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

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

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Tuesday said the government had 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 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 sav-

ing 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. He said the government was providing 100,000 laptops and small loans to the youth on concessional rates for their startups. The government, he said had also offered tax ex-

emptions in the Budget 2023-24 for businesses in IT for encouragement of the youth. The prime minister said the Rs 2000 billion Kissan Package would further expedite the country's journey of agriculture development and prosperity. He said the government would offer more facilities in the agriculture sector through the budget 2023-24 to ensure food security and to make the youth an important stakeholder in the agriculture development of the country.

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.

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. The prime minister, who chaired a meeting to review the preparedness ahead of the possible impact of the Biparjoy cyclone, asked the Sindh government, NDMA and other organizations to ensure the establishment of mobile hospitals in coastal areas and provide adequate emergency medical assistance

there. He said in view of the storm, special arrangements of clean drinking water and food should be made at the camps of displaced persons. The prime minister instructed Power Minister Engineer Khurram Dastgir Khan to ensure his presence in the districts of southern Sindh until the effects of the cyclone were over, to monitor the 24-hour power transmission system in the coastal areas.

Prime Minister Shehbaz said after the cyclone, the possible damage to the power transmission system should be repaired immediately. He also set up a committee to deal with the emergency situation arising in view of the Biparjoy cyclone. To be headed by Climate Change Minister Sherry Rehman, the committee would comprise Power Minister Engineer Khurram Dastgir Khan, Food Security Minister Tariq Bashir Cheema, NDMA Chairman Lt. Gen. Inam Haider Malik, and representatives of Sindh and Balochistan governments, Meteorological Department and National Institute of Health (NIH).

The prime minister instructed the committee for constant consultation to deal with the situation arising from the cyclone and keep the people aware of any possible emergency. Complete evacuation of people from the coastal areas likely to be affected, should be ensured, besides providing relief materials to them.



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

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

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.

The minister reaffirmed that those who were involved in the violent incidents of May 9 would be brought to justice at all costs, as the people of Pakistan would never forget the painful day. Marriyum said the whole nation and the patriotic political parties were united and unanimous that the planners, including the mastermind, and attackers of May 9 tragedy should be punished. She said the architect of May 9 tragedy was still misleading the nation with his conflicting statements. Sometimes he said his workers were responsible for the tragedy and sometimes he blamed the media squarely for all the mayhem on that day. The person, who had hatched the conspiracy while sitting at his residence in Zaman Park, continued to churn out lies about human rights conditions in the country, she added.



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.

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.

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.

Will right to fair trial be not affected due to initiation of proceedings against judge in a jiffy: SC

ISLAMABAD (Online): Supreme Court (SC) has reserved judgment on the maintainability of petition seeking court's order to regulate Judicial Council (JC) proceedings. A two members bench of SC presided over by Justice Ijaz ul Ahsan took up the case for hearing Tuesday.

abolishes the proceedings after the resignation of judge.

Justice Munib Akhtar remarked "you want what, should court give directives to JC. Can court give guidelines to JC. The counsel said holding judge accountable is responsibility of JC. If law is silent then court should give directives. A judge who gets retirement despite corruption is burden on national kitty. Justice Munib Akhtar remarked complaint runs on social media before going to council now a days. We are hearing the case actively being the matter serious. We have not issued directives to JC in any decision. If court gives decision and it is not implemented then will there be contempt of court against the JC. The counsel said people of council have not come from outside. They are within from us.

PM to inaugurate IJP Road, kick-start 11th Avenue of Islamabad today

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif would inaugurate and break ground for different road projects of the federal capital and Rawalpindi here on Wednesday morning. The prime minister will inaugurate the Srinagar Highway-Seventh Avenue overhead bridge. Later, he will attend the opening ceremony of the reconstructed IJP Road and also perform the groundbreaking of 11th Avenue. On the occasion, the prime minister will also be given a detailed briefing on the development projects.

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.



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 to Pakistan through Torkham border.

Russian gas tankers has been made possible through Pak Afghan 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.

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.

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.

BA's budget session summoned on June 16

Independent Report 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.

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 preferential 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. He expressed concerns about the lack of a submitted report regarding corruption complaints surrounding the Mohmand Dam project.



GENEVA: Minister for Overseas Pakistanis & HRD, Mr. Sajid Hussain Turi held a crucial meeting with representatives from the Industrial Global Union led by Mr. Kamal, Assistant Secretary General on the sidelines of the 111th Session of the International Labour Conference.

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.

