

Independent

Member APNS & CPNE

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Quetta

Ph: 2841470/2841473 REG: No. BC-116 B/ID-445 Vt XXIV No. 282, Zee'qad 12, 1444 AH Friday June 02, 2023 Pages 12, Price Rs.15

AGP tells Supreme Court Government decides to review legislation aimed at trimming CJ's powers

CJP Bandial welcomes govt decision says Government should consult with the SC when making laws related to the judiciary

ISLAMABAD (APP): Attorney General for Pakistan (AGP), Mansoor Usman Awan on Thursday said that the federal government had decided to reconsider the Supreme Court Practice and Procedure Bill.

He expressed these views before eight-member larger bench of the Supreme court headed by Chief Justice Umar Ata Bandial and comprising Justice Ijaz Ul Ahsan, Justice Munib Akhtar, Justice Sayyad Mazhar Ali Akbar Naqvi, Justice Muhammad Ali

Mazhar, Justice Ayesha A Malik, Justice Syed Hasan Azhar Rizvi and Justice Shahid Waheed which heard the petitions challenging SC Practice and Procedure Bill. During the course of proceedings, the Attorney General said that this law also dealt with many other issues.

He said that there were two laws, one was the Supreme Court Review of Orders and Judgments Act and the other was the Supreme Court Practice and Procedure Act, both the

laws had similar provisions for review and hiring a lawyer.

Chief Justice Umar Ata Bandial said that it was good that the Parliament and the government were amending similar laws.

The government should consult the Supreme Court regarding the legislation of the judiciary, he added.

The attorney general said that the Supreme Court (Practice & Procedure) Act, **Continued on page 2**



QUETTA: A delegation led by head of IRC Nicolas Lambert meeting with Governor Balochistan Malik Abdul Wali Khan Kakar

Governor acknowledges int'l support for flood victims; urges action against gas theft

Governor Abdul Wali Khan Kakar highlights international cooperation in assisting natural disaster victims and stresses the need to curb gas theft

Independent Report
QUETTA: Governor of Balochistan, Malik Abdul Wali Khan Kakar, expressed gratitude to international organizations, particularly the International Red Cross (IRC), for their effective assistance in providing relief to those affected by recent natural disasters, especially the devastating floods, on Thursday.

He emphasized the critical role played by international institutions in aiding and rehabilitating individuals who have lost their lives or suffered injuries in natural calamities, considering Balochistan's status as an economically disadvantaged province. Governor Kakar conveyed these sentiments

during a meeting with a delegation led by IRC's Chief, Nicolas Lambert, at the Governor House in Quetta. Representatives from the Balochistan Rural Support Program (BRSP) were also present on the occasion.

Governor Kakar underscored the prevalence of deadly diseases in Balochistan, emphasizing **Continued on page 2**

Two security personnel martyred in terrorist attack along Pakistan-Iran border

RAWALPINDI (APP): Two soldiers of the Pakistan Army on Thursday embraced martyrdom amid gallantly thwarting the terrorists' attack when a group of terrorists targeted a security forces' post through fire in Singwan Area District Kech of Balochistan along the Pakistan-Iran Border.

were already alert and responded gallantly with all available weapons.

The security forces pushed back the terrorists successfully however, during the intense fire exchange, two brave soldiers, Sepoy Hasnain Ishtiaq (age 34 yrs resident of District Dera Ghazi Khan) and Sepoy Inayat Ullah (age 27 yrs resident of District Jhal Magsi) embraced Shahadat (martyrdom) while fighting bravely against the terrorists.



QUETTA: Federal Ombudsman Ejaz Ahmed Qureshi meeting with representatives of Chamber of Commerce.

Report to be compiled on jail reforms on SC directives: Jails lacking amenities; steps are to be taken to resolve issues of prisoners, says Ejaz Qureshi

Independent Report
QUETTA: The Federal Ombudsman, Ejaz Ahmed Qureshi has pointed out that our jails are lacking desired amenities and as such the necessary steps are to be taken to resolve the issues being confronted by the jail inmates.

He said that the matters related to the jail reforms are continuously being monitored, and a report would be compiled on the jail reforms on directives of the Supreme Court of Pakistan. **Continued on page 2**

He said that there is an improvement in the issue of keeping the over capacity of prisoners in the jails.

This and similar other views were expressed by the Federal Ombudsman while speaking to the media persons after interaction with the office bearers of Quetta Chamber of Commerce and Industry (QCCI) here at the Chamber on Thursday afternoon.

The Federal Ombudsman is on the three-day

PTI's Pervez Khattak steps down from party position

Monitoring Desk
ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) senior leader Pervez Khattak announced stepping down as the party's Khyber Pakhtunkhwa chapter president late Thursday.

Addressing a press conference in Islamabad, the PTI stalwart said it was difficult for him to continue serving as the party's KP chapter president amid the prevailing political crisis. Khattak said he would announce the future course of action after consulting his friends and party colleagues.

The PTI leader further said that he had taken the decision to leave the party post after thorough consideration.

Six killed, three injured in house explosion

MUZAFFARGARH (APP): At least six people including two women and a minor were killed while another three persons sustained injuries as result of an explosion at a house in Daira Din Pannah on Thursday.

Police and rescue resources said that the explosion took place in the junkyard room of the house which caused in death and injuries.

They stated that the deceased belonged to a single family.



ISLAMABAD: Minister for National Food Security, Tariq Bashir Cheema calls on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif.

PTI chief using all tactics to divert attention from May 9 incidents: PM

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Thursday said that Imran Niazi could go to any extreme to distract attention from his culpability in the tragic events of May 9.

"Make no mistake about the evil intent behind Imran Niazi's latest ploy to defame our law enforcement agencies and police. Yet again, he is making misleading and baseless allegations of the 'rights abuses' just to distract attention for his culpability in the tragic events of May 9," the prime minister said in a tweet.

