democracy in key areas from 2008 to 2018: devolution (18th Amendment), smooth transfer of power (electoral reforms and the 2013 elections), Fata reforms, etc. These gains came to naught when the establishment allegedly rigged the 2018 polls for the PTI. The justifiable no-trust move against the then prime minister in 2022 raised hope that the PDM alliance would relaunch its 2008-2018 agenda. Instead, they have adopted the PTI's autocratic ways, imperilled free polls and put the establishment back into a pole position.

The Punjab polls mess is a reflection of the controversial verdicts of the Supreme Court and the Election Commission on Article 63-A of the Constitution and the de-seating of 25 PTI dissidents. But there is no excuse for the KP polls and abuses against the pro-PTI media. May 9's horrific but limited street violence has been used as an excuse to reverse-engineer and nix the PTI. Most of those involved deserve fines, community service or home lockups, as done after a mob attacked the US Capitol, which is considered more sacrosanct than the palatial home of a commander.

Only those carrying out arson and serious assaults deserve jail. Trying them in non-civilian courts for inciting mutiny has been criticised. Mutiny is open rebellion against an authority. The Potemkin Mutiny during the Russo-Japanese War was over bad food. The 700-strong crew killed nearly half the ship's officers. In Germany's Kiel mutiny in 1919, thousands of sailors occupied ships and seized control of the city. On May 9, we only had brief aimless mayhem by largely unarmed mobs led astray by fake rhetoric. It soon dispersed.

One can't speak of

Missing resilience



Masood Lohar

Karachi's history of natural disasters remains obscured, just like its original topographical contours. As the cyclone Biparjoy, meaning 'disaster' in Bangla, sets its sights on this city of over 200 million, ordinary Karachiites find solace in the common refrain: 'Abdullah Shah Ghazi won't let disaster befall us.' However, it appears that they have forgotten that cyclones have indeed struck Karachi multiple times throughout history.

One such cyclone in 1944 rendered 10,000 people homeless when the city's population was less than half a million. Back then, Karachi's marine ecosystem was still intact, with two key lagoons, Obhayo and Nai Nar, as well as two creeks, Korangi and Gizri, existing alongside their sub-creeks. Karachi faced two other significant cyclones in 1902 and 1964. Given the severe degradation of the city's marine ecosystem today, one must question the disaster preparedness incorporated in its urban planning.

Regrettably, the transformation of Karachi's landscape has left little room for disaster resilience. Gizri Creek, once a thriving ecosystem, is now a housing settlement, leaving Korangi Creek as the sole remaining waterway. The largest lagoon, Obhayo, has been reduced to a polluted black water pond called Boat Basin, surrounded by housing settlements such as Hujrat and Shireen Jinnah Colony. The Mai Kolachi Bridge severed the remaining lagoon from the

open sea, disrupting a critical function of the marine ecosystem. Similarly, the disconnection of another significant lagoon, Nai Naar, at Sandspit in the 1950s halted the natural high tide-low tide cycle that previously cleansed the Keamari Harbour. Consequently, severe pollution in the area, especially in and around the fish harbour, led to a ban on fish exports to the EU.

Karachi typically experiences average annual rainfall of less than 175 mm. However, recent occurrences have showcased extraordinary variations in precipitation. In August 2020, Karachi witnessed a significant downpour, with rainfall recorded at 223.5 mm. Similarly, the previous year saw a remarkable 1050 mm of rainfall in Bahria Town.

Unfortunately, each year, the regular monsoon rains wreak havoc on the city, leading to substantial damage. In comparison to other coastal cities in Asia, Karachi's average rainfall is considerably lower. For instance, Goa and Mumbai receive an average of 3000 mm and 2200 mm respectively, while Jakarta receives over 1800 mm. It is noteworthy that despite the higher rainfall in these cities, they continue to function normally without municipal emergencies, unlike Karachi, where even a downpour of less than 200 mm can trigger such situations.

If Karachi were to face a severe cyclone or experience unusual rainfall, the consequences could be devastating. The once-efficient backwater absorbing capacity of Obhayo lagoon and Gizri Creek has been lost, while the blocked waterways of the Lyari and Malir rivers threaten further harm to the city's infrastructure and its inhabitants. The 2001 earthquake in Gujarat, India, serves as a grim reminder of the potential devastation that can oc-

cur along the Allah Band seismic fault. Throughout history, the coastal region of Sindh and Gujarat, India, has experienced a series of major and minor earthquakes along this fault line. One significant earthquake, in the eighth century, had its epicentre near Jungshahi and resulted in the destruction and submergence of Debal port. Similarly, the 1668 earthquake, as reported by Euro-pean travellers, devastated 'Auranga Port' or 'Samawani' submerging 30,000 houses and claiming 50,000 to 150,000 lives. Another earthquake in 1819 wreaked havoc on Sindhri Port, located near the Pakistan-India border south of Badin. Further, the last recorded tsunami to hit Karachi occurred in 1945, with a British newspaper estimating 4,000 casualties along the Makran Coast.

Karachi has undergone an exponential population increase, from 4m in 1980 to 10m in 2000, leading to haphazard expansion and the proliferation of poorly constructed concrete structures. Urgent action is needed to develop disaster risk reduction strategies and implement bold measures to enhance the city's resilience against disasters and climate change. Central to achieving this goal is the restoration of Karachi's marine ecosystem. Failure to do so not only jeopardises Pakistan's commercial capital but also endangers the lives of over 10pc of the country's population.