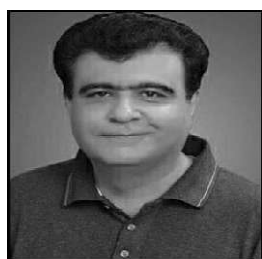
Indeed, if one were to thoroughly account for the costs and benefits of Islamabad's decision to suspend trade with India, the bottom line would reflect a net loss for our people. Perhaps it is time for our foreign policy pundits and decision-makers to reconsider their stance and decouple trade from geopolitical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

the death of democracy as it is as yet unborn in Pakistan let alone grown to adulthood. We had a foetus in a womb parented by the PPP and PML-N who have aborted even that. When these two parties can crush the tiny seeds their hands had planted, one loses hope for democracy in Pakistan. If both adopt the PTI's autocratic ways, they will get two new PTIs. One can only say sadly: "Et tu, Brute?" Will we have another tryst with democracy any time soon?

These events reflect the weak basis of the PTI, engineered by the establishment around Khan's empty populism. The PPP survived six much longer crackdowns: 1968-1969, 1977-1988, 1990-1993, 1997-1999 and 1999-2008; the PML-N three (1993-1996, 1999-2008 and 2018-2022). But the PTI collapsed a few weeks after facing its first crackdown, even if it was the most intense one by a civilian set-up in recent years. Khan cuts a lonely figure today in Zaman Park, like Bahadur Shah in Delhi Fort.

The PPP and PML-N emerged from the societal realities of the poor and the traders whose lives depend heavily on politics. These groups join the PPP-PML-N patronage networks that sap their ire. The PTI emerged from the vacuum of rage of the upper middle class for whom politics is a social media pastime. Their elite lives are less affected by misuse as they use private fixes for public problems like crime and power cuts, instead of joining political struggles to fix them. Their ire thus sapped, neither class joins political struggles. We must go beyond such patronage and social media political fixes. The way forward is a progressive leftist political struggle to birth a better democracy. — Courtesy Dawn

Missing resilience



Masood Lohar

Karachi's history of natural disasters remains obscured, just like its original topographical contours. As the cyclone Biparjoo, 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 Hijat 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.

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 H 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

All Pakistan Traders delegation meets Dar

ISLAMABAD (APP): A delegation of All Pakistan Anjuman e Tajran led by Mohammed Naqem Mir Tuesday called on Finance Minister Senator Mohammad 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.



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.

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.

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 @ Zulfiqar 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.



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 the provincial capital 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.

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.



MILTAN: Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of Discount World Sultan Richard and Project Set 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 Mehmood 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 Mehmood 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 Karim 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 Mehmood Hospital DI Khan were set up by the doctors on a self-help basis and highly praised philanthropist 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 between 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.

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 message 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.

British court orders company to compensate some Beirut port blast victims

Monitoring Desk
BEIRUT: A British court has ordered a London-based company that delivered the ammonium nitrate that exploded in 2020 at Beirut's port to pay compensation to some families of the hundreds of victims, Beirut's Bar Association said Tuesday. The verdict in the High Court of Justice on Monday came four months after the court ruled that

India denies threatening Twitter with shutdown

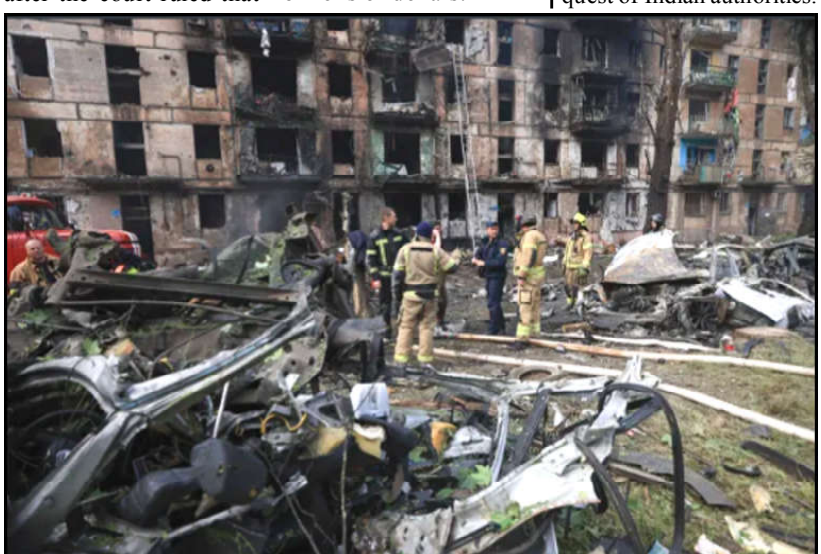
Monitoring Desk
NEW DELHI: India on Tuesday denied claims it had threatened to shut down Twitter inside the country if it did not block accounts critical of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's government. The world's biggest democracy petitions Twitter for content removals more than almost any other country, and the platform regularly takes down or blocks content at the request of Indian authorities.

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."

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 dwindling 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 amongst 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 difficult 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.