"I am not surprised by his antics," Prime Minister Shehbaz said.

He said that someone who could persistently use foul language against the state institutions, incite people to violence and attack the state symbols and military installations,

and bring down martyrs' monuments, was capable of going to any extreme.

The prime minister said that Imran Niazi presided over a disinformation apparatus that deployed fake news methodically to fool the people. "Everything about him is hate, division and lie," he remarked.

Meanwhile At the invitation of President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif will attend the inauguration ceremony of President Erdogan in Ankara on 3 June 2023.

The Prime Minister's visit will be a reaffirmation of the deep-rooted fraternal ties between Pakistan and Türkiye. The Prime Minister will convey warm felicitations on behalf of the Government and people of Pakistan to President Erdogan on his reelection as President of Türkiye on 28 May 2023.



ISLAMABAD: Chief of the Naval Staff, Admiral Muhammad Anjad Khan Niazi exchanging views with Suh Sangpyo, Ambassador of Korea to Pakistan during meeting held at Naval Headquarters in Islamabad.

Marriyum says: Interview with BBC, true reflection of Imran's duplicitous character

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Information and Broadcasting Marriyum Aurangzeb Thursday said that Imran Khan's interview with BBC correspondent was "a true reflection and mirror of the real face of a duplicitous and false character."

In a tweet while commenting on Imran's contradictory claims in the interview, she said in one sentence he said if he was jailed, there would be reaction while in the next sentence he blamed the party's workers and leaders for May 9 mayhem.

This was a lesson for all those who had fallen victim to the misguidance and deception of the misguided Imran Khan, she remarked.



She said Imran Khan himself always indulged in wrongdoings, but whenever he was caught, he blamed others. "From 'one page' to 'I was powerless', from 'United States brought down my government' to 'Mohsin Naqvi brought down my government', the liar has now finally put the debris of May 9 on his party workers and leaders.

Woman among five died, 10 injured in Mastung accident

QUETTA (APP): At least five people including a woman died and 10 other sustained injuries in a collision between passenger bus and wagon on National Highway near Jangal Cross area of Mastung district on Thursday.

According to Levies sources, a Khuzdar-bound wagon carrying commuters was on its way when a passenger bus hit it which was

coming from the opposite direction due to overspeeding. As a result, a woman among four died on the spot while 10 others sustained injuries. The bodies and the injured were shifted to Shaheed Nawab Ghaus Bakhsh Raisani Hospital where the injured victims' treatments were started. One injured succumbed to his injuries during treatment process.



QUETTA: A delegation led by Provincial Advisor for Information Mitha Khan Kakar meeting with Balochistan Chief Secretary Abdul Aziz Uqaili

Bizenjo condemns firing incident in Kech: Nefarious designs of peace enemies to be foiled at every cost, asserts CM

Independent Report
QUETTA: While strongly condemning the incident of firing at the check post of security force in Sangwan area of Kech district on Thursday, the Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Abdul Qudus Bizenjo has expressed deep grief and sorrow over martyrdom of two security personals in the attack.

In a condemnation statement issued here, the Chief Minister commended the response of security forces to the terrorist attack at the security force check post in Kech area saying that the personals countered the attack very courageously and bravely.

The nefarious designs of the peace enemies would also be foiled at every cost in future, adding the Chief Minister asserted.

Mir Abdul Qudus Bizenjo said that the sacrifices of the martyrs for the cause of peace would not go waste at all.

He also paid tributes to the martyrs and added that the whole nation is saluting

them. He prayed for the departed souls of the personals embraced martyrdom in the terrorist attack. He also prayed that may Allah Almighty give enough strength and patience to the bereaved families to bear the loss of their loved ones.

Meanwhile, the spokesperson of provincial government has also condemned the act of terrorism in Kech district.

The spokesperson for the Government of Balochistan, Farah Azeem Shah, strongly condemned the firing on the security forces' checkpoint in the Sangwan area. She denounced the act of terrorism as cowardly and highlighted the timely response and bravery of the security forces.

She assured that the sacrifices of the martyrs would not be in vain, emphasizing the nation's solidarity and tribute to the fallen heroes. She prayed for the elevation of the martyrs' ranks and urged patience and resilience among their bereaved families.



ISLAMABAD: Honourable Mr. Justice Umar Ata Bandial, Chief Justice of Pakistan administering the oath of office to Honourable Mr. Justice Iqbal Hameedur Rehman, former Judge of the Supreme Court of Pakistan, as Chief Justice of the Federal Shariat Court at Supreme Court of Pakistan.

Anti-corruption, Punjab police arrests Ch Prevaz Elahi

LAHORE (Online): Anti-Corruption Punjab and Punjab Police arrested Former chief minister Punjab Chaudhry Prevaz Elahi from his residence.

The arrest was made when he was going somewhere in his car.

Corruption cases are filed on Ch Prevaz Elahi in Mandi Bahudin and Gujranwala.

Prevaz Elahi was not appearing in court after the cancellation of his bail.



Keep clear that anti-corruption court dismissed his interim bail. Heavy contingents reached to Elahi residence Gulberg. Anti Corruption team was also along with police however they fail to arrest him.

Once again taking action anti corruption and Punjab police arrested him from Zahoore Elahi Palace. Afterward Zahoore Elahi Palace was surrounded by police. On the other side Anti-corruption also recognized the arrest of Prevaz Elahi.

Punjab interim information minister Amir Mir said he was wanted to anti-corruption. They arrested him. We haven't arrested him. Action will be taken in accordance with crime.

He said see today resistance was made he was attempting to runaway in bulletproof vehicle. Police attempted to break glass then he gave arrest.

It is worth mentioning that Anti-corruption Punjab made many raids on house to arrest Elahi. Raids were made in Gujrat, Kandahar and Lahore residences.