In addition to its vulnerability to natural disasters, Karachi faces a significant concern in the form of air pollution. Industrial activities, vehicular emissions, and a lack of vegetation contribute to the city's heavily polluted air. The absence of trees further exacerbates the risk of heat-related illnesses. — Courtesy Dawn

Commerce News

Relief for masses on cards as Russian crude oil arrived in Pakistan: Minister

ISLAMABAD (INP): Minister of State for Petroleum Musadik Malik on Tuesday said the deal struck by Pakistan with Russia for crude oil import would help the government pass on financial relief to the masses who had been bearing brunt of inflation stemmed from the previous government's flawed economic policies.

"This is the history since it is the first time that crude oil from Russia has been arrived in Pakistan," the minister said while addressing a news conference here.

He refused to divulge details of the commercial terms of the oil deal with Russia due to agreements

signed by both sides for confidentiality.

"I want to say to my political opponents that Russian oil has reached Pakistan, which will benefit the people, so at least congratulate the nation today," he said while accusing the previous government of misleading the masses on the subject.

The PTI government, in fact, did not manage to get any oil deal with Russia which was also confirmed by the Russian government's officials.

He said Pakistan had imported 100,000 tons of oil from Russia initially with plans to gradually increase the quantity over time as the country would

meet its quarterly oil requirements through the utilization of Russian oil.

He said the previous regime had made baseless claims, suggesting that the PTI government's attempt to import oil from Russia led to its alleged removal.

"If this is true then how we have imported oil from Russia successfully," he questioned.

Musadik said the government wanted good relations with all countries including Russia, America, Europe, Azerbaijan, Tajikistan and China as Pakistan was not part of any group.

He said that the government intended to ink a \$10 billion contract,

before the end of its tenure, so a new oil refinery could be established in Pakistan.

The minister said that Pakistan had also received a contract from Azerbaijan, which was available to the cabinet.

"Under the contract, the Central Asian country would provide Pakistan a distressed LNG cargo monthly. The LNG price would be much lower than in the international market," he said.

The minister said that under the terms of the contract, it would be Pakistan's prerogative to accept the cargo or not, but Azerbaijan would be obligated to provide distress cargo monthly.



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif chairs a review meeting regarding matters relating to Pakistan Railways.



ISLAMABAD: Minister of State for Petroleum Musadik Malik addressing during post budget challenges Macroeconomic Indicators and Way Forward for Pakistan at ICCL.

Ayaz, OIETAI Head discuss bilateral economic cooperation to strengthen ties

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Economic Affairs, Sardar Ayaz Sadiq and Deputy Minister, Head of Organization of Investment, Economic and Technical Assistant of Iran (OIETAI), Ali Fekri Tuesday discussed bilateral economic cooperation and strengthen ties between two nations. A high-level delegation from Iran led by Deputy Minister and OIETAI Head, Ali Fekri called on the Minister for Economic Affairs here, said a press release issued here.

The meeting marked an important step towards enhancing trade and investment opportunities between the two countries.

During the meeting, the minister welcoming the Iranian delegation, apprised that Pakistan valued its longstanding and amicable relations with Iran and aimed to strengthen bilateral ties fostering trade and economic prospects that would contribute to regional stability and prosperity.

Additionally, the minister highlighted that

prompt execution of Agreements and MoUs reached during the 21st Session of Pak-Iran Joint Economic Commission would bolster economic cooperation and facilitate enhanced people-to-people connectivity with progress in all modes of transportation. The OIETAI head expressed Iran's keen interest in collaborating with Pakistan and shared their plans for investment in various sectors including energy projects and infrastructure development.

Progress on food system transformation reviewed

ISLAMABAD (INP): In order to strengthen efforts to improve access to nutritious food and follow global targets set for 2030, Ministry of National Food Security & Research convened national consultation for progress review on 'Pakistan National Food System Transformation Pathway'.

The event titled "Aligning National Practices and Policies for Transforming Pakistan Food Systems", was conducted as the result of the government's high level of political ownership for the upcoming United Nations (UN) Food System Summit+2-Stock Taking Moment-2023, said a press release issued here on Tuesday.

National Convenor for Pakistan and Federal Secretary, Ministry of National Food Security and Research Zaffar Hasan Chairman Pakistan Agricultural Research Council (PARC) Dr Ghulam Muhammad Ali, Joint Secretary Ejaz Ahmed Bajwa, and Additional Secretary Captain Muhammad Asif also attended the meeting.

Chairman NEPRA says: Work permit plays vital role in prevention of electrical accidents

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chairman of National Electric Power Regulatory Authority (NEPRA) Tauseef Farooqi has said that work permit plays an important role in the prevention of electrical accidents adding that most of the electrocutions occurred due to ineffective work permits. Speaking at

a webinar on "Work Permit" organized by NEPRA, he said that the deficiencies in the existing work permit system of Distribution Companies (DISCOs) were leading to frequent accidents and the regulator developed a Work Permit Form in Urdu language to ensure the workers' safety in the field.

PM directs upgradation of ML-1 on priority basis

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Tuesday directed for the upgradation of Main Line (ML-1) of Pakistan Railways on priority basis and said that the government was working on the revival of railways on urgent basis.

The prime minister said that ML-1 was the backbone of Pakistan

Railways and in the future, Pakistan would provide trade corridor facilities to the regional countries through its railways and sea-ports systems.

The prime minister chaired a meeting to review reforms in Pakistan Railways and upgradation of ML-1. The meeting was attended by Minister for Finance Ishaq Dar, Minister for Commerce Syed Naveed

Qamar, Minister for Railways Khawaja Saad Rafique and other relevant officials, PM office Media Wing said in a press release.