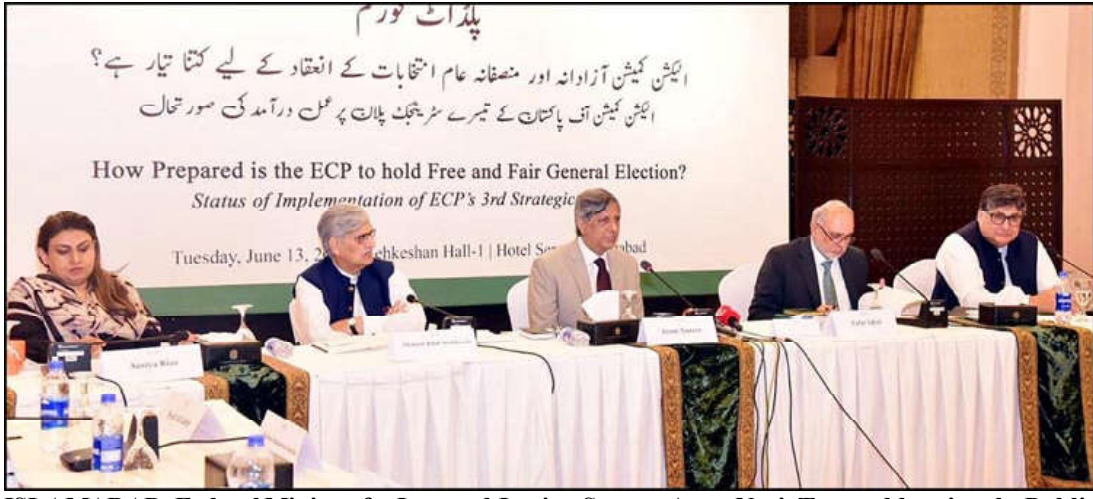
Emergency workers inspect a damaged multi-storey apartment building caused by the latest rocket Russian attack in Kryvyi Rih, Ukraine.

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.



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.

Simultaneously holding of general elections in interest of country: Azam

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

He underscored the ECP's commitment to ensuring a credible electoral process and the tireless work it had undertaken towards this end.

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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 Sajjad Ahmad and former MNAS Shahabuddin, Jamshaid Khan and Aurangzaib Naikto 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.

He further said that talented youth of the province would be provided with laptops and loans on affordable terms, adding the farmers would be given quality seed and timely supply of urea, besides equipping them with the latest technology.

He observed that economic issues of the people would be reduced with the provision of trade facility in the border areas.

The delegation appreciated the prime minister for inclusion of steps in the fiscal budget for the development and prosperity of province and its erstwhile tribal areas.



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

President directs DC P'bad to restore possession of elderly woman's plot

ISLAMABAD (APP): President Dr Arif Alvi has directed the deputy commissioner (DC) Islamabad to restore the possession of 10-marla property to an elderly lady, whose property had been allegedly occupied by land grabbers in Bara Kahu area. The president upheld the orders of the Federal Ombudsman for Protection Against Harassment of Women at Workplace (FOSPWAH) and gave these directions while deciding upon a representation filed by Malik Abdul Majeed and others against the orders of FOSPWAH, the President Secretariat Press Wing said in a press release on Tuesday. As per details, Munawar Bibi (complainant) had filed a complaint before FOSPWAH under the Enforcement of Women's Property Rights Act, 2020 saying that Malik Abdul Majeed and Jawad Shoukat

(petitioners) belonged to a "Qabza Mafia" and had illegally taken possession of her plot by erecting a boundary wall around it. FOSPWAH passed the orders in her favour and directed the DC Islamabad to restore possession of the complainant.

The petitioners preferred a review petition which was rejected on the ground that it had been proved that Munawar Bibi was the owner of the property and it was transferred in her name through the registered sale deed in 1979 and its entry had also been made in the revenue records.

FOSPWAH had directed the station house officer (SHO) of Bara Kahu Police Station to take steps to restore possession, take assistance from Patwari Halqa on the spot, and use all legal means in connection with the restoration of the plot to the complainant.

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 X-Wapda 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.



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.

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

LAHORE (APP): Federal Minister for Planning Prof. Dr. 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 approved 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 the PML-N government 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.

Shazia urges public to strictly follow PMD instructions

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Poverty Alleviation and Social Safety (PASS) Shazia Marri on Tuesday urged the public to follow instructions issued by the government of Sindh and the Pakistan Meteorological Department (PMD) regarding the impending cyclonic storm.

Speaking on the floor of the National Assembly (NA), the minister emphasized the gravity of the situation, as the province faces potential danger.

"The Sindh government has taken swift action by issuing warnings and evacuating a significant number of residents, with around 80,000 to 100,000 people already moved to safer locations," she said.

Moreover, she said, "The government officials, including the CM and members of the Provincial Assembly (MPA) and Members of National Assembly (MNA), are actively engaged in providing assistance to affected communities."



ISLAMABAD: Minister of Climate Change of Pakistan Sherry Rehman addressing press conference along with Chairman National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) Lieutenant General (R) Inam Haider at Press Information Department

Pak Navy evacuated 700 villagers in Shah Bandar, 64 fishermen rescued from sea

KARACHI (APP): Pakistan Navy troops evacuated 700 personnel from various villages of Shah Bandar - a coastal town of district Sujawal - while 64 fishermen have been rescued from sea. PN Ships are patrolling and maintaining vigilance in open sea to render assistance to vessels in distress amid tropical cyclone Biparjoy, said a statement issued here on Tuesday. Pakistan Navy has put all its available resources at high alert with requisite assets to provide assistance to the inhabitants of coastal areas of Sindh in case of any emergency amid the tropical cyclone.

A cyclone monitoring cell has been activated at Headquarters Commander Karachi for monitoring the developments and coordinating the responses, the spokesperson informed adding that PN Joint Maritime Information Coordination Center (JMICC) was relaying information at regular intervals to all stakeholders especially fishermen community so that they not to venture out to open sea in rough weather.

Effective policing to eliminate crime from city: Dr Akbar Nasir

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad Capital City Police Officer (ICCP) Dr. Akbar Nasir Khan presided over an important crime meeting at the Central Police Office, a police public relations officer said.

He said that, the meeting was attended by CPO/DIG Operations Syed Shahzad Nadeem Bukhari, AIG Operations Saud Khan, SSP Operations Malik Jameel Zafar, zonal DPOs, SDPOs and Incharge of all police stations.

The ICCPO Dr Akbar Nasir Khan reviewed the performance of all police stations thoroughly and directed that all Incharge Police Stations must develop and implement robust crime prevention strategies within the next 15 days and those officers with poor performance will face stringent departmental actions.

In a bid to combat crime effectively, the ICCPO formed a special committee under the supervision of CPO/DIG Operations. This committee will identify crime-prone



areas in the vicinity of the federal capital and devise targeted strategies to prevent criminal activities. Additionally, all DPOs and SDPOs were directed to engage with the community, attentively listen to their concerns, and employ available resources for prompt issue resolution.

He urged to boost the campaign against drug peddlers in different areas of the city, especially educational institutions, adding that a special crackdown against proclaimed and target offenders should be started immediately.

He also ordered to arrest the criminals involved in different criminal activities and recover the stolen valuables, adding that the investigation of the cases should be made purely on merit. The investigation officers who are showing poor performance and not interested in their duties should be removed from police stations and strict department actions should be taken against them, the ICCPO reiterated.

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 post 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.

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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.

No need to panic amid Biparjoy's intensification, authorities on alert: Sherry

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Tropical Cyclone Biparjoy was approaching the coastal areas of Sindh province whereas the federal and provincial departments along with the armed forces were on alert with necessary coordination to manage the natural hazard and save the masses.

Federal Minister for Climate Change and Environmental Coordination Senator Sherry Rehman on Tuesday briefed the media here on Tropical Cyclone (TC) Biparjoy's imminent impact on the coastline of the Sindh province and urged the masses to avoid panicking on the ground as federal and provincial authorities were ensuring proper measures to address the natural hazard and protect the masses.

The federal minister for climate change was flanked by Chairman National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) Lieutenant General Inam Haider Malik to provide a detailed synopsis of the ongoing tropical cyclone that emerged in the Arabian Ocean and aggravated after June 5.

Senator Rehman said the TC Biparjoy was under monitoring for the past many days, and the information being shared through media had to be conveyed to the local masses in a responsible manner. She underlined that these cyclones could unexpectedly change their course, therefore the situation demanded strict stock-taking and continuous monitoring to take adequate measures for coping with any emergent situation.

The Minister informed that the cyclone's landfall had started at the coastline of Gujrat, India, and was heading towards Pakistan.

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

Islamabad Capital Police host farewell for outgoing SSP

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad capital police hosted farewell for the outgoing Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Islamabad Gulfam Nasir who retired from his services after serving the force, a police public relations officer said.

He said that, the farewell ceremony was attended among others by Capital Police Officer (CPO) Law and Order Shakir Hussain Dawar, Principal Capital Police College and other senior officers.

CPO Law and Order Shakir Dawar appreciated the services of SSP Gulfam Nasir and said that the officer had served in Islamabad capital police with dedication and commitment adding that his services to make Islamabad capital police as an ideal force will be remembered forever.

SSP Gulfam Nasir joined Islamabad capital police as a Probation ASI and served various posts including Superintendent of Police and Senior Superintendent of Police.

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 or 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.