BHC expresses displeasure over absence of MD SSGC

QUETTA (APP): The Balochistan High Court on Thursday expressing its displeasure over absence of the Managing Director of the Sui Southern Gas Company (SSGC) directed him to appear in next hearing.

Justice Kamran Mulakhail was hearing the case filed in connection with the low gas pressure and unknown additional charges added by the company in consumers utility bills for the month of March and April.

Annoyed by the unsatisfactory response from the gas company, the BHC issued another notice to the MD SSGC for appearing in next hearing.

"Despite the court order to eliminate illegal charges in gas bills, the

company is reluctant to do so," Justice Kamran Mulakhail said, urging SSGC to take note of the complaints of the people and allot them a serial number.

Expressing displeasure over non-compliance of the court order, he said on the next appearance, he would look at each complaint himself.

Strict action will be taken if a single meter is removed without informing the house owner within 24 hours, the court ordered.

The BHC also directed the SSGC consumers not to deposit additional amount of the bill and file a complaint in the complaint cell. The court adjourned the next hearing till June 19.

President directs SRBC to pay Rs 10.32m outstanding dues to security company

ISLAMABAD (APP): President Dr Arif Alvi has directed the Shalimar Recording and Broadcasting Company (SRBC) to pay outstanding dues of Rs 10.32 million to a company in lieu of security services, which SRBC had regretted to pay due to financial crunch.

The president further directed the Secretary of the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting to ensure payment of outstanding dues in monthly instalments within one year and, if necessary, seek approval of the competent forum within six months.

He gave these directions while rejecting a representation filed by SRBC against the decision of the

Wafaqi Mohtasib (WM) that directed it to pay Rs 10,320,800 to a security company (the complainant company) on account of security services received from it, a President House press release said.

The SRBC had admitted the outstanding dues but had expressed its inability to pay the outstanding amount, even in easy instalments, due to financial constraints faced by it since 2020.

Feeling aggrieved, the security company approached the Wafaqi Mohtasib, which passed the orders in its favour. SRBC, then, filed a representation with the president, which was rejected. In his decision, the

president said that it was strange that SRBC had adopted the stance before the president that it did not fall under the definition of "the Agency", which as per president's order No. 1 of 1983 meant a Ministry, Division, Department, Commission or office of the Federal Government or a statutory corporation or other institution established or controlled by the Federal Government.

He observed that SRBC was a public sector company, established under the Companies Act, 2017, and administratively controlled by the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting under the Rules of Business, 1973.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Education, Professional Training Rana Tanveer Hussain in a group photograph with students during his visit at Pakistan Sweet Home.

Audio leaks IHC seeks help of AG on matter of recording telephonic conversation

ISLAMABAD (Online): Islamabad High Court (IHC) has directed Attorney General (AG) to assist the court on the matter of recording telephonic conversation of private persons and audio leaks.

A amicus curiae have also been appointed.

Justice Babar Sattar of IHC issued the written order to Najam Saqib son of former Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) Saqib Nisar about suspension of summons issued to him by committee of parliament.

In the 7-page order of IHC, directives have been issued to make federation, interior ministry, ministry of defence and PTI respondents.

The court have appointed five amicus curiae including Attorney general, Aitzaz Ahsan, Makhdoom Ali Khan, Raza Rabbani and Shah Nawaz Ranjha.

The court has raised different questions on the matter. It has been asked to do the law and constitution allow to make secret re-

ording of citizens calls. If it is allowed then which authority can do so under what mechanism. What are the safeguards for keeping secret such audio recording and stopping their misuse.

IHC also raised this question if it is not allowed then which authority is responsible for violation of privacy.

Responsibility will rest with whom for releasing illegally recorded calls. Can parliament conduct inquiry on the matter of a private person.

The court raised question to do the rules allow the speaker to constitute committee on the leakage of conversation of private persons.

Justice Babar Sattar remarked notification on formation of the committee is not being suspended by exercising restraint in the reverence of parliament. However summons issued by special committee to call the petitioner Najam Saqib will remain suspended.



ISLAMABAD: Girls are taking interest in paintings during exhibition at Art Gallery in Sector F-6 at Federal Capital.

NA defence body condemns May 9 incidents, express solidarity with armed forces

ISLAMABAD (APP): The National Assembly Standing Committee on Defence Thursday expressed solidarity with the Armed Forces of Pakistan, who were pride of the nation and strongly condemned the incidents of terror that happened on 9th May.

The committee in its meeting held here under the chairmanship of Member National Assembly (MNA) Chaudhary Farrukh Altaf unanimously condemned the incidents of violence of May 9 and said such incidents were deplorable and intolerable, and must be dealt with sternly.

"We unanimously condemn the incidents of violence of 9th May which have deeply hurt the sentiments of the nation. We stand with our Armed Forces," the committee in its resolution resolved.

The 19th meeting of the Standing Committee on Defence discussed the prevailing law and order situa-

tion, and condemned the terror incidents of May 9th.

The committee remarked that it was imperative upon every citizen of Pakistan to respect the sanctity of the institutions and the public property of Pakistan.

The committee also paid tributes to the martyrs, who sacrificed their lives for Pakistan.

MNA, Barjees Tahir moved the resolution stating, "The Committee passed the resolution unanimously, and recommended that the perpetrators of the violent incidents must be dealt with an iron hand."

Additional Secretary, Ministry of Defence thanked the committee for recognizing the role and sacrifices of the Armed Forces of Pakistan to ensure prosperity of the country.

The committee expressed its desire to visit the General Headquarters (GHQ), Rawalpindi as a symbol of solidarity with the armed forces.

Motorway police foil drugs smuggling bid

ISLAMABAD (APP): National Highways and Motorway Police (NHMP) on Thursday foiled an attempt to smuggle a large quantity of drugs near Burhan Interchange on the Islamabad-Peshawar Motorway, recovering 17kg of opium and 41 kg of hashish.

According to an NHMP spokesperson, the officers signaled a suspicious vehicle coming from Peshawar to stop, but the driver fled the scene.