During the meeting, the prime minister observed that people were being facilitated through motorways, public transport, health and education initiatives, completed during the PML-N tenures.

All Pakistan Traders delegation meets Dar

ISLAMABAD (APP): A delegation of All Pakistan Anjuman e Tajran led by Mohammad Naeem Mir Tuesday called on Finance Minister Senator Muhammad Ishaq Dar and extended felicitations on presenting a people and business-friendly Budget 2023-24. The delegation thanked Ishaq Dar for incorporating traders' suggestions in the Finance Bill for ease of doing business and removing their issues, said a press release.

Federal Budget 2023-24: Dar announces two anomaly committees

ISLAMABAD (Online): Minister for Finance and Revenue Senator Muhammad Ishaq Dar on Tuesday announced the formation of two 'anomaly committees' as per the tradition followed after the announcement of the federal budget.

Making an announcement on the floor of the National Assembly during the budget session, he said two notifications for constitution business-anomaly and technical-anomaly committees had

been issued having the mandate to look into any anomaly(s) if mistakenly printed in the budget document or pointed out by any individual. He said the committees, formed in consultation with the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) would thoroughly deliberate on the anomaly(s), if any, and recommend the government for their removal from the document within a stipulated timeframe before passage of the budget.

CM Punjab says: Nishtar-II to be made fully operative by Sept this year

Independent Report
MILTAN: Caretaker Punjab Chief Minister, Mohsin Naqvi announced on Tuesday that Nishtar-II would be made operative by Sept with 100 per cent staff this year and termed it a dire need of the hour for masses of Multan and its adjoining areas. Talking to the media after inspecting different sections of the project, he stated that Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif would be invited to open the health facility as he had performed its groundbreaking ceremony too as CM Punjab.

He informed no staff would be deputed at Nishtar-II from Nishtar Hospital, adding that Punjab government would allocate funds in the budget for ongoing health projects of Multan. The CM maintained that the Extension of Chaudhry Pervaiz Elahi Institute of Cardiology would also be made functional by next month and added that a new emergency Children Complex would be constructed with the help of philanthropists soon. Earlier, Naqvi went to different sections of the

under-construction health facility including OPD, Pharmacy, Laboratory and Ultrasound. Project Director IDAP, briefed the CM about the Nishtar-II project. Provincial ministers Amir Meer, Azfar Nasir, ACS South Punjab, Saqib Zafar, NMU VC, Dr Rana Altaf Ahmad, Commissioner Multan Division, Amir Khattak, RPO, Sohail Chaudhary and other officials were accompanying the CM. Later, he inspected the CPEIC extension of the Emergency block beside other departments of the hospital.



SIALKOT: Dr. Nasir Jamal, Caretaker Provincial Health Minister is visiting Allama Iqbal Teaching Hospital.

LHC suspends sessions court order about Parvez Elahi's physical remand

LAHORE (Online): The Lahore High Court (LHC) on Tuesday suspended an order of sessions court about physical remand of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) President Chaudhry Parvez Elahi in a case related to illegal recruitment in the Punjab Assembly. Justice Muhammad Waheed Khan passed the orders while hearing a petition filed by Chaudhry Parvez Elahi challenging the order of sessions court. The court also issued notices to the respondents, including Anti-Corruption Establishments (ACE) Punjab, and sought reply by June 27.

The petitioner's counsel had argued before the court that the order of the sessions court was liable to be set aside for being illegal and without jurisdiction. He argued that only the anti-corruption court could hear the matter. A day earlier, a sessions court had set aside an order of a district court for sending Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) President Chaudhry Parvez Elahi to jail on judicial remand in the case. The court ordered for production of Chaudhry Parvez Elahi before the area magistrate concerned on Tuesday (June 13) for obtaining his physical remand for investigations of the case.

16 killed, 1,277 injured in road accidents in Punjab

LAHORE (APP): At least 16 people were killed while 1,277 injured in 1,168 road accidents in Punjab during last 24 hours.

Of whom, 661 people with serious injuries were shifted to different hospitals, while 606 victims with minor injuries were treated on the spot by rescue medical teams, said a spokesman for Rescue 1122 here on Tuesday.

Analysis showed that 614 drivers, 33 underage drivers, 191 pedestrians, and 478 passengers were among the victims of road accidents.

Statistics showed that 260 accidents were reported in Lahore which affected 314 people placing at top of the list followed by 103 in Multan with 103 victims and at third Faisalabad with 77 accidents and 82 victims.

As many as, 1029 motorcycles, 75 rickshaws, 96 cars, 25 vans, nine buses, 37 trucks and 96 other vehicles and slow-moving carts were involved in the road accidents.



GILGIT: Chief Minister Gilgit-Baltistan Khalid Khurshid Khan chairing a cabinet meeting at CM Secretariat.

Governor KP highlights significance of research for making progress in 21st century

PESHAWAR (APP): Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Governor, Haji Ghulam Ali Tuesday highlighted the significance of research to make progress in the 21st century and said that research should be target oriented and benefit each and every tier of society.

He was talking to senior professors of colleges who were given training at the Higher Education Academy for Research and Training (HEART) Kohat. Caretaker Minister for Higher Education, Irshad

Qaisar, Director HEART, and Tasbeeh Ullah were present on the occasion. Academy Director informed the governor about the objectives of the academy and said that it has been established for professors to complete a four-month course that is mandatory for their promotion. He told that the academy is facing many problems including the unavailability of a budget and training has been conducted on a self-help basis.

KP Minister directs WSSCA to address issues

ABBOTTABAD (Online): KP Minister Local Government and Rural Development, Sanwal Nazeer Advocate Tuesday while appreciating the performance of Water and Sanitation Services Company Abbottabad (WSSCA), directed to address the prevailing issues and visited the office also.

He expressed these views during his visit to WSSC Abbottabad. Chairman of the Board of Directors, Major @ Zulfikar Ahmed, and Chief Executive Officer Engineer Rehan Yousuf welcomed him at the office.

According to the information, the Minister of Local Government, Sanwal Nazeer Advocate during his visit to the WSSCA introduced him to the officers and board members and mentioned that the Board is fully functional and is committed to providing municipal services to the city's citizens through people-friendly policies. The Chief Executive Officer WSSC Engineer Rehan Yousuf also briefed the Minister about the performance of the department, future planning and ongoing challenges.

Rescue-1122 starts mock exercise, trainings for monsoon: DG

PESHAWAR (APP): The emergency service Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Rescue-1122 has started preparations, mock exercises and training programmes for line departments for monsoon emergencies. Director General Rescue-1122 Dr Khateer Ahmed said here Tuesday that currently staff of 1122 was engaged in mock exercises to deal with the possible flood situation in monsoon.

USKT pays tribute to the martyrs of Pak-Army

SIALKOT (APP): University of Sialkot (USKT) paid tribute to the martyrs of Pakistan Army at the Martyrs' Memorial, Sialkot Garrison here on Tuesday. Chairman USKT Faisal Manzoor, Executive Director/Vice Chancellor USKT Muhammad Rehan Younas, Registrar USKT Muhammad Yaqoob, joined faculty and students in a solemn ceremony. The esteemed representatives of the university presented a wreath as a symbol of respect and gratitude to the brave souls who sacrificed their lives for the defense and security of Pakistan.

Kundi inaugurates 'Burn and Plastic Surgery Unit'

DERA ISMAIL KHAN (APP): Minister of State for Poverty Alleviation and Social Safety Faisal Karim Kundi on Tuesday inaugurated a 'Burn and Plastic Surgery Unit' here at Mufti Mahmood Hospital.

On this occasion, former MPA Ahmed Karim Kundi, Dean Gomal Medical College Dr. Naseem Saba Mehsud, Director Mufti Mahmood Hospital Dr. Umar Shah Ustrana, Medical Director Dr. Muhammad Waseem, renowned social worker Shaker Khan Kundi, Director DHQ hospital Dr. Farrukh Jameel and

others were also present. Addressing a symposium held at Gomal Medical College regarding the opening ceremony of the Burn and Plastic Surgery Unit, the state minister said that it was his desire to ensure provision of all facilities to the hospitals of Dera Ismail Khan so that any patient should not be referred to go to Islamabad, Multan or any other big city from here. He said the professional skills of doctors in Dera Ismail Khan were beyond any doubt, but the lack of facilities was a hindrance to their expertise.



MULTAN: Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of Discount World Sultan Richard and Project Sec of Romanza Golf and Country Club Col. Habib-ur-Rahman, signed the memorandum of understanding at DHA.

Minister inaugurates burns, plastic surgery unit at Mufti Mahmood Hospital

PESHAWAR (APP): Minister of State for Poverty Alleviation and Social Security, Faisal Karim Kundi here on Tuesday inaugurated the burns and plastic surgery unit at Mufti Mahmood Hospital, Dera Ismail Khan. Former Member Provincial Assembly, Ahmad Karim Kundi, Dean of Gomal Medical College, Dr. Nasim Saba Mehsud, Director of the hospital Dr. Umar Shah Ustrana, hospital director medical, Dr. Muhammad Wasim, doctors, paramedics and elites of the city attended.

In his address at the symposium at Gomal Medical College DI Khan in connection with the inauguration of the unit, Faisal Kundi said that it was his desire to equip all hospitals of DI Khan with state-of-the-art facilities so that patients could not go for treatment to other cities including Islamabad, Multan or Lahore. He said the burns and plastic surgery units at Mufti Mahmood Hospital DI Khan were set up by the doctors on a self-help basis and highly philanthropic Hidayatullah Khan Kundi for providing Rs 8 million.

International News

Iran's president begins Latin America tour with stop in Venezuela

Monitoring Desk
CARACAS: In his first visit to Latin America, Iran's hardline president on Monday met with his Venezuelan counterpart and declared that both countries have "a common enemy," alluding to the United States, before signing a series of cooperation agreements. President Ebrahim Raisi's visit to Venezuela came a year and a day after President Nicolás Maduro visited him in Iran. Both countries are under heavy U.S. economic sanctions. Raisi said the link be-

tween the two countries "is not normal, but rather a strategic relationship," insisting that their nations have "common interests and we have common enemies." "They do not want the two countries, Iran and Venezuela, to be independent," Raisi said referring to the U.S. government. His tour of allied nations in Latin America, including Cuba and Nicaragua, comes amid rising tensions with the administration of U.S. President Joe Biden. The U.S. has accused Iran of providing Russia with

materials to build a drone manufacturing plant east of Moscow, while the Kremlin seeks to ensure a steady supply of weapons for its invasion of Ukraine. U.S. intelligence officials believe the plant in Russia could start operations early next year, but Iran has said it supplied drones to Russia before the start of the war. The more than dozen agreements signed by officials from the countries Monday include scholarships for Venezuelan students and the importations of cattle to Iran.



Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi and Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro get ready to sign a bilateral accord at Miraflores presidential palace in Caracas, Venezuela.

UN nuclear chief says Large Ukraine atomic power plant held by Russia faces 'dangerous situation'

Monitoring Desk
KYIV: The largest nuclear power plant in Europe faces "a relatively dangerous situation" after a dam burst in Ukraine and Kyiv launches a counteroffensive to retake ground occupied by Russia, the head of the United Nations nuclear watchdog said Tuesday.

Rafael Moreno Grossi, the head of the International Atomic Energy Agency, spoke to journalists in Kyiv just before leaving on a trip to the Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plant. That plant

has been repeatedly in the crossfire since Russia launched its war on Ukraine in February 2022 and seized the facility shortly after. Grossi said he had met Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy to discuss the situation affecting the plant, which grew more serious after the Kakhovka Dam burst last week.

The dam, further down the Dnieper River, helped keep water in a reservoir that cools the plant's reactors. Ukraine has said Russia blew up the dam,

something denied by Moscow, though analysts say the flood likely disrupted Kyiv's counteroffensive plans. Grossi said the level of the reservoir that feeds the plant is dropping "quite steadily" but that it didn't represent an "immediate danger."

"It is a serious situation because you are limited to the water you have there," Grossi said. "If there was a break in the gates that contain this water or anything like this, you would really lose all your cooling capacity."

Putin says no need for new mobilisation for now, quips about trying again to take Kyiv

Monitoring Desk
MOSCOW: President Vladimir Putin said on Tuesday that for now he saw no need for an additional mobilisation of men to fight in Ukraine but said it all depended on what Russia wanted to achieve there and he asked if Moscow's forces should try to take Kyiv again. "There is no such need today," Putin told a televised meeting of Russian war correspondents and military bloggers when asked about another

mobilisation after last year declaring what he cast as a "partial mobilisation" of 300,000 reservists. Putin said the defence ministry saw no need for another wave of mobilisation. "Some public figures say we need to get 1 million or two million," Putin said. "It depends on what we want." "Should we return there?" Putin said of Kyiv, which Russian troops failed to take in the early stages of what Moscow calls its "special military operation".

Israeli military raid kills 1 Palestinian, 4 people wounded in separate West Bank shooting attack

Monitoring Desk
JERUSALEM: A raid by Israeli security forces into the northern West Bank set off a gunfight with militants that killed a young Palestinian man on Tuesday, Palestinian health officials said. Elsewhere in the occupied territory, Israeli medics said that an assailant opened fire, wounding at least four people. The Israeli military stormed into the dense Balata refugee camp near the city of Nablus.

Nato begins unprecedented air drill in 'show of strength'

Monitoring Desk
BERLIN: Nato began its largest ever air force deployment exercise in Europe on Monday, in a display of unity toward partners and potential threats such as Russia.

The German-led "Air Defender 23" will include some 250 military aircraft from 25 Nato and partner countries including Japan and Sweden, which is bidding to join the alliance. It will run until June 23.

Up to 10,000 service members are to participate in the drills intended to boost interoperability and preparedness to protect against drones and cruise missiles in the case of an attack within Nato territory. "The significant mes-

sage we're sending is that we can defend ourselves," Lieutenant General Ingo Gerhartz of the German Luftwaffe told public television.

"Air Defender" was conceived in 2018 in part as a response to the Russian annexation of Crimea from Ukraine four years before, though Gerhartz insisted it was "not targeted at anyone".

He said the exercise would not "send any flights, for example, in the direction of Kaliningrad," the Russian enclave bordering alliance member states Poland and Lithuania.

"We are a defensive alliance and that is how this exercise is planned," he said.

Japan's Kishida unveils new child care plan amid election rumours

Monitoring Desk
TOKYO: Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida unveiled on Tuesday a package of wide-ranging measures to reverse a declining birthrate, saying the problem needed to be tackled as an ageing population threatens the world's third-largest economy.

Kishida's flagship policy comes amid speculation that he will dissolve parliament's lower house this week and call a snap election, a move that could heighten calls from within his ruling party for big spending to boost its support among the electorate. "Now is the last chance to reverse the downturn in childbirth by the 2030s," Kishida told a televised press conference.

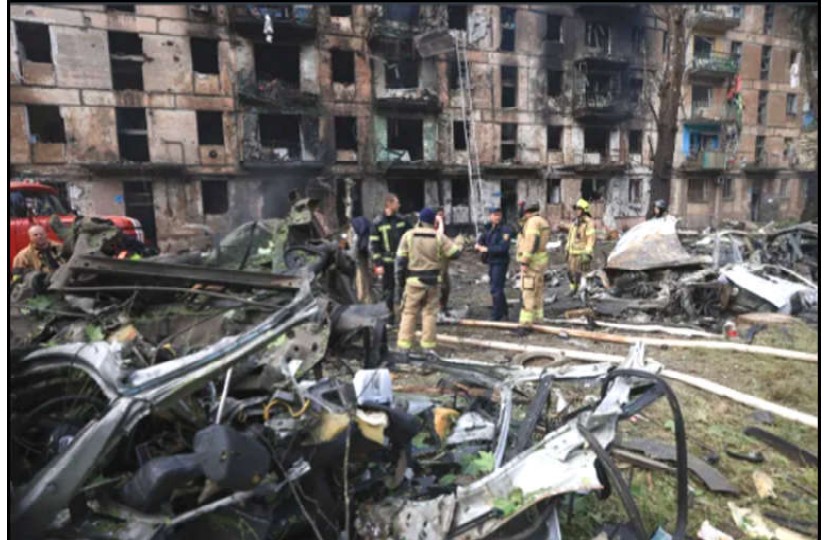
"The low birthrate is a massive problem that concerns our country's society and entire economy and can't be put off," he said. "Without arresting the fast-declining birthrate and populations, Japan's economy and society would shrink, making it dif-

ficult to maintain social security systems."

With measures such as bigger payouts to families with children and providing homes for hundreds of thousands of such households, Kishida said he hoped to double child care spending by the early 2030s, from about 4.7 trillion yen (\$33.7 billion) now. The package may help his party appeal to the public, fanning speculation of an early election.

Although an election for parliament's powerful lower house is not due until late 2025, Kishida, who swept to power in October 2021, is keen to boost his grip over the party ahead of a leadership race next September, analysts say.

Kishida sidestepped queries on plans for a snap election, saying numerous factors would govern the decision as the approaching end of the parliament session could make for a fluid political situation. "I want to be sure that I can assess the situation appropriately," he added.



Emergency workers inspect a damaged multi-storey apartment building caused by the latest rocket Russian attack in Kryvyi Rih, Ukraine.

Special steps afoot to uplift merged tribal areas of KP: PM

Economic issues of the people would be reduced with provision of trade facility in border areas

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Tuesday said that special measures had been included in the fiscal budget 2023-24 for the uplift of merged tribal areas of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

Expressing his resolve to transform Khyber Pakhtunkhwa as cradle of peace, the prime minister regretted that the previous government had altogether neglected the development and progress of the province.

The prime minister expressed these views during a meeting with a delegation of Pakistan Muslim League-N leadership from the province, PM Office Media Wing said in a press

release. During the meeting, the political situation of the country was discussed. They also deliberated over the upcoming general elections in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. During the meeting, Minister for Parliamentary Affairs Murtaza Javaid Abbasi, PM's Adviser Engineer Amir Muqam, Senator Pir Sabir Shah, members of the National Assembly captain (ret'd) Muhammad Safdar, Sajjad Ahmed and former MNAs Shahabuddin, Jamshaid Khan and Aurangzaib Nalotha were present. The prime minister assured that the federal government would ensure that the residents of KP should fully avail of its health and educational projects.



LAHORE: Federal Minister for Planning Development and Special Initiatives Prof. Dr. Ahsan Iqbal unveiling the plaque to inaugurate ceremony of the new building of Institute for Energy and Environment Engineering at Punjab University.

CM approves summary of release of funds for salaries of teachers, staff of four varsities

Independent Report
QUETTA: The Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Abdul Qudus Bizenjo has approved the summary of release of two months' salaries of the teachers and staff of four public sector universities in the province.

According to an official handout issued here on Tuesday, the approval of release of salaries for two months i.e., May and June 2023 has been given on the summary moved by the Department of Education, Colleges and Higher Education, Government of Balochistan.

The Chief Minister approved the release of Rs. 558.091 as a bailout package for the universities including Balochistan University of Information Technology, Engineering and Management Sciences (BUTEMS), Sardar Bahadur Khan Women University (SBKWU), University of Turbat and Lasbela University.

It may be mentioned here that the employees and teachers of the universities including BUTEMS were on protest for last few days against non-payment of the salaries.

Country will not stay if NAB stays: Abbasi

ISLAMABAD (Online): PML-N senior leader Shahid Khaqan Abbasi has said country will not stay if NAB stays adding NAB be abolished.

"Istehkam Pakistan Party (IPP) will make no difference in national politics. If any impact of this party comes on country it will be negative impact, he said this while talking to media men after his appearance in Accountability Court (AC) Tuesday.

Any one can make budget of Pakistan, he said adding first borrow money and then make the budget.

He held people will decide about government performance on election day.

"I have been coming to court since the last four years. Case has not been run so far. Allegation was leveled against me then run the case.

He demanded of the government to abolish NAB. If institution like NAB remains then country will not make progress, he added.

If there is no evidence against me then NAB should apologize, he remarked.



ISLAMABAD: Minister of state for Petroleum, Dr. Musadik Malik addressing a press conference.

Lawmakers appreciate govt's balanced budget

ISLAMABAD (APP): The lawmakers in the National Assembly here on Tuesday expressed their appreciation for the government's presentation of a balanced budget despite prevailing economic challenges. During the general discussion on the Budget for the year 2023-24, Maulana Muhammad Anwar of MMAP acknowledged Pakistan's multifaceted challenges and stressed the importance of unity in accordance with Islamic teachings to effectively overcome them.

Noor Ul Hassan Tanvir commended the government for announcing a balanced budget despite the difficult economic circumstances.

He advocated for justice to be served to Muhammad Nawaz Sharif in the fabricated cases initiated by PTI, while also highlighting the achievements of Sharif's previous

administrations. Mahesh Kumar Malani lauded the salary increase for employees and pensioners, recognizing it as a significant step to address the financial struggles faced by individuals affected by inflation.

He also lauded the government's allocation of additional funds for development projects and the Benazir Income Support Program (BISP).

Maulana Abdul Akbar Chitrali of Muttahida Majlis-e-Amal Pakistan (MMAP) emphasized the need to establish an interest-free economic system in line with the Constitution of Pakistan and Islamic laws.

Chitrali criticized the federal budget for its inclusion of interest-based financial measures, expressing concern over the substantial expenditure on loan interest payments to international institutions.



ISLAMABAD: A delegation of PML-N leadership from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa calls on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif.

Simultaneously holding of general elections in interest of country; Azam

Emphasizes role of ECP in setting election date, underscoring its legal authority; Govt committed to closing its tenure along with NA within the constitutional framework, as bound by law

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Law and Justice Senator Azam Nazeer Tarar on Tuesday said that holding of general elections at the same time was in the interest of the country.

The minister expressed these views while addressing the PILDAT Forum on 'How Prepared is the ECP to hold Free and Fair General Election.'

Senator Azam Nazeer Tarar in his address offered the government's perspective

on the upcoming general election, outlining key elements of the Elections Act 2017.

He emphasized the role of the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) in setting the election date, underscoring its legal authority.

Acknowledging the financial constraints the ECP faced in the past year, Senator Tarar stated, "Our ECP is a strengthened institution."

He said that these con-

straints were no longer the case. He assured the attendees that the government was committed to closing its tenure along with the National Assembly within the constitutional framework, as bound by law.

Senator Azam Nazeer Tarar lauded the ECP's proactive approach to ensuring free and fair elections.

Special Secretary ECP, Zafar Iqbal, provided a comprehensive update on the progress made against

the ECP's third strategic plan (2019-2023). He said that the ECP had achieved 90% of implementation of its Strategic Plan and it was ready to hold free and fair general election in 2023.

He announced that the ECP was fully prepared to hold a free and fair general election, signaling its readiness to fulfill its vital role in the democratic process.

Govt working to revive economy, overcome other challenges: Ahsan Iqbal

LAHORE (APP): Federal Minister for Planning Prof. Ahsan Iqbal on Tuesday

said that Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz government during its previous tenure launched significant uplift projects, eliminated terrorism, overcome power outage, revived economy and achieved other milestones for the progress and prosperity of the country.

Addressing the inaugural ceremony of newly constructed building of the Department of Energy and Environment Engineering, University of the Punjab, he said that it was pleasing to see completion of Energy & Environment Department's project which was ap-

proved during the PML-N's previous tenure.

He said that in 2013 before the PML-N government, the country was facing severe economic challenges, power outage, terrorism, and the international media was labelling Pakistan as most dangerous country in the world but the PML-N after coming into power adopted comprehensive strategies to restore the country's image, eliminate terrorism, overcome load shedding and revive economy of the country.

The Minister said in 2013 had introduced a policy of 3Es - Energy sources and solutions,

elimination of extremism and economic revival to put the country on road to development and progress which was successfully achieved as more than 11,000 megawatt electricity was generated and added to the national grid only in four years, taking out the country from darkness. It was a historic achievement as no government in 65 years could generate and add such electricity capacity in the system, he maintained.

Ahsan Iqbal said that for action against terrorism and extremism, the security forces and law enforcement agencies were provided all resources and support to eliminate terrorism.



QUETTA: Different delegations meeting with Balochistan Governor Malik Abdul Wali Khan Kakar

Naz Baloch calls on PM

ISLAMABAD (APP): Member National Assembly Naz Baloch called on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Tuesday and discussed matters of mutual interest.

Matters relating to current political situation also came under discussion during the meeting, a statement issued by the Prime Minister Office said.

OIC chief lauds Pak active role for joint Islamic action

ISLAMABAD (APP): Secretary-General of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) Hissein Brahimi Taha on Tuesday appreciated the active role of Pakistan in the OIC and in promoting the joint Islamic action. The OIC chief received Pakistan's Permanent Representative to OIC Syed Mohammad Fawad Sher at the headquarters of the General Secretariat.

NEPRA notifies Rs 1.61 per unit increase in power tariff

ISLAMABAD (APP): National Electric Power Regulatory Authority (NEPRA) on Tuesday notified Rs 1.61 per unit increase in power tariff for XWapda power distribution companies (DICOSs) for April under monthly fuel adjustment mechanism.

According to the power regulator notification, Central Power Purchasing Agency (CPPA-G) had sought a Rs2.1 per unit increase in the tariff for the said period.

The NEPRA conducted a public hearing into the matter on May 30.

SC adjourns hearing of journalist Arshad Sharif's murder case till July

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Supreme Court on Tuesday adjourned the hearing of renowned journalist Arshad Sharif's murder case till the first week of July.

A five-member larger bench of the apex court headed by Chief Justice Umar Ata Bandial and comprising Justice Ijaz Ul Ahsan, Justice Sayyid Mazhar Ali Akbar Naqvi, Justice Jamal Khan Mandokhail and Justice

Muhammad Ali Mazhar heard the suo moto notice case.

During the course of proceedings, the Attorney General for Pakistan appeared before the bench and submitted the report of the Special joint investigation team (JIT). The report of the Special JIT was delayed due to certain reasons, he added.

He said that contacts with Interpol were ongoing.

Ongoing budget session to end on June 24 after completing business

ISLAMABAD (APP): The House Business Advisory Committee, chaired by National Assembly Speaker Raja Pervez Ashraf, has proposed to conclude the ongoing budget session on June 24, 2023, after completing its business.

The decision was made during a meeting of the committee, said a news release.

According to the proposed schedule, the general discussion on the budget for the year 2023-24 will continue until June 17. This will be followed by the consideration of recommendations made by the Senate

of Pakistan and the winding up of the general discussion on the budget by the Finance Minister on June 19.

On June 20, discussions on appropriations related to charged expenditures will be held, while Cut Motions will be taken up on June 21-22. The consideration and passage of the Finance Bill, 2023, are proposed for June 23.

Finally, June 24 has been earmarked for the consideration of supplementary demands for grants for the years 2021-2022 and 2023, among other matters.

Senate body recommends rationalizing Super tax, advance tax for non-filer

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Senate Standing Committee on Finance and Revenue Tuesday recommended to reduce super tax besides rationalizing advance tax for non-filer.

The committee met here under the chairmanship of Senator Saleem Mandviwalla discussed and approved several tax proposals under Finance Bill 2023. The body proposed to reduce the super tax to 7 percent from 10 percent on income above Rs 500 million besides charging tax at the rate of 6 percent on income between Rs 400 million to Rs 500 million and 4 percent on income between Rs 300 million to Rs 400 million. Earlier, the FBR official said that the budget proposed super tax at the rate of 10 percent on income above Rs 500 million, 8 percent on income between Rs 400 million to Rs 500 million, and 6 percent on income between Rs 300 million to Rs 400 million.

The committee also suggested to increase the advance tax at the rate of 1 percent from 0.6 percent for non-filer persons on cash withdrawal from banks.

To encourage foreign

remittance, the committee approved exemption of 2 percent tax on purchase of immovable property for a non-resident individual holding Pakistan Origin Card (POC), National Identity Card for Overseas Pakistani (NICOP) and computerized National Identity Card (CNIC) acquiring immovable property through SBP notified FCA and NRVA accounts.

After detailed discussion, the committee also approved the limit of US \$ 100,000 under unexplained income of Assets, it is a remittance from outside Pakistan through normal banking channels. Senator Saadia Abbasi said that it was good for Pakistan that people invested in the country and also proposed that it was an income through proper banking channels so the word 'unexplained income' should be changed.

The body also approved the minimum tax on income of certain persons.

The committee approved the FBR proposal regarding recovery of liability outstanding under other law which includes empowering the commissioner to recover any outstanding liability.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Law and Justice, Senator Azam Nazeer Tarar addressing the Public Forum organized by PILDAT on the Status of Implementation of the ECP's 3rd Strategic Plan.

Two bodies found in Quetta

QUETTA (INP): Bodies of two people including a child were recovered from different areas of the provincial capital on Tuesday, rescue sources said.

According to details, beheaded body of an unidentified person was recovered from Qambrani road area of Kechi Baig. The body was shifted to civil hospital through Chhipa Ambulance.

Body of 12-year-old Abdul Nabi was recovered from Khazai Chowk Manzoor Maidani nullah. The body was shifted to BMC hospital via Edhi ambulance.

The police after registering separate cases in both incidents at respective police stations have started investigations.

PAC directs MoFA to make financial system more transparent

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Public Accounts Committee Tuesday directed the authorities concerned of Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA) to make its internal audit system more effective to ensure better financial management in the foreign missions.

Noor Alam Khan presided over the committee meeting which reviewed the audit objections of 2019-20 of Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Ministry of Planning and Development.

Bus-tractor collision claims 5 lives in Faisalabad

FAISALABAD (Online): At least 5 persons have been killed and 2 have been critically injured in collision between bus and tractor trolley here in the area of Satiانا.

The incident occurred when a passenger bus on its way from Pakpattan to Islamabad collided with a tractor trolley coming from opposite side. 5 persons died and 2 were critically injured. The injured were rushed to Allied hospital in precarious condition. According to police the victims were residents of Okara.

Hina, EU commissioners discuss matters of bilateral relations

ISLAMABAD (APP): As part of her ongoing visit to Belgium, Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Hina Rabbani on Tuesday held extensive meetings with two European Union (EU) Commissioners in Brussels.

The Minister of State called on the European Commissioner for Crisis Management Janez Lenarcic to follow up on discussions pertaining to the EU's flood relief activities in Pakistan.

During the interaction, the Minister of State thanked the EU for activating the European Civil Protection Mechanism support floods which enabled immediate assistance from the EU during the rehabilitation phase.

The two sides agreed to explore further avenues for collaboration in disaster management and capacity building, said a statement received here.

In her meeting with the European Commissioner for Home Affairs Ylva Johansson, the Minister of State discussed optimal utilization of the recently launched Migration and Mobility Dialogue including opportunities for legal migration of skilled labor. It was agreed to strengthen cooperation in the implementation of the Pakistan-EU Readmission Agreement.

In her interactions at the EU Commission, the Minister of State expressed the hope that the EU would take a leadership role in dealing with emerging global challenges and non-traditional security threats including climate change, pandemics, water, energy, and food security.

Gillani calls for unity, economic reforms amidst challenges

ISLAMABAD (APP): Former Prime Minister, Senator, Syed Yousof Raza Gillani on Tuesday urged both the treasury and opposition benches to unite during difficult times in order to tackle the prevailing economic crisis faced by the country. During his speech on the budget for the fiscal year 2023-24 in Senate, he emphasized the crucial need for a "Charter of Economy," underscoring its significance in the current hour of trials and tribulations.

He highlighted the adverse financial conditions inherited by the coalition government of the Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM) due to the poor economic policies of the previous administration.

Senator Gillani pointed out that, in an attempt to gain public sympathy, the leadership of the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) violated the terms and conditions set by the International Monetary Fund before facing a "no trust motion." However, despite the declining political popularity of the PDM, they approached the situation with a positive and non-partisan attitude, prioritizing the national interest and striving to steer the country out of the economic crisis.



QUETTA: Provincial Minister for Communication & Works Sardar Abdul Rehman Khetran presiding over a meeting regarding performance of C&W Department