

Independent

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Balochistan Assembly approves budget of Rs. 724 billion for next financial year

Independent Report
QUETTA: The Balochistan Assembly approved the budget for next financial year having total outlay of over Rs. 724 billion in its session here on Monday. The Provincial Minister for Finance, Engineer Zamrak Khan Achakzai tabled the budget while the Speaker, Mir Jan Muhammad Jamali was in the chair.
 Winding the debate on budget, the Minister Finance said that it is an honour for him to present a balanced budget for the upcoming fiscal year.
 He said that we can implement the budget within one and half month,

if the due amount is received from the federation. He also said that we can also leave good budget for the next government even. Mr. Achakzai mentioned that we have urged the federation to help us in the budget. Referring the dues against PPL, the Finance Minister recalled that it (PPL) had assured us to pay the arrears within three days, however, the same are yet to be received.
 Earlier, no motion was presented by the opposition in the session about deduction in the budget. Speaking in the house, the leader of Opposition Malik Sikandar Khan Advocate said that the economic condition of the country is not better. He said that the country is being blackmailed through IMF. He also said that the federal government is not extending financial assistance to the province, and in these circumstances, an appropriate budget was presented.
 However, he regretfully pointed out that our recommendations have not been included in the budget. We have already been giving advises about bringing good governance in the province, he maintained.
 Later, the budget session was adjourned till Tuesday morning.



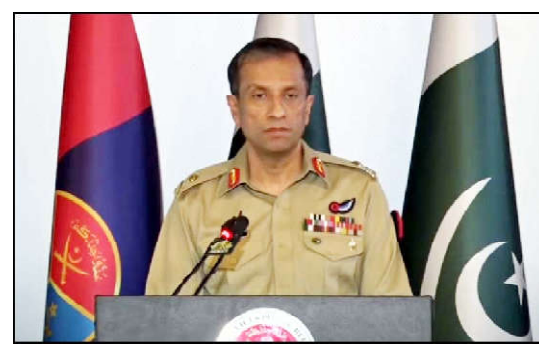
KARACHI: Federal Minister for Planning, Development & Reform, Ahsan Iqbal in a Group Photograph during his visit to Karachi Shipyard.

Lt. Gen. among others sacked from service after May 9 probe: ISPR DG

Army spokesperson says strict disciplinary action has been taken against 15 officers, including three major generals and seven brigadiers; Relatives of retired generals are also facing accountability; False propaganda was conducted for nefarious political purposes and lust for power; The extremist elements of May 9 did what an enemy could not do. There would be no reprieve or leniency for the facilitators and perpetrators of the May 9 mayhem on account of fake human rights narrative

RAWALPINDI (APP): Director General of Inter Services Public Relations (DG ISPR) Major General Ahmed Sharif Chaudhry on Monday said there would be no reprieve or leniency for the facilitators and perpetrators of the May 9 mayhem on account of fake human rights narrative.
 A thorough probe had clearly indicated that May 9 riots and arson were a pre-planned and orchestrated conspiracy against the armed forces, he said, adding there was no substance in the concocted narrative of any human rights abuses.
 Addressing a news briefing at the ISPR Directorate, Major General Ahmed Sharif informed the media about the actions and investigations with regard to the violent incidents against military installations on the Dark Day of May 9.
 He said the May 9 was the darkest chapter in the 76-year history of Pakistan, and in its aftermath, the process of self-accountability within the Army was carried out without any discrimination.
 "Two comprehensive institutional inquiries were conducted into the incidents of violence at various garrisons on May 9. The inquiries were presided over by officers of the rank of Major General," he added.
 He said a disciplinary action had been initiated against the officials con-

cerned who failed to maintain the security and sanctity of the garrisons and the Jinnah House.
 "There is no distinction of rank or social status in the accountability process of the Army. The bigger the post, the bigger the responsibility."
 The DG ISPR said the investigations clearly estab-



and first an atmosphere of uncertainty was created and then the public unrest was made.
 However, the probe is underway and further proofs are being collected," he added.
 The Pakistan Army, relatives of the martyrs and veterans were perturbed and saddened over the May 9 tragic incidents, he said, adding, "The relatives of the martyrs are questioning whether their loved ones sacrificed their lives for the nation so that their symbols are desecrated? Will the evil elements continue disrespecting the sacrifices of martyrs and Ghazis to achieve their political goals? When will the planners of May 9 tragedy be brought to justice?"



QUETTA: Provincial Finance Minister Zamrak Khan Achakzai presenting budget proposal for FY 2023-24 in Balochistan Assembly

We have no stick for implementation of court's orders: CJP

Several people have stick. But what moral justification they have
ISLAMABAD (Online): The 7-member bench of Supreme Court (SC) hearing petitions against trial of civilians in military court once again stands dissolved due to objection raised by federal government against Justice Mansoor Ali Shah, member of bench.
 The 7-member bench headed by Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) Umar Ata Bandial took up the case for hearing Monday.
 At the inception of hearing Attorney General (AG) on behalf of federal government requested Justice Mansoor Ali Shah to recuse himself from bench.
 AG came on rostrum and informed about federal government directives regarding bench.

PM directs immediate rainwater draining measures

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Monday directed the provincial and district authorities to immediately take rainwater drainage measures in Lahore.
 Taking notice of the problems faced by the dwellers of Lahore, the prime minister also directed the relevant authorities to remain alert in the situation arising out of the current rainy spell, the PM Office Media Wing said in a press release.
 No leniency should be shown in addressing the public issues and grievances, it was further added.
 The authorities were tasked to continuously monitor the situation with prompt measures in place.
 The prime minister further stressed that considering the situation, alternate routes should be timely identified for smooth vehicular traffic.



QUETTA: Chairman Ansar Burney Trust and Governor Balochistan Malik Abdul Wali Khan Kakar

Ahsan Iqbal says Govt placed promotion of blue economy in its growth agenda

Call for concerted efforts to achieve sustainable economic growth
KARACHI (APP): Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives, Ahsan Iqbal, on Monday said that the blue economy possesses enormous potential for sustainable financial stability and development of Pakistan and the incumbent government has placed it in its futuristic agenda of national growth.
 The minister talking to media persons during the visit of the Pakistan Maritime Security Agency (PMSA) here said that more than one thousand kilometres long coastal line and over 2 million kilometres of vast exclusive economic zone offer unfathomable opportunities to the country.
 Pakistan being an agricultural country had relied on the green economy at the time while the volume of its blue economy was greater than the green one, he observed and noted that integration of both economies could boost the pace of the journey of development to a greater extent.
 The federal minister said that PML-N led government has expedited important projects under China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) that were integrated with the global Belt and Road initiative and open new vistas of growth and prosperity of the country.
 He said that under the sustainable development approach, it was our responsibility to secure and efficiently monitor the country's coastal line and maritime frontiers.
 The minister while lauding the services of PMSA for the protection of the borders of Pakistan said that the agency was equipped with state-of-the-art equipment and fleet and was vigilantly securing the maritime frontiers of Pakistan.
 Additionally, PMSA has also earned a good name for the country across the globe due to its rescue and relief operations in the deep sea, he added.

Acting President approves Finance Bill 2023-24

ISLAMABAD (Online): After the assent of the Acting President, the Finance Bill has become a formal law.
Acting President Sadiq Sanjrani has approved Finance Bill 2023 and 2024.
 It is pertinent to mention that Finance Bill was approved by National Assembly (NA) yesterday.

Marriyum says: Title of 'CPEC Hero' for Ahsan, a slap on face of malicious characters

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Information and Broadcasting Marriyum Aurangzeb on Monday felicitated Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Ahsan Iqbal who was given a title of the Hero of China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) by the Chinese government the other day.
 The minister, in a tweet, said ironically, a person whose honesty, dedication, and hard work were acknowledged by a country as esteemed as China, was unjustly thrown into jail during the previous regime's campaign of political victimization. She said the title of CPEC hero for Ahsan Iqbal also reflected the effective foreign policy of Pakistan which faced isolation during the four years rule of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI).
 Marriyum said Pakistan's relations, dignity, and stature had been restored at the international stage during the one year of the incumbent government led by Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif.

Governor desires Ansar Burney Trust may expand activities in remote areas of Balochistan

Independent Report
QUETTA: The Governor Balochistan, Malik Abdul Wali Khan Kakar has expressed his desire that the welfare institutions like Ansar Burney Trust may expand all their activities in remote areas of the province. The Governor was speaking to the Chairman Ansar Burney Trust (ABT), Ansar Burney and its vice Chairman, Shaheen Burney who called on him here at the Governor's House on Monday.
 He appreciated the important role being played by ABT for coping with the emergent situation, preventing kids smuggling, providing legal aid to the prisoners and providing relief to the affected people during the natural calamities.
 The Governor stressed that we have to provide true guidance to the new generation for boosting volunteer spirit, restoration of the human dignity and formation of healthy society.



QUETTA: Provincial Minister Syed Ehsan Shah, Senator Manzoor Ahmed Kakar and MPA Noor Muhammad Dummer meeting with Principal Secretary to Chief Minister Imran Gichki

No compromise can be made on state's matters: Langove

Independent Report
QUETTA: The Provincial Minister for Home and Tribal Affairs, Mir Ziaullah Langove has stated that the issue of Haq Do Tehreek leader, Maulana Hidayatur Rehman Baloch is related to the state, and no compromise can be made on the state's matters.
 He reiterated the government's resolve not to spare those challenging the writ of government at all.
 In an official statement issued here on Monday, the Minister Home said that CPEC is the game changer project and Gwadar is future of Pakistan. He charged that Maulana Hidayatur Rehman is playing with sentiments of people of Gwadar.
 He claimed that Maulana Hidayatur Rehman has nothing to do with Gwadar and its people. He said that what he thought that Maulana Hidayat's target is to become MPA.



QUETTA: In light of ruling of Speaker Balochistan Assembly, QESCO Chief briefed MPAs regarding load shedding

Preparedness for upcoming Monsoon rains: Govt. taking steps on war footing grounds, says CS

Independent Report
QUETTA: The Chief Secretary Balochistan, Abdul Aziz Uqali has stated that the provincial government is taking steps on war footing grounds in connection with the Monsoon rains in the province so as to prevent the damages in case of heavy rains.
 The Chief Secretary was speaking at the review meeting regarding preparations of the Monsoon rains means and preventive measures here on Monday.
 The senior Member Board of Revenue, Roshan Ali Sheikh, Secretary Public Health Engineering, Saleh Muhammad Baloch, Secretary Agriculture, Umeed Ali Khokhar, Secretary Livestock, Arshad Hussain Bugti, Secretary Finance, Zahid Saleem, Director General Provincial Disaster

13 killed in rain related incidents

LAHORE (APP): Provincial Disaster Management Authority (PDMA) Director General Imran Qureshi has said that at least 13 people died with 17 severely and 6 minor injuries in 15 lightning strikes and roof collapse incidents due to heavy rains across the province during the last 24 hours.
 He said the PDMA has received reports of damages and casualties from all districts of the province, said a handout issued here.
 The injured have been provided with the best medical treatment while monitoring of the situation is continuing from the provincial control room, he said and added that machinery and staff have been put on high alert for handling emergencies as the PDMA is in constant contact with the province-wide administration.



QUETTA: Chief Secretary Balochistan Abdul Aziz Uqali presiding over a high level meeting regarding preparation for pre monsoon rains in the province

Daily Voice of Masses Independent

Revised budget

Budget 2023-24 that was passed by parliament yesterday after the introduction of large fiscal-tightening measures to sweeten it for the IMF might resuscitate the bailout deal with the Fund, stalled since last November.

As Finance Minister Ishaq Dar said in his closing budget speech, the IMF's concerns regarding the original budgeted deficit of 6.5pc of GDP have been largely addressed through the imposition of additional taxes of Rs215bn and spending cuts of Rs85bn.

In its comments on the original budget unveiled in May, the IMF had said that it "misses the opportunity to broaden the tax base in a more progressive way". The lender had also objected to certain other budgetary measures like the 'no-questions-asked scheme' to attract new dollar inflows from Pakistanis abroad. Unfortunately, the details of the new fiscal adjustments show that the government has wasted yet another opportunity to broaden the tax base despite meeting the IMF condition.

It has imposed a total of Rs438bn — taxes of Rs223bn were introduced in the original draft — and there is no major effort to bring undertaxed sectors, such as retail, agriculture and real estate, into the net. No reform of the SOEs has been planned either.

Although the government has increased the withholding tax on property transactions in the hope of netting Rs35bn, the measure is unlikely to produce the targeted revenue without drastic documentation of the sector. Much of the burden of the additional taxes will be borne by the organised corporate sector and salaried classes.

Mr Dar's speech indicated that agreement on the new adjustments had been reached between the two sides after three days of hard negotiations. That means that one of the three concerns of the lender has been met before it restarts the funding.

How much progress has been made on the other two demands regarding the removal of controls on the exchange rate to keep the rupee from going into free fall, and the gap between the two sides on the IMF's external financing gap estimates for the outgoing fiscal year?

The government has already moved towards restoring the proper functioning of its foreign exchange market, and it is anticipated that the Fund will relax its condition on external financing gap projections.

Since the 'thaw' in ties between the lender and Islamabad has come only after Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif's repeated interactions with IMF managing director Kristalina Georgieva, including their recent Paris meeting, both sides seem to be softening their positions. Though just a few days are left before the rescue facility expires on June 30, there is still enough time to seal the deal. This is crucial if Pakistan is to avoid the looming sovereign default; without the deal, the country could exhaust its forex reserves in the next few months.

It's all geopolitics



Huma Yusuf

Kicking off his US visit with a yoga session on the north lawn of the United Nations, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi assumed the positions of a cobra, crocodile, and frog. Pakistanis watching the visit unfold last week probably hurled more animal slurs his way. But the visit should leave Pakistan introspective.

My compatriots have been incensed at the US-India joint statement calling on Pakistan to do more to counter terrorism, and inviting further FATF scrutiny of our efforts to counter terrorism financing. Similar statements with similar phrasing have been issued by four US administrations to smooth the course of the US-India bilateral relationship. It is the least of our worries.

Much has already been written to explain why Modi — once banned from entering the US due to his involvement in the anti-Muslim pogrom in Gujarat — is now feted as America's great friend. The answer is always geopolitics: India, with its burgeoning population and robust economy, is in America's eyes the only convincing counterpoint to China in Asia; there is no managing Beijing without befriending New Delhi.

And then there's the Russia angle. With growing urgency to resolve the Ukraine conflict and weaken Russia sufficiently to prevent future such transgressions, Washington needs New Delhi to take a more critical stance vis-à-vis Moscow, historic defence ties notwithstanding.

When Great Games

are underway, everyone starts to bend the rules. In the US case, that means choosing to largely ignore India's horrific human rights record with regard to Kashmir and the Indian Muslim population, and the rapid erosion of India's democratic culture in the form of press censorship and clampdowns on the political opposition.

So where does this leave Pakistan? We could cry foul at being told (yet again) to clamp down on home-grown militancy. But this is not a way to make friends and influence people (least of all China and Saudi Arabia, long-term allies who discreetly signalled to Pakistan in recent years that the strategy of maintaining state-sponsored 'assets' is no longer welcome).

Here's another option: we could initiate a serious rethink of our foreign policy. The major challenge for Islamabad arising out of Modi's visit is the question of how to balance its ties with Washington and Beijing. We need to maintain our links with both these superpowers: we need the loan rollovers from Beijing, the IMF bailouts from the US. We need China's infrastructure investments, and American IT innovations. We do not want to have to choose.

Arguably, the visit we should have obsessed over last week was that of US Secretary of State Antony Blinken to China. The trip aimed to ease tensions between the superpowers after the US shot down a Chinese spy plane in February. Some progress was made to stabilise ties and improve communication, but relations soured again when US President Joe Biden referred to China's president as a "dictator".

Could Pakistan add value to both its allies by playing a productive mediator? Unlikely given

our current political meltdown, but these are questions we should be asking.

Another 21st-century reality highlighted by Modi's visit is that unless you have something to offer the world, the world doesn't care what happens to you. Our long-term strategy of negotiating under pressure has run its course. Rather than agonise over the impressive defence deals that New Delhi has struck with Washington, let's consider what else makes India an attractive partner for the US.

Geopolitical might aside, Modi arrived in Washington with semiconductor assembly and other manufacturing capacity, critical minerals, climate finance opportunities and an ambitious space programme.

For supporting the diversification of supply chains away from China and facilitating the global green transition, India is receiving the kind of inward investment that many will covet: not just hundreds of millions dollars into manufacturing facilities, but also an agreement to train 60,000 Indian engineers to boost India's capacity to develop semiconductors. Pakistan will be lost if it doesn't marry economic policy (our vague premise of doing better on agriculture and IT) with foreign policy and geopolitical realities. Ultimately, it will have to reappraise the cost of premising its foreign policy on enmity with India. Areas for co-operation — food and water security, climate adaptation and mitigation, supply chain integration, access to technology, and even regional stability — are proliferating and need to be explored (perhaps with Washington too?). Without a more agile approach, Pakistan will only hasten its isolation. — Courtesy Dawn

Token legislation?



Haris Zaki

Today marks the 26th International Day in Support of Victims of Torture, commemorating the adoption of the UN Convention Against Torture in 1987 and the absolute prohibition on torture in any and all circumstances. Each year, this day provides a platform for stakeholders to come together in universal condemnation of the reprehensibility of torture, and to rally support for the victims and survivors.

Pakistan's relationship with the phenomenon of torture has always been an uneasy one. Despite repeated condemnation by the state and accession to various international human rights instruments, torture is an institutionalised practice that permeates nearly every facet of our criminal justice system. Impunity breeds violence, and in the absence of clear-cut accountability mechanisms, those in power were free to exercise this violence to coerce, intimidate and extract unlawful confessions from the public.

When the president put his assent to the Torture and Custodial Death (Prevention and Punishment) Act, 2022, in November last year, it seemed as though years of effort were finally yielding some progress; the past decade had seen the introduction and subsequent failure of five separate bills criminalising torture. As such, the passage of this law (introduced by the previous government's interior ministry and taken up by the incumbent one) was nothing short of momentous. It may have

been out of a sense of duty to the public, or perhaps to protect themselves from the victimisation they inevitably face depending on which way the ballot goes, or even a step towards compliance with international obligations. Regardless of their motivations, our lawmakers have succeeded in bringing to life a procedural framework within which torture by public officials is defined, criminalised and penalised.

Since then, however, there has been no documented use of this law, despite the rampant prevalence of the term 'custodial torture' in today's public discourse. Seven months on, it seems the general public, particularly those who most regularly find themselves in the police's cross hairs, are largely unaware of this Act and the protections it offers. The true success of any law lies not in whether it receives the approval of our legislature, or how many brownie points it gets in the UN Treaty Body reporting phase. Without passing rules that detail responsibilities, powers and procedures, similar to those notified under the Anti-Rape (Investigation and Trial Act), 2021, the Act criminalising torture will remain a token piece of legislation introduced as a cosmetic measure in advance of Pakistan's GSP-Plus reapplication.

On this International Day in Support of Victims of Torture, perhaps more than simply bringing attention to the prevalence of torture in the country (which is no great secret), the priority should be ensuring every Pakistani who has or may unlawfully suffer at the hands of public officials knows how to hold them to account.

Under the Torture and Custodial Death (Prevention and Punishment) Act, 2022, the Federal Investigation Agency

(FIA) and the National Commission for Human Rights are granted investigative authority. As an independent institution mandated to protect and promote human rights across the country, it is imperative that the NCHR be sufficiently empowered, and that its resource constraints and bureaucratic encumbrances be addressed immediately. Given that they have the power to initiate inquiries and investigations into human rights abuses upon receiving a complaint, they remain the best avenue for ensuring culpability and justice.

However, there are also other channels available to victims that remain woefully underutilised. The judicial magistr-a-te presiding over the arrest of an individual may, of their own volition or acting upon a complaint, direct the FIA to launch an investigation into alleged torture in custody. The FIA (similarly plagued by resource constraints and capacity issues) may be directly approached as well, as can the Ministry of Human Rights and the National Commission on the Status of Women. Furthermore, in Punjab, the 'Meri Awaz' app can be used by women subjected to torture.

In the absence of concrete results in the form of successful prosecutions of perpetrators through impartial investigations, accountability and compensation for victims and a reduction in police excess, the Act will never be more than a piece of paper. Our government must fulfil its duty to train and capacitate the relevant actors, allocate resources, spread awareness amongst the Pakistani people and notify a procedural framework, should it truly wish to demonstrate its commitment to eradicating the blight of torture. — Courtesy Dawn

Commerce News

CDNS to launch four Shariah compliant product from July 1st

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Finance and Revenue Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar on Monday reiterated firm resolve of the government to implement Shariah Compliant financial system to promote and encourage interest-free Islamic banking and finance in the country.

Addressing the launching ceremony of the Shariah Compliant products by the Central Directorate of National Saving (CDNS), the minister said the directorate has designed and introduced Shariah-compliant investment and saving scheme which would be formally launched by July 1, 2023.

Tasneem Qureshi says: Promotion of agro based industry vital

SARGODHA (APP): State Minister for Production and Industries Tasneem Ahmed Qureshi Monday stressed the need for promotion of the agro-based industry.

He said agro-industry contributes to GDP, earns foreign exchange through exports, promotes rural development, ensures food security, and adds value to agricultural products.

Talking to APP, he said a strong and vibrant

In a first, the minister said the CDNS has launched four investment and saving products based on one-year, three-year and five-year terms, besides initiating saving account facility, adding that it is a flexible scheme with monthly profit and to withdraw principle amount that would encourage savings and ensure full returns.

Ishaq Dar informed that soon after assuming the charge as finance minister, he had directed the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) and National Bank of Pakistan (NBP) to withdraw their petitions against the decision of the Federal Shariah Court in which the Court

had ordered to implement interest-free banking and financing system in the country.

Meanwhile, a high power steering committee headed by the Governor SBP was formed to find ways and means to promote Shariah-compliant financial system in the country. The committee was comprised of other prominent scholars and experts from the banking and finance sectors.

He said during the last tenure of the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz government, a committee was also constituted, which had taken several steps and produced positive results as due to these efforts.

Gold prices up by Rs 800

ISLAMABAD (APP): The per tola price of 24 karat gold increased by Rs 800 and was sold at Rs 215,300 on Monday against its sale at Rs.214,500 the previous day. The price of 10 grams of 24 karat gold also increased by Rs .685 to Rs 184,585 from Rs 186,043 whereas the price of 10 grams 22 karat gold went up to Rs 169,203 from Rs 168,574. All Sindh Sarafa Jewellers Association reported. The price of per tola silver increased by Rs.50 to Rs2,550 whereas that of ten gram went up by Rs.42.87 to Rs.2,186.21.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar addresses the launching ceremony of Sarwa Islamic Savings Products by National Savings at Finance Division.

Naeem stresses to enhance Pak-Africa economic integration

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan's High Commissioner for the African country Rwanda Naeem Khan on Monday said that the African region is very important for enhancing economic integration with Pakistan.

Africa is the largest consumer market in the world due to the lack of large-scale industry and production at the local level, he said.

Pakistan's High Commissioner for the African country Rwanda Naeem Khan expressed these views during his visit to Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry, said a press release issued here.

He said there are im-

mense opportunities for Pakistan's business community in this region.

Naeem Khan said that the way Islamabad Chamber has made efforts for trade relations with other African countries including Ethiopia for some time is commendable.

"I hope that as the Head of Mission to Rwanda and other countries, I will continue to receive the full support of the Islamabad Chamber and the business community."

He said that the diplomatic and political importance of Africa for Pakistan is its place but the most importance is trade.

In the policy given to us by the government, trade

has priority, he said.

"I invite the business community of the whole country, including Islamabad, to set up their display center in the Pakistani Embassy in Rwanda, we will provide full facilities, Rwanda is an excellent tourist destination, the business community should also pay attention to it."

He said that the African region is of great importance at the political and diplomatic level in the whole world.

"Africa is well represented in all international forums including the United Nations, OIC. We need to take advantage of it."

PEW says: Govt's new tax measures to intensify miseries of poverty-stricken masses

ISLAMABAD (INP): Senior Vice President of Pakistan Economy Watch (PEW) Dr. Hanif Mughal has said that newly introduced tax measures of the government will further intensify the hardships of the poverty-stricken masses who are in the grip of the unprecedented inflation and unemployment in the recent years.

In a statement issued here on Monday, he said that various changes have been made by the government in budget of the including fiscal tightening measures in a last-ditch effort to secure critical funding, but it will also hit the masses badly, he said.

Dr. Hanif Mughal said that the government now aims to generate another Rs215 billion in taxes and cut spending by Rs85 billion without reducing the federal development budget or the salaries and pensions of government employees, which will be difficult.

The IMF orders will revise the revenue collection target to Rs9,415 trillion; put total spending at Rs14.48 trillion and the share of provinces would be increased to Rs5.39 trillion from Rs5.28 trillion, he added.

The business leader said that the government will collect Rs70 billion from fertiliser duty, Rs45 billion from hike in tax on buying, selling property, and Rs30 billion from increased tax on people earning above Rs200,000 per month.

SMEDA to sign MoUs with six public sector organisations

LAHORE (APP): The Small and Medium Enterprises Development Authority (SMEDA) is going to sign six memorandums of understanding (MoUs) with six public sector organisations to celebrate June 27 (Tuesday) as the World SME Day.

The signing ceremony would be attended by Makhdoom Syed Murtaza Mehmood, Federal Minister Industries and Production as chief guest.

The organisations joining the signing ceremony of MoUs included Punjab Small Industries Corporation (PSIC), Federal Tax Ombudsman (FTO), Punjab Information Technology Board (PITB), Messalaha International Center for Arbitration and Dispute Resolution (MICADR), Urban Unit Government of the Punjab and Gov-

ernment of Gilgit Baltistan.

Talking to media here Monday, CEO SMEDA Farhan Aziz Khawaja highlighted the significance of World SME Day, and said that the United Nations General Assembly, in order to recognize and streamline the importance of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) in any economy had declared 27 June as world MSME Day and the first MSME day was celebrated on 27th June 2017.

The objective of celebrating this day was to provide a platform for MSME owners to tell their stories of entrepreneurship and its challenges, while governments, international organizations and business support organizations show their commitment to supporting their development, he explained.



HYDERABAD: Vendors selling sacrificial animals at Animal Market Hathri Bypass in connection with upcoming Eid ul Azha.



PESHAWAR: Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Haji Ghulam Ali addressing 1st Convocation of University of Technology Nowshera at chief guest

Kundi for ensuring all possible facilities at BISP payment centers

DERA ISMAIL KHAN (APP): Minister of State for Poverty Alleviation and Social Safety Faisal Karim Kundi on Monday directed for ensuring the provision of all possible facilities to the beneficiaries at payment centers of Benazir Income Support Program (BISP).

He issued these directions during his visit to different payment centers of BISP in Dera Ismail Khan. On this occasion, the state minister was accompanied by Pakistan People's Party (PPP) District President Malik Farhan Afzal Dhap,

Tehsil General Secretary Malik Khizer Hayat, Tehsil Information Secretary Haji Sooba Khan and others.

He listened to the issues and difficulties being faced by the beneficiary women at these payment centers and directed the on-duty staff to take steps for immediate resolution of the problems being faced by the deserving people.

He warned that no negligence would be tolerated in ensuring smooth payments to the beneficiary women.

The state minister

said that on the special instructions of PPP Chairman and Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari, this time the aid amount has been increased from Rs 8,500 to Rs 9,000.

Similarly, he said, educational scholarships worth Rs 17 billion were being given under the Waseela-e-Taleem programme.

The stipend amount for the children of deserving women has also been increased. The female student would be given Rs 2,500 and the male student would be provided Rs 2,000 stipend amount.

Ahmed Hassan says: PML-N to come up to people's expectations

LAHORE (APP): Prime Minister's Coordinator Khawaja Ahmed Hassan said on Monday the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) government was determined to steering the country out of prevailing crises and it would come up to people's expectations.

He was addressing a meeting, called to review the ongoing development work in the city and arrangements in connection with the Eidul Azha at the Aiwan Iqbal Complex. With sincere efforts of the government, the country would get out of the prevailing crises soon, he said adding that the leadership would mitigate the effects of the damage, caused to the economy by politics of

vandalism, and it would be compensated by working hard.

Former MNA Mehar Ishtiaq, MPA Ch Shehbaz, Rabia Farooqi, Ramzan Siddique Bhatti, Syed Tauseef Shah, MD LWMC Babar Sahibuddin, DG PHA Naeem Watto, DMD WASA Abdul Karim, representatives of Walled City of Lahore Authority, Punjab Police and others were present.

Khawaja Ahmed Hassan said that despite difficult circumstances, the government was providing resources worth billions of rupees to improve the quality of life to people whereas comprehensive reforms were being introduced for rapid development of the province.

KP registers 40 dengue cases in one week

PESHAWAR (APP): The provincial health department, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa on Monday called for more pragmatic measures to control the spread of dengue fever in the province as at least 40 cases were reported within a week from across the province. A comparative report of dengue fever cases issued here by the department revealed that 13 cases were reported from Mardan, 11 Peshawar, five Bajaur, three Chitral, two each from DI Khan and Swabi and one each from Bannu, Lakki Marwat, Khyber and Kohat districts. It said that the health department in collaboration with the district administrations and other line departments kept the dengue cases under control this year as compare to the last year.

CM Punjab puts line departments on alert

Independent Report
LAHORE: Caretaker Chief Minister Punjab Mohsin Naqvi has directed all line departments including the provincial administration, Punjab Disaster Management Authority, Rescue 1122, and Water and Sanitation Agency to maintain a state of high alertness, operating round-the-clock, in response to heavy rainfall in Lahore and other cities. The chief minister directed the officers concerned to remain present in the field, ensuring prompt drainage of stagnant water. He emphasised the need for expeditious water drainage, without any compromise, utilising available machinery to implement the

planned drainage strategy within the designated timeframe. He sternly emphasised that no negligence would be tolerated in carrying out the vital task of water drainage.

Addressing the issue of traffic management, the CM emphasized the need for special arrangements to facilitate the smooth flow of vehicles, with active efforts required to resolve public grievances.

He urged administrative officers and WASA staff to oversee and complete the water drainage operations, while emphasizing the initiation of immediate emergency measures in the event of any unfortunate incident.

GB unveils over Rs116 bln budget for fiscal year 2023-24

GILGIT (APP): The Gilgit Baltistan government on Monday announced an Rs116 billion 15 crore budget for the next fiscal year 2023-24 in the Assembly held here on Monday.

Gilgit Baltistan Finance Minister Javed Ali Manwa presented the budget in the House.

In the budget of the new financial year, 74 billion rupees have been allocated for non-developmental expenditure, while 28 billion 45 crore rupees have been allocated for development expenditure. 13 billion 70 crore rupees have been proposed for subsidy on

wheat. The finance minister announced a 35 per cent increase in the salaries of government employees up to 16 and 30 per cent in the salaries of employees from grades 17 to 22.

He further said that more than one billion 37 crore rupees have been allocated for the improvement of the health sector.

He said that more than 1 billion 57 crore rupees have been allocated for education, 45 crore rupees for agriculture, animal husbandry and fisheries, and 4 billion 17 crore rupees have been proposed for the power sector.

To control drug abuse Governor underlines need to evolve comprehensive mechanism in universities

Independent Report
LAHORE: Governor Punjab/Chancellor Muhammad Balighur Rehman chaired a meeting of Consortium on Drug and Narcotics Control today at Governor House Lahore. In the meeting, suggestions and recommendations regarding the prevention of drug abuse in universities were discussed.

Speaking on the occasion, Punjab Governor Muhammad Balighur Rehman underlined the need to evolve a comprehensive mechanism in universities to control drug abuse at the campuses of the universities. He said that the 2021

policy of the Higher Education Commission is an effective and comprehensive policy in this regard. Governor Punjab urged all the vice chancellors to ensure the implementation of this policy.

He said that there is a need to train the faculty in this regard as well. Governor Punjab emphasized that regular awareness campaigns should be conducted to make students aware of the ill effects of drugs. He added that there should be counseling facility for students in the campuses in this regard.

On this occasion, the members of the Consortium briefed the Governor

Punjab in detail about the various recommendations. Convener/Pro-Vice-Chancellor Bahauddin Zakaria University, Dr. Muhammad Ali, Vice-Chancellor Faisalabad Medical University Prof. Dr. Zafar Ali Chaudhry, Vice-Chancellor Nishtar Medical University Multan Prof. Dr. Rana Altaf Ahmed, Vice-Chancellor GC University Lahore Prof. Dr. Asghar Ali Zaidi, Vice-Chancellor University of Health Sciences Lahore Professor Ahsan Waheed Rathore, Vice-Chancellor Women University Multan Professor Dr. Director ANF Raja Tariq Mehmood participated in the meeting.

3 siblings died in a tragic traffic accident in Lahore

LAHORE (Online): 3 siblings died due to traffic accident in provincial capital Lahore.

According to rescue authorities, a tragic traffic accident took place on Soi Asal Road near Kahana where two speeding motorcycles have been collided with a tractor trolley parked on the side of the road.

Authorities have said that as a result of the accident, three siblings died while the mother and two sons were injured.

Minister vows to arrest miscreants behind attacks on Sikh youth

PESHAWAR (APP): Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Minister of Information Barrister Feroze Jamal Shah Kakakhel on Monday said the law enforcing agencies and police were actively pursuing the two attacks on Sikh youth in the provincial capital and assured that soon the miscreants would be brought to justice.

The Minister arrived here at Gurdwara Bhai Joga Singh, Mohalla Jogan Shah and consoled with the bereaved family of 32-year old

Manmohan Singh a Sikh shopkeeper who was shot dead in Rashidgarhi Bazaar here on Saturday. The Minister conveyed his heartfelt sorrow and grief to later Manmohan Singh's father and brother and assured that soon the culprit would be arrested and given exemplary punishment. He said that no one would be allowed to disturb the peace and atmosphere of brotherhood in the province and reiterated the resolve of the KP government to ensure protection of lives.



LAHORE: Governor Punjab/Chancellor Muhammad Balighur Rehman chairing a meeting of Consortium on Drug and Narcotics Control at Governor House

International News

Russian PM urges citizens to rally behind Putin after aborted mutiny

Monitoring Desk
MOSCOW: Russian Prime Minister Mikhail Mishustin said on Monday that the country had faced "a challenge to its stability" and must remain united behind President Vladimir Putin following Saturday's abortive mutiny by heavily armed mercenary fighters.

Under a deal late on Saturday that defused the crisis and averted possible bloodshed, the Kremlin said the Wagner Group mercenaries would return to base, while their leader Yevgeny

Prigozhin would move to Belarus. All criminal charges against him and his fighters would be dropped, the Kremlin said.

In what appeared to be the first public comments by a senior Russian official since then, Mishustin appealed at a televised government meeting for national unity in the face of what he said were efforts by the West to undermine Russia.

"The main thing in these conditions is to ensure the sovereignty and

independence of our country, the security and well-being of citizens," said Mishustin, a technocrat who was appointed prime minister in 2020.

"For this, the consolidation of the whole of society is especially important; we need to act together, as one team, and maintain the unity of all forces, rallying around the president," he said. Mishustin, a former head of Russia's federal tax service, also took a swipe at the West.

"As the president

noted, virtually the entire military, economic, information machine of the West is directed against us," he said.

Putin said on Saturday that the rebellion by the Wagner mercenary force had threatened Russia's very existence under threat and vowed to crush it.

However, he has not publicly commented since then on the dramatic events or on the deal brokered by Belarusian President Alexander Lukashenko that defused the crisis.



President Joe Biden arrives in the East Room with Vice President Kamala Harris and Jeff Say for an event about high speed internet infrastructure at the White House.



Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Andrei Rudenko and Chinese Foreign Minister Qin Gang in Beijing.

At least 3 dead, dozens of homes damaged after storms hit US Midwest, South

Monitoring Desk
INDIANA: Tornadoes and thunderstorms hit the US Midwest and South a day earlier, leaving dozens of homes damaged and at least three people dead in Indiana and Arkansas, authorities said on Monday.

The National Weather Service said multiple tornadoes and severe storms were reported on Sunday in central Indiana and Arkansas.

Emergency officials from Martin County, Indiana, confirmed one death in the area. Emergency Management Director Cameron Wolf said the victim's injured partner was airlifted to hospital. They lived in a two-storey log cabin, which

was destroyed by the storms. Further details were not immediately available.

"Damage is random, it's kind of widespread," Wolf said in an interview with PBS. The damage mostly happened out in the countryside, he said, adding that towns were not hit that hard by the storms.

The Lonoke County Sheriff's Office confirmed that two people were killed after a tree fell on a home in Carlisle, Arkansas, due to severe storms on Sunday, a CBS News affiliate said.

Images and footage from local media showed fallen trees had blocked roads and homes were damaged.

Kremlin releases first video statement by Putin since Wagner mutiny

Monitoring Desk
MOSCOW: Russian President Vladimir Putin on Monday issued via the Kremlin website his first statement since an armed mutiny by the Wagner mercenary group, congratulating participants of an industrial forum.

It was not immediately clear when or where Putin's statement was recorded.

UN ship agency chief urges decisive action at environment talks

Monitoring Desk
LONDON: Countries must take decisive action at talks aimed at accelerating decarbonisation in the shipping industry, the United Nations' shipping agency chief said on Monday, as pressure for change builds.

Shipping, which transports around 90% of world trade and accounts for nearly 3% of the world's carbon dioxide emissions, is facing growing calls from environmentalists and investors to deliver more concrete action including a carbon levy.

China expresses support for Russia after failed mercenary revolt

Monitoring Desk
HONG KONG: China has expressed support for Russia's efforts to maintain national stability in the wake of a failed uprising by mercenaries that posed a brief but unprecedented challenge to Russian President Vladimir Putin's rule.

Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Andrei Rudenko was in Beijing on Sunday, a day after Yevgeny Prigozhin called off an advance on Moscow

by his Wagner mercenary group forces and agreed to leave for Belarus in exchange for charges being dropped.

"The Chinese side expressed support for the efforts of the leadership of the Russian Federation to stabilize the situation in the country in connection with the events of June 24, and reaffirmed its interest in strengthening the unity and further prosperity of Russia."

Lebanon's militant Hezbollah group says it shot down an Israeli drone near the southern border

Monitoring Desk
BEIRUT: Lebanon's militant Hezbollah group said its fighters shot down an Israeli drone Monday that was flying near the border and over southern Lebanon.

The group gave no further details about the type of drone that it claimed was downed near the village of Zibqine just north of the border with Israel.

An Israeli military spokesman said in a tweet that a drone crashed in Lebanon when an Israeli force was performing routine activities. The spokesman, Avichay Adraee, added in Arabic that there were no concerns of information being leaked. The incident comes after weeks of tensions along the Lebanon-Israel border, mainly in a disputed area known as Chebaa Farms. Earlier this month, Israeli soldiers fired tear gas to disperse scores of Lebanese protesters who pelleted the troops with stones along the border.

Blinken says Wagner insurrection shows 'cracks' emerging in Putin's rule

Monitoring Desk
WASHINGTON: US Secretary of State Antony Blinken said Sunday that the brief and chaotic insurrection in Russia led by the Wagner paramilitary group shows "cracks" in Russian President Vladimir Putin's role as a leader of the country.

"This is just an added chapter to a very, very bad book that Putin has written for Russia. But what's so striking about it is, it's internal," Blinken told CNN's Dana Bash on "State of the Union," describing the situation as

"extraordinary."

"The fact that you have from within someone directly questioning Putin's authority, directly questioning the premises that upon which he launched this aggression against Ukraine. That, in and of itself, is something very, very powerful. It adds cracks. Where those go, when they get there, too soon to say, but it clearly raises new questions that Putin has to deal with," he said.

The comments from the nation's top diplomat underscore the short-lived

intensity of a crisis that started when Yevgeny Prigozhin, the head of the Wagner Group, marched his fighters toward Moscow, taking control of Russian military facilities along the way. Prigozhin on Friday openly accused Russia's military of attacking a Wagner camp and killing a "huge amount" of his men. For months, he had railed against Russian Defence Minister Sergei Shoigu and the country's top general, Valery Gerasimov, whom he blames for Moscow's faltering invasion of Ukraine.

Airport worker dies after plane engine 'ingests' him

Monitoring Desk
WASHINGTON: US regulators said on Sunday they are investigating an incident in which a Texas airport worker was killed after being sucked into a passenger plane engine.

A Delta flight had arrived in San Antonio, Texas from Los Angeles on Friday night and was taxiing to the gate with one engine on "when a worker was ingested into that engine".

North Korea holds rallies denouncing US, warns of nuclear war

Monitoring Desk
SEOUL: North Korea held mass rallies in Pyongyang where people shouted slogans vowing a "war of revenge" to destroy the United States, as it marked the 73rd anniversary of the outbreak of the Korean War, state media reported on Monday. About 120,000 working people and students took part in the rallies held across the capital on Sunday, state news

agency KCNA reported. Photos released by state media showed a stadium crowded with people holding placards reading "The whole U.S. mainland is within our shooting range" and "The imperialist U.S. is the destroyer of peace." Sunday's anniversary came amid concerns Pyongyang could soon conduct another launch of its first military spy satellite to boost monitoring of U.S. military activities.

Pak wins 10 golds as Special Olympics ends

KARACHI (INP): Pakistan won a total of 10 gold medals in the 16th Special Olympics World Games, which concluded on Sunday in Berlin.

The number of golds in Pakistan's kitty increased after cyclist Safer Abid clinched one in the 10km time trial race during the games' cycling event. He completed the 10km distance in 23 minutes and 02.02 seconds.

This was the first time that Safer, who hails from Karachi, has participated in the World Games. The cyclist had been preparing for the special sporting event since the last two years, he said.

"I have the passion to win more medals for Pakistan in the upcoming international events," Safer said. In the 500m time trial race, Madeeha Tahir of Pa-

kistan won the silver medal by covering the distance in 1 minute and 14.15 seconds, while Amina Arshad won the bronze medal by covering the distance in 1 minute and 16.82 seconds.

In the final of the futsal event, Oman won the gold medal by defeating Pakistan by 6-3 goals. Pakistan finished second with the silver medal.

Pakistan stood fourth in women's doubles, men's singles and unified men's doubles of the tennis event.

In the Bocce team event, Pakistan's Mahnoor, Simran Mahesh Lal, Jamilur Rahman and Farhan Aslam won the silver medal after defeating Canada, Australia and New Zealand.

Farhan Aslam won the bronze medal in men's singles, and Mahnoor won the bronze medal in women's singles.



BERLIN: Participants of the 16th Special Olympic World Games Pakistan athletes in a group photo after the closing ceremony at Brandenburg Gate.

Saudi media minister affirms strong fraternal relations with Pakistan, calls it 'his country'

MAKKAH (APP): Saudi Arabia's Minister of Media, Salman Al-Dosari, expressed his deep bond with Pakistan, referring to it as his country, while emphasizing that Saudi Arabia serves as a second home for Pakistanis.

During a comprehensive meeting held in Mina the other day, the Minister engaged with a delegation of Pakistani journalists, underscoring the strong fraternal relations between the two nations.

Al-Dosari conveyed his heartfelt sentiment that Pakistanis are considered brothers, and Saudi Arabia welcomes them as a second home.

Recognizing the importance of fostering bilateral cooperation in the media sector, Salman Al-Dosari highlighted the ongoing efforts to strengthen ties with Pakistani media.

Emphasizing the significance of mutual collaboration, he affirmed that both countries are actively promoting this alliance.

In response, the Pakistani delegation expressed sincere appreciation to the Saudi authorities and government for the impeccable arrangements made for Hajj 2023.

After a three-year hiatus, this year's Hajj was

held in its full glory, and the delegation conveyed their gratitude for the excellent management of the sacred pilgrimage.

They said the reaffirmation of close ties between Saudi Arabia and Pakistan, coupled with efforts to enhance media cooperation, exemplifies the commitment of both nations to further strengthen their relationship.

The Pakistani delegation was comprised of Abdul Qayyum Bokhari of GTV, Sanaullah Khan of DWAN, Syed Savez Ali of BOL, Ayaz Khan of Express, Hafiz Tariq of SAMA and Rehan Khan of APP.



QUETTA: Provincial Minister Muhammad Khan Lehri meeting with Governor Malik Abdul Wali Khan Kakar

Mariyum says: Big news - new policy parameters to boost music industry

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Information and Broadcasting Mariyum Aurangzeb on Monday announced finalization of the country's first-ever music policy draft, which would ultimately prove to be a big news for the industry.

The new policy incentives and initiatives would eventually boost the music industry since they would effectively redress piracy, copyrights and other pertinent issues, she said in a statement.

The minister said the music policy had been prepared in accordance with the international standards and also considering the relevant laws in vogue in the neighbouring countries.

She said the artists' public performance, production, distribution, adaptation, duration, and mechanical and communication rights were also brought into legal framework through the policy.

Through such measures, the problem of users and licensees would also be solved, which would give a boost to the music industry, she added.

The minister said the end of monopoly, the basic legal rights of music industry workers would also be protected under the proposed policy.

All issues and demands of the music stakeholders, including copyrights, would be resolved, she reiterated.

The policy, she said, would also protect the legal rights of music producers, singers, writers and lyricists, besides resolving the long-standing issues of the industry related to sales, copying and piracy.

The minister said the policy also included special measures to preserve classic music, and initiatives for local and folk music to promote regional singers and artists.



QUETTA: Balochistan Chief Secretary Abdul Aziz Uqaili, Provincial Secretaries and others watching Balochistan Assembly proceeding

Stampede breaks out during distribution of BISP funds

KARACHI (INP): Stampede broke out during the distribution of funds of the Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP) among deserving women in Karachi.

The stampede broke out outside the BISP office near KPT Ground in Karachi's Kemari area. As a result, 20 women lost fell unconscious.

Getting the information, the rescue teams reached the spot and moved the women to the hospital. Last Monday, Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP) announced releasing the fourth quarterly tranche of Benazir Kafalaat cash assistance.

Pak, Kazakhstan hold political consultations

ISLAMABAD (APP): The second round of Pakistan-Kazakhstan Bilateral Political Consultations (BPC) was held on Monday in Astana, Kazakhstan.

Additional Secretary (Afghanistan & West Asia) Syed Ahsan Raza Shah led Pakistan side while Kazakh side was led by Kanat Tymshy, Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Kazakhstan.

During the consultations, both sides held extensive discussions on various facets of bilateral relations in the political and diplomatic, trade, economic connectivity, science & technology and culture sectors. The two sides also exchanged views on issues of regional and global importance. Cooperation between two countries within

the framework of United Nations, CICA, OIC, ECO and SCO was also reviewed.

The two sides agreed towards early finalization of the Transit Trade Agreement which would become the catalyst for enhanced trade between the two countries. It was also agreed to enhance connectivity between the two countries and welcomed the resumption of direct flights commencing early next month.

The consultations offered an opportunity for both sides to comprehensively review the current level of bilateral relations. Both sides also identified new areas of mutual interest and reiterated the desire to further strengthen bilateral relations.



QUETTA: Provincial Minister Mir Sikandar Ali Umrani meeting with Provincial Minister Sardar Abdul Rehman Khetran

Seminar for learning lesson from miserable life of drug addicts, not to hate them

QUETTA: The speakers at an awareness seminar on "International Day against drug abuse and illicit trafficking" have underlined the need to learn lesson from the miserable life being led by the drug addicts in the society instead of hating them.

They also stressed that every individual of the society would have to play one's effective role in prevention of the drugs and illicit trafficking.

The speakers were addressing the seminar organized by the Excise, Taxation and Anti-Narcotics,

Government of Balochistan, at the Government Sandeman High School here on Monday.

The Secretary Excise and Taxation, Zafar Ali Bokhari, Secretary Law and Parliamentary Affairs, Abdul Saboor Kakar, eminent psychologist, Professor Dr. Ghulam Rasool, academician, Gulab Khan Khilji, DG Excise, Muhammad Jahangir Kakar and Principal Dr. Naseer Shah addressed the seminar.

They highlighted the ill effects of the use of narcotics and delivered lectures on the life skill education.

Monsoon rains DA Hub issues advisory to relevant institutions

HUB: District Administration HUB has issued an advisory to the relevant institutions on the advance reports of monsoon rains from the Department of Meteorology.

In the meeting, in light of the orders of Chief Minister Balochistan and Chief Secretary Balochistan Abdul Aziz Uqili, the meeting was held in the deputy commissioner Hub office. Decisions were made regarding the coordination between all relevant government departments and the formation of emergency quick response teams and the correctness of storm

drains and sewage systems. Addressing the officials, he said, "There are clear instructions from the Chief Secretary of Balochistan that the Monsoon Plan should be effective and coordination between the government agencies should be ensured. Watering pumps should be prepared and rescue personnel should be alerted.

On this occasion, the officials of the relevant government departments briefed the meeting participants regarding the proposals and preparations for the monsoon plan. Janshir Chairman of Municipal Committee Wunder FC 54 Wing Major Saad Ullah Driji.

SBP raises policy rate to 22% amid recent financial developments

KARACHI (APP): The State Bank of Pakistan, on Monday, decided to raise the policy rate by 100 bps to 22 percent for keeping real interest rate firmly in the positive territory amid recent developments. The decision, effective from 27th June 2023, was taken in an emergency meeting of Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) convened here to review the overall economic situation particularly the potential effects of budgetary measures and relaxation in imports, said a statement issued here by the Central Bank.

The MPC in its meeting held on 12th June decided to maintain the policy rate unchanged at 21 percent the then monetary policy stance as appropriate

to achieve the objective of price stability "barring any unexpected domestic and external shocks." The MPC further noted that, this outlook was "contingent on effectively addressing the prevailing domestic uncertainty and external vulnerabilities." The Committee in its emergency meeting, however, had noted two important domestic developments since the last meeting - certain upward revisions in taxes, duties and PDL rate in FY24 budget and withdrawal of SBP's general guidance for commercial banks on prioritisation of imports - that have slightly deteriorated inflation outlook and which could potentially increase pressure on the already stressed external ac-

count, the statement said. The measures have increased the upside risks to the inflation outlook, the MPC noted and viewed that additional tax measures were likely to contribute to inflation both directly and indirectly, while the relaxation in imports may exert pressures in the foreign exchange market. "The latter may result in higher-than-earlier anticipated exchange rate pass-through to domestic prices," it further added. The MPC termed the decision as necessary to keep real interest rate firmly in the positive territory on a forward-looking basis and hoped that it would help further anchor inflation expectations - which are already moderating over the last few months.



MUZAFFERABAD: Activists of All Parties Hurriyat Conference holds banner and shouting slogans during protest in the favor of their demands in the capital of AJK.

PCG recovers huge quantity of drugs from empty house

UTHAL: Pakistan Coast Guard in a major anti-narcotics operation in Kapkpar area of Balochistan recovered 51 66kg hashish, 274kg crystal (ice) and 53kg heroin.

According to the press release of Pakistan Coast Guards, Pakistan Coast Guards received information from sources that there was a large amount of drugs in an empty house in Kapkpar area. Keeping this in mind, the Director General of Pakistan Coast Guards issued orders to the concerned commander to form a team consisting of officers and sub-ordinate. During the operation, the said team recovered 5166 kg of high quality hashish, 274 kg of crystal (ice) and 53 g of heroin from an empty house in Kapkpar area, which was worth around 136 million dollars in the international market.

Railway police foils an attempt to smuggle high-quality hashish

QUETTA: On the World Anti-Narcotics Day, Quetta Railway Police operation successfully foiled an attempt to smuggle high-quality hashish by hiding it in clothes through Jafar Express from Quetta, 7 packets of hashish were recovered and three accused were arrested. Investigation has been started against the arrested accused.

According to the details, the Railways Police Quetta Division foiled the smuggling of drugs by train and recovered 7 packets of hashish from the suitcases and shopper of the passengers at the railway station Quetta.

PTI chairman must be given punishment as per law: Malik

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister of State for Petroleum Dr Musadiq Malik on Monday said that Pakistan Teheek e Insaaf (PTI), Chairman must be given punishment as per law. PTI leaders and workers have found attacking security institutions on May 9, he said while talking to a private television channel. PTI had been using derogatory remarks against the heads of national institutions, he said. Appreciating the military courts' unbiased working style, he said the current decisions taken by military courts are unprecedented. He said military courts had sent a message across the board that everyone is equal before the law.

BNP announces to launch protest drive against Wadh, & related issues on July 3

QUETTA: The Balochistan National Party's central committee has decided to launch protest campaign against the lingering law and order situation in Wadh and other related issues in which what it claimed the party is being targeted.

The decision to this effect was announced by the secretary General of BNP, Jahanzaib Baloch while addressing a hurriedly called urgent press conference at the Quetta Press Club on Monday.

He was flanked by the parliamentary leader of BNP, Malik Naseer

Shahwani, MPAs Sanaullah Baloch, Ms. Shakeela Naveed Dehwar and others.

The BNP senior leader announced that wheel jam strike would be observed on all highways of the province on July 3. While protest rallies would be taken out on July 8 and shutter down strike would be observed on July 14, adding he announced.

Jahanzaib Baloch alleged that the political victimization is continued against the BNP even after the change of government.

He also alleged that an armed group is being patronized and given funds even.



HUB: Pakistani Coast Guard Officials are showing huge apprehended drugs worth millions of rupees, during raid on local area of Kapkpar, during press conference held at PCG Headquarters.

DC Loralai chairs meeting regarding monsoon rains

LORALAI: Under the chairmanship of Deputy Commissioner Loralai Suban Saleem Dashti, a meeting of officers was held regarding the contingency plan to be implemented because of the recent monsoon rains.

Police Officer Asif Faraz Mastoi, Assistant Commissioner Zahoor Ahmad Baloch, Deputy Director of Agriculture Extension Ghulam Muhammad Uthmankhil Education Bahadur Nasir, Irrigation Engineer Ahmed Shah Nasir XEN PHE Muhammad Ali Samit, officers of all departments

participated in the meeting and informed Deputy Commissioner Loralai about the recent monsoon rains.

A detailed briefing was given by Deputy Commissioner Loralai Suban Saleem Dashti while addressing the meeting said, "All departmental officers and their supporting staff are on alert, the machinery of all departments is on standby in case of any emergency during the rains, all government rest houses, government buildings have been reserved, the control room of police department and Levies have been restored."



KARACHI: Woman line up at Benazir Income Support Center after Stampede broke out during the distribution of funds of the Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP) among deserving women as several women were injured in the stampede at Benazir Income Support Center in Provincial Capital.