The NHMP officers chased the suspicious vehicle and near Burhan Interchange, the driver escaped the scene while leaving the vehicle behind on the road. During a search huge quantity of drugs was recovered from the suspected vehicle.

The search for the escaped driver continued, the spokesman added. The beat commander of NHMP was also present at the spot along with the force during the operation.

FDE announces summer vacation from June 10

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Directorate of Education (FDE) has announced summer vacation for all the public sector educational institutions in the federal capital from June 10 to July 31.

According to a notification issued by the FDE, the educational institutions will reopen on August 01 for the session 2023-24. The summer vacations will be fully utilized to manage physical verification of stock/stock checking, repair and maintenance of furniture/buildings/playgrounds, and in-house CPD in the last week of July.

The heads of the institutions (Hols) will engage a necessary number of staff to manage all these activities.

PIMS adopts special measures to serve dengue patients

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan Institute of Medical Sciences (PIMS) has made all necessary arrangements to manage dengue cases keeping in view the prevailing high-risk season of disease spread.

According to PIMS ED spokesperson Dr Mubashir Mushtaq Dahi, the Executive Director of PIMS Prof. Dr Rana Imran Sikandar directed the hospital staff to ensure the implementation of the plan prepared to handle the dengue patients at the hospital. Dr Rana said the hospital staff was put on high alert and he will personally supervise all preparations to prevent patients from any inconvenience in treatment.



ISLAMABAD: A delegation of Pakistan Tobacco Company calls on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif.

PM directs FBR to stop illegal sale of tobacco products

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif Thursday directed the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) chairman to completely stop the illegal sale of cigarettes and tobacco products.

While talking to a delegation of Pakistan Tobacco Company here, the PM said steps should be taken on emergency basis against the illegal sale of cigarettes and tobacco products.

He also ordered that installation of track and trace system in all the cigarette factories in the country should be ensured by July 15.

He said the smuggling of cigarettes should be stopped, adding nobody would be allowed to cause loss to the national exchequer.

He said strict action should be taken against those involved in selling of smuggled cigarettes and tobacco or those products on which taxes were evaded. Minister for Finance Ishaq Dar, Advisor to the PM Ahad Cheema, FBR chairman and high ranking officials attended the meeting.

Sherry Rehman says: Pakistan, law nation's red line not Imran

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Climate Change Senator Sherry Rehman on Thursday said that the country and its law were the red line of the nation and not Imran Khan who was trying to defend the worst attack of May 9.

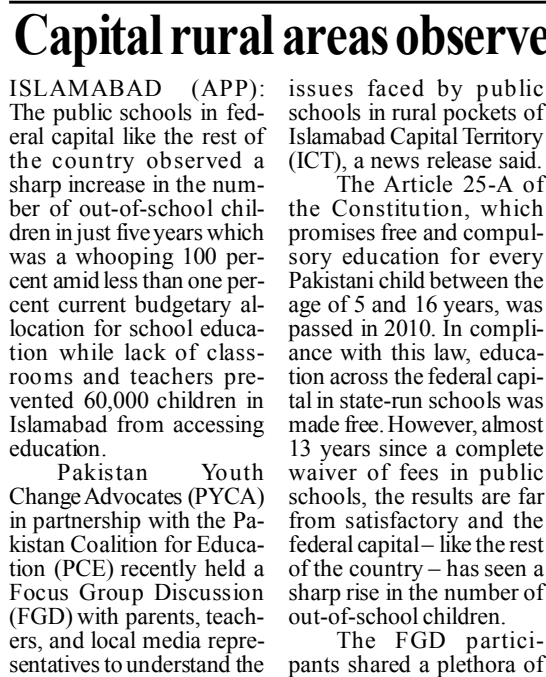
In a series of tweets, the Minister criticized Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) chief Imran Khan for his recent remarks and adamant attitude towards the violence of May 9th.

Senator Rehman said that since May 9, Imran Khan has changed his position several times on violent protests and attacks on sensitive installations.

He has adopted an apologetic attitude regarding May 9 and his attitude would lead the country to a new tragedy, she added.

The minister said that defending May 9 was tantamount to complicity in these attacks as Imran Khan should have apologized to the nation for these shameful incidents.

She regretted that Imran Khan was still defending May 9. He was arrested in an open and shut case of \$60 billion alleged misappropriation, and not in a bogus case, Sherry Rehman said.



ISLAMABAD: Chairman Hilal E Ahmar Sardar Shahid Ahmad Laghari giving shield to Sheikh Saoud bin Abdulrahman bin Faisal Al-Thani, Ambassador of State of Qatar.

Capital rural areas observe increased ratio of school children dropout

ISLAMABAD (APP): The public schools in federal capital like the rest of the country observed a sharp increase in the number of out-of-school children in just five years which was a whopping 100 percent amid less than one percent current budgetary allocation for school education while lack of classrooms and teachers prevented 60,000 children in Islamabad from accessing education.

Pakistan Youth Change Advocates (PYCA) in partnership with the Pakistan Coalition for Education (PCE) recently held a Focus Group Discussion (FGD) with parents, teachers, and local media representatives to understand the

issues faced by public schools in rural pockets of Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT), a news release said.

The Article 25-A of the Constitution, which promises free and compulsory education for every Pakistani child between the age of 5 and 16 years, was passed in 2010. In compliance with this law, education across the federal capital in state-run schools was made free. However, almost 13 years since a complete waiver of fees in public schools, the results are far from satisfactory and the federal capital—like the rest of the country—has seen a sharp rise in the number of out-of-school children.

The FGD participants shared a plethora of

106 social media accounts blocked on request of Ibad police

ISLAMABAD (APP): Around 106 social media accounts have been blocked on the request of Islamabad police for promoting sectarianism, and propaganda against state institutions.

According to an Islamabad Police spokesperson, the step was taken in response to the findings of the Provisional of Violent Extremism Unit (PVE) of the capital police's Counter-Terrorism Department (CTD).

It is worth mentioning here that PVE is monitoring the social media accounts involved in different illegal activities, including sectarianism, anti-state, terrorism, and anti-Islam.

Police said that the unit had recommended to Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) to block 203 accounts, out of which 106 had been blocked by now.

IG IBD put on notice on contempt of court plea

ISLAMABAD (Online): Islamabad High Court (IHC) has issued notice to IG Islamabad on the contempt of court plea on the matter of re-arresting PTI leader Shehryar Afridi despite court's orders.

The contempt of court plea came up for hearing before single bench of IHC led by justice Arbab Tahir.

Justice Arbab Tahir issued notice to IG Islamabad.

The counsel for Shehryar Afridi said his client was again arrested despite court's orders. My client is also not being presented in the court.

Asad Qaisar approaches IHC to avoid arrest

ISLAMABAD (Online): Former speaker National Assembly and PTI leader Asad Qaisar has resorted to Islamabad High Court (IHC) to avoid arrest.

PTI leaders said in his application filed in the court that PTI leaders were arrested under 3 MPO and different cases after May 9 incidents. Two baseless cases were registered against him in which he had got bail. Apprehension is there that he will be arrested under 3 MPO. It has been requested in the petition details of the proceedings under 3 MPO should be summoned from deputy commissioner Islamabad. Deputy commissioner should be barred.

Over the course of

Benazir Nashonuma Program reaches over 659,500 women, children

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Benazir Income Support Program (BISP) has served over 659,500 women and children under the Benazir Nashonuma initiative until now through provision of health and nutrition services.

Among the total beneficiaries, a total of 320020 pregnant and lactating women (PLW) and 339480 children have been facilitated so far.

According to an official source, these beneficiaries had been served through the network of over 470 Nashonuma Centers across the country.

The Conditional Cash Transfer (CCT) intervention of Benazir Nashonuma was designed in August 2020 to increase the uptake of Health and Nutrition services of its beneficiaries.

The primary objectives of the program were to prevent stunting in children under two

years of age, improve weight gain of pregnant women during pregnancy, reduce anemia and micronutrient deficiencies and prevent low birth weight.

World Food Programme (WFP) is the lead implementing partner for Ehsaas Nashonuma. The programme aims to address stunting among pregnant and lactating women (PLW) and their children less than two years of age through the provision of additional cash of Rs. 2,000 per quarter per PLW and boy child and PKR 2,500/- per quarter per girl child of BISP beneficiary families.

In return, mothers are required to attend regular antenatal health checks and awareness sessions during pregnancy, consume specialized nutritious food (SNF), and take their children for immunization and regular health checks.



ISLAMABAD: Dr. Nawaz Ahmad Additional Secretary-1, Establishment Division giving away certificates during the 4-days workshop on Significance for Good Governance in the Public Sector.

IST, PSF collaborate to host Space Maker Camp 2023

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Institute of Space Technology (IST) has joined hands with the Pakistan Science Foundation (PSF) to host the Space Maker Camp 2023, scheduled to be held at IST from June 07-09. The camp, planned under the framework of Chinese Association of Science and Technology for Belt and Road Teenager Maker Camp, will be held in collaboration with the National Center of GIS and Space Applications (NCGSA), IST. According to an official of NCGSA, the primary objective of this camp is to ignite a passion for space exploration and serve as a catalyst in inspiring the forthcoming generation of scientists and engineers. Space Maker Camp 2023 provides a unique opportunity for students in grades 8 to 12 to immerse themselves in the design and development of Small Satellites.

Through active engagement in all phases of satellite development, students will acquire invaluable practical experience and develop a profound comprehension of satellite technology and its intricate development processes. The highlight of the camp will be the development, testing, and launch of a model student satellite at IST. This camp, organized in the context of a Memorandum of Understanding signed between IST and PSF, is the culmination of collaborative efforts between the Ministry of Science and Technology, China, and the Ministry of Science and Technology, Pakistan.

Over the course of

three days, the camp will feature a combination of lectures and hands-on activities, providing participants with valuable insights into space mission design, satellite subsystems design and integration, as well as launch and ground segment operations.

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ISLAMABAD: MOS/SAPM on Public Communication & Digital Platforms Fahd Haroon delivering a keynote speech at Microsoft EduDay event.



ISLAMABAD: Senator Saleem Mandviwalla, Convener Sub-Committee of the Senate Standing Committee on Aviation presiding over a meeting of the committee at Parliament House.

Daily Voice of Masses
Independent

Friday June 02, 2023

Free, fair & timely

The Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaf has been made to suffer a steep price for the events of May 9. It appears deflated in the wake of a sweeping crack-down against its most ardent supporters and sympathisers, and has been depleted by the exodus of several key leaders from its ranks. However, it would be a mistake to write the party off just yet.

It may be diminished, but it is not defeated. Imran Khan enjoys remarkable public support for his cause. The PTI chairman recently told his supporters that, despite whatever they may be suffering today, they have already won the narrative war.

He believes his party's message has resonated so deeply with millions of Pakistanis that it will remain alive in the hearts of a vast cross-section of the citizenry. This majority may have been forced into silence, but they will not so easily forget this message. He may not be wrong.

Mr Khan, his party and its supporters may have made some grievous missteps and mistakes in recent weeks. The right way to punish them would be to do so through the criminal justice system.

We are living in an age of unprecedented hyperconnectivity, where every act of oppression and resistance gets documented, disseminated and archived for future reference. Excessive measures by the state will only turn them into bigger martyrs in the eyes of ordinary people.

One cannot put a lid on the brewing storm by rounding up a few thousand PTI supporters or arresting and re-arresting the party's leaders. With the challenges the country is facing, especially those arising from its fast-sinking economy, the situation represents a ticking bomb. Very soon, the hungry and the desperate will be joining the political workers on the streets.

Against this backdrop, the Pakistan Institute of Legislative Development and Transparency has offered the authorities sage advice. "Only a free and fair and timely election can bring back desperately-needed political stability in Pakistan," Pildat has said.

It has asked for the prosecution of lawbreakers involved in the May 9 violence, but through civilian courts; urged the armed forces to steer clear of politics, reminding them it's not their place; and underlined the need for urgent political dialogue between the government and the PTI. Those words should be heeded. Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif may not be interested in talking to the PTI, but he must for the sake of the country.

The anger, resentment and frustration that are building up in the body politic can only be released safely through a fair fight at the polls. This is no time to repeat dangerous experiments that can only end in ignominy and regrets. The stakeholders need to take a step back and let democracy take its course. All of Pakistan should not suffer for their egos.

**Ali Tauqeer Sheikh**

At the heart of the controversies surrounding Census 2023 is the National Finance Commission award that determines the basis of financial flows from the federation to the provinces. The current formula rewards the provinces that record higher population growth rate and occasionally brings the simmering differences between more populous and less-populated provinces to a boiling point. The NFC award criteria has simply failed to keep pace with the changing times.

Instead of serving as a catalyst for accelerated and inclusive development, the NFC award has perpetuated elite capture and a political system that does not rest on local governance and service delivery institutions. Each chief minister

annually receives an envelope from the federal government. Based on an unsustainable formula, he spends it all without worrying about the provincial financial commission and without systematically transferring resources to lower tiers of government. This mechanism does not address increasing poverty, climate vulnerability, degrading physical environment, and falling quality of life indicators. In this system of top-down dispensation, the envelope is delivered without building mechanisms for performance, resource efficiency, transparency and accountability.

The soul of the NFC award continues to be a prisoner of the colonial purpose defined by Sir Otto Niemeyer in 1936 and later adopted by Liaquat Ali Khan's finance minister in 1951: the central government will collect and distribute the collected revenue to the federating units. The focus was on strengthening the capacity of the central government to collect taxes. Strengthening capacities of the federating units to generate and collect revenues was not the

objective. There was no room to tax and spend locally. The same principle has continued to drive the federal-provincial financial allocation system.

After East Pakistan left the federation, population was adopted as the sole basis for distribution of finances. Hence, the NFC award began to increase economic and social disparities between the provinces and widened the development gap between less and more populated regions simply because more financial resources were flowing into more populated areas.

This arrangement continued for 50 years and was revised only by the 7th NFC award in 2009. A new beginning was made by revisiting the formula and reducing the weightage of population to 82 per cent, resulting in 5.2pc reduction in Punjab's share. The sum that accrued created space for three additional parameters: poverty and (economic) backwardness (10pc), revenue collection and generation (5pc), and inverse population density (2.7).

This formula can be distilled into four guiding

principles that can help shape future NFC awards. First, it recognised the principle of give and take, whereby for collective benefit a province allows reduction in its given share. Second, poverty and economic backwardness were recognised as a shared concern by all provinces. Third, revenue collection and generation capacity in the provinces was recognised as a source of prosperity for all federating units. Fourth, affirmative action was taken to cater to the special needs of some federating units.

Regrettably, successive governments have failed to build upon these principles, despite some significant enabling changes introduced by the 18th Amendment. The amendment transferred 17 social sector ministries to the provinces and made it mandatory for them to make local governments functional. In reality, the then existing local governments have been withdrawn by violating the constitutional amendment. Subsequent awards, if issued, should have redefined and refined these parameters, or simply revisited their respective

percentages in order to respond to the emerging provincial needs and demands — a task that is staring in the face of the present government.

Successful federal governments have invoked debt servicing, defence, terrorism, merger of Fata with KP, the Covid-19 pandemic and climate induced-disasters to revisit the existing formula, while GB is knocking on the door for its fair share. Rather than ring-fencing, Islamabad has undermined the NFC award by randomly accessing it for contingencies. This dysfunctionality is an inevitable result of an overly centralised system that denies the provinces powers to generate and collect revenues except through property and agricultural income taxes, the latter remaining a pipe dream. Likewise, the federal government is accused of defining the services sector arbitrarily to increase its own share. Finally, the efforts to weave environment and climate resilience in development planning has been far from successful since the efforts at national and provincial levels began in the early 1990s. This has made Pa-

kistan a high-risk country, routinely suffering unbearable losses and damages. The 2022 floods alone cost over \$30 billion. The NFC award is an underutilised policy instrument for Pakistan to adopt a climate-smart development pathway. Climate-compatible NFC awards can help to systematically pursue SDG targets and build climate resilience.

Given the present transitional nature of the polity, it is unlikely that the government can constitute the commission, or muster a new consensus. What then are the government's options for immediate remedial measures? Creating a national pool of funds to manage contingencies. In operational terms, the government may like to roll back the 1pc fund that was set aside for KP to tackle terrorism, now that it has been largely tamed. The provinces have been asking to bring this pre-allocation to a closure. Herein lies an opportunity to repurpose this allocation as an inter-provincial climate risk pool. This fund can lend collective support to the provinces immediately following any climatic disasters. -- Courtesy Dawn

Will Imran ever introspect?**Taimur K Bandey**

One of the core teachings for the primary year students of the International Baccalaureate system is to learn how to reflect on their work and actions. These young elementary students are populated with the skill to introspect and learn from their journeys towards completion of any task, project or assignment. This helps them cope with a lot of academic demands of the IB system but in essence it gives them a lifelong skill to introspect at any given time of their life. Sadly, former prime minister Imran Khan wasn't taught this fundamental skill of life nor did he learn it through his vast array of experience and tremendous exposure. One of the reasons he and his party are where they are today is because he never learnt the art to stop, ponder and think twice or in his

case think three times. Post-2011 PTI was a mirror image of what Imran was all about. The leadership reflected his mind set and the followers, most of them being the youth, echoed his language and attitude. Sadly, Imran saw all those who opposed him as enemies and never wanted to try to engage with them. He sold hate to his fans and vilified all his political opponents by creating an aura of negativity and hostility towards the opposing political parties/politicians.

He personally attacked them with very serious charges and when in a lighter mood he would mock them by name calling, body shaming, misogynist remarks or through his homophobic/transphobic statements. All this while his fans picked up in numbers and applauded him when he resorted to all of the above. Strangely not many of his followers; if any, called him out for his sexism, bigotry, vilification and charges without proof. His media trial of the leading political parties and their leaders was covered by all forms of the media and was seen more as a form of entertainment by many

PTI voters. He had a name for all the leading politicians that he hated and made sure that his fans hated too. The envious attention Imran captured through his rhetoric, utopian claims and a mirage of hopes was mesmerizing with many willing to overlook so many of his shortcomings and lies that they would have handed others for.

Imran's past, his U-turns and his contradictions were valiantly defended in public and on social media by many of his hardcore followers. The word 'troll' was used for some diehard online Imran fans as they would hunt you in pairs every time you dared to either question or disagree with what he said or claimed. Imran Khan's era polarized society and created friction within homes, friendships and even relationships.

But the biggest turn of events was when his narrative was picked up by certain journalists, channels and social media activists who became holier than the king and took Imran's already extreme and violent narrative to a different level. Many made a fortune in the process and gained enormous popularity within

Pakistan and especially outside Pakistan. There came a point where instead of Imran giving them themes and trajectories to work on, they started doing the same to/ for him. The tail indeed started wagging the dog.

This was a turning point for his politics as those journalists or social media activists who had millions of viewers or followers now started and raised the narratives for Imran Khan. They started a very well-structured design of fake news which they were able to transmit to millions within seconds through their YouTube channels or social media handles and the blinded zealots would buy the most unbelievable and the vilest of accusations and statements about anyone without any fact checking, probe or questioning. Reason, logic and facts were oblivious and evasive in this situation — thus resulting in humongous power in the hands of those who actually started to set the ball rolling for the party through Imran Khan.

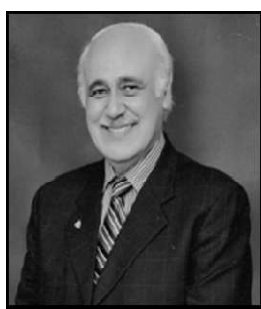
Those sitting abroad and sitting pretty didn't care much about the reactions and counter-argu-

ments and continued to raise the political temperatures in the country while Imran followed their lead carelessly and without question. The term Khan-fidence emerged after Imran grew in size and became louder and more aggressive in his language, tone and approach. He became the most popular leader — at least on social media, certain channels, surveys and the by-elections after his ouster as the PM of Pakistan. In this entire roller coaster journey one can't find instances of action or words when one could presume Imran has paused and reflected upon his actions. We could not find any introspection and the blinded zealots would buy the most unbelievable and the vilest of accusations and statements about anyone without any fact checking, probe or questioning. Reason, logic and facts were oblivious and evasive in this situation — thus resulting in humongous power in the hands of those who actually started to set the ball rolling for the party through Imran Khan.

Those sitting abroad and sitting pretty didn't care much about the reactions and counter-argu-

institutions. Imran seemed unconquerable and his valiant keyboard warriors made sure the impression remained true. They attacked all opposing voices at all media platforms. They ran ugly and ruthless campaigns against dissenting voices in the country. They lied and lied to such an extent that it felt true to even those that didn't support him.

The wild and often brutal narrative had many takers and few to scrutinize it. They mocked all those arrested during his regime and laughed when the opposition faltered. They sat on this moral high ground where their filthy and often personal attacks were pat-tered by Imran himself. Then came the events of May 9, 2023 and everything suddenly changed. Of course, Imran Khan probably did not ask his followers to go and burn every military installation etc but when you sell so much hate against all your opponents. When you constantly ask your fans to come out on the streets to protest. When you name and shame men in the military all the time. What do you expect out of your blind followers? -- Courtesy TheNews

'Noli me tangere'**F.S. Aijazuddin**

The term 'untouchable' has a different connotation in each culture and religion. To Christians, the words noli me tangere are attributed to Jesus Christ who, after his resurrection, deterred his follower Mary Magdalene from touching him.

In other cultures, untouchability, although officially discouraged, has been practised nevertheless — in China, against the Tanka people; in Europe, the Romani gypsies; in France, the Cagots; in Japan, the Burakumin; in Korea, the Baekjeong; in Nigeria, the Ohuhu and Osu, in Tibet, the Ragyabpa; in Yemen, the Al-Akhdam; in South Africa, the Bantus (Blacks) and the Coloureds; and in the United States, the Blacks and Hispanics.

Discrimination abounds wherever humans are found. Man is an unsocial man. He creates distinctions from his fellow men, enforcing practices that are discriminatory, humiliating, exclusionary and exploitative.

In India, the world's largest functioning democracy, now the world's most populous nation, and soon to be the world's largest saffron theocracy, untouchability is the hate 'that dare not speak its name'. It had been abolished officially in the Indian constitution of 1950, because of the influence of its major author Dr B.R. Ambedkar, himself an untouchable Dalit.

Another Dalit to achieve a ministerial position in Indian politics was Jagjivan Ram. He served in

the cabinets of both Jawaharlal Nehru and his daughter Indira Gandhi. She gave Jagjivan Ram the ministries of defence (1970-74) and of agriculture and irrigation (1974-77), but while she was prepared to share a table with him in cabinet meetings, she preferred not to offer him a place at her dining table.

Today, Muslims in India are the new Dalits. They are beyond being untouchable. They are unwanted in their homeland.

In Pakistan, the word 'untouchable' is closer to the Cambridge Dictionary definition. Its entry reads: "...not able to be punished, criticised, or changed in any way".

Name one individual or institution in our society that does not regard itself if not at par, then above or beyond the law.

Parliament seeks to curtail the powers of the judiciary. The judiciary retaliates with a pre-emptive strike hamstringing the legislature. The law is above the law.

Political parties demand democracy in the country but eschew elections within their own parties. Benazir Bhutto handed the PPP to her widower Asif Zardari, who shares it with their son Bilawal. Nawaz Sha-rif yields the prime ministership to his you-n-ger brother Shehbaz Sharif and the PML-N party to his daughter Maryam Na-waz. Imran Khan nominates Shah Mah-mood Qureshi as his unelected successor.

The Election Commission which has had five years to oil and service the electoral machinery tells the Supreme Court that it cannot hold the elections in May as demanded by law, but is happy to do so at some future unspecified date. It has flouted constitutional provisions and also evaded the dictates of the Supreme Court.

Once, an Indian parliamentarian

complimented on India's success in holding general elections. He replied: "Any fool can hold elections. The maturity of our democracy was when Mrs Gandhi lost the 1977 elections, she handed over power to the Janata Party. And when it lost the 1979 elections, it handed power back to her Congress party."

Another lesson was provided by the Indian experience after Mrs Gandhi's declaration of a national emergency in 1975. It provoked such outrage that there were rumours of a military takeover by the field marshal, Sam Manekshaw. According to him, during their meeting, she questioned him about rumours circulating in Delhi of a military coup. He recalled later that he put his long nose near her long nose and from this unlikely proximity, reassured her that as long as he was chief, she had nothing to fear from him.

Each elected prime minister in Pakistan craves a similar reassurance from his uni-form subordinate. The present prime minister Shehbaz Sharif is unlikely to repeat the mistake made by his elder brother, when in 1998, emboldened by the ease with which he removed COAS General Jehangir Karamat, Nawaz attempted to remove his successor General Pervez Musharraf. He paid for his petulance.

Faced with the prospect of stormy general elections whenever, Shehbaz Sharif must view his contemporaries with envy. N. Modi — PM since 2014 — is set for another five-year term. The Bangladeshi PM, Sheikh Hasina Wajed, has been in power since 2009. Turkish President Erdogan, after 20 years in the saddle, has just been re-elected to ride for a third term. President Xi Jinping and the de facto Saudi ruler Mohammed Bin Salman are secure for life. -- Courtesy Dawn

34th National Games in Quetta: A path to peace**By Hamza Shahzad**

Balochistan has confronted the security challenges over the years. Balochistan has struggled with security challenges postured by terrorism, insurgency, and religious violence. These disastrous incidents have had a damaging effect on the province's reputation and stalled its tourism potential. The unstable security condition in the past has discouraged tourists and damaged the province's image, leading to a weakening in tourism opportunities.

Despite the security challenges, Balochistan has shown extraordinary spirit and progress in fighting terrorism. The province has assumed substantial actions to improve security, reinforce law enforcement agencies, and restore peace. These efforts have brought about a significant reduction in security incidents, raising an environment favorable to tourism and investment. In February 2023, after 7 years, a PSL exhibition match was played in Quetta which picked the interest of the people of Balochistan and they came from all over Balochistan just to show their love for peace and show their hospitality. But this was just a

wind of change.

After 19 years of continuous hard work by Security forces, the government of Balochistan and the loving people of Balochistan, the 34th National Games were held from 22nd May to 30th May 2023, in Quetta. This represents an astounding journey of struggle for peace and unity in a province factually dogged by conflict and volatility.

The 34th National Games Quetta, arise as an inspiration of hopefulness in the province dealing with long-standing obstinacies. By organizing an inclusive sporting event, the Games challenge the usual narrative of war and separation. This Event provided a chance for athletes from various backgrounds and areas to come together and compete beyond social, ethnic, and political dissimilarities. The Games sent a powerful message that peace and unity can triumph even in hardships.

The 34th National Games Quetta served as a platform for endorsing inter-provincial harmony and nurturing a sense of national integration. 7000 Athletes and officials from all over Pakistan participated in various sports disciplines, on behalf of their respective provinces and departments. The event created an atmosphere of friendship and harmony, where athletes had the opportunity to connect, learn from one another, and build lasting interactions. Through healthy competition, the Games reinforced the shared

uniqueness of being Pakistani, endorsing unity.

The journey towards organizing the 34th National Games in Balochistan contains substantial public engagement and empowerment. Local authorities i.e. Quetta Metropolitan Corporation, District administration, community leaders, and volunteers have worked together to ensure the success of the event. This event also provided platform for showcasing the talents of local players, fostering their potential and reassuring sports contribution at the grassroots level. This enablement will contribute to the growth of an optimistic and wide-ranging community spirit, and the development of a sense of pride and belonging among inhabitants.

The 34th National Games in Quetta stands as evidence of the flexibility and willpower of the people of Balochistan motivated for peace and unity. Beyond its significance as a sporting event, the National Games represent the spirit of endorsing coherence, and stirring social change. By yoking the power of sports, the 34th National Games Quetta is creating a platform for negotiation, sympathy, and friendship, flagging the way for a positive and more peaceful future. As the event has been concluded, its impression on the region will help as an aide-memoire that a unified effort can turn the tide of terrorism into a journey of hope and progress.

Govt striving for best medical facilities: CM

Naqvi reviews progress on Lahore's development projects

Independent Report
LAHORE: Caretaker Chief Minister Punjab Mohsin Naqvi on Thursday said that the government was striving to provide the best medical facilities to patients in public sector hospitals related to heart emergencies.

He was chairing a meeting at his office to review the progress of primary angiography in hospitals.

During the briefing, it was revealed that a total of 5,534 primary angiographies were performed in government hospitals of various districts in the past five months. As many as 3113 primary angiographies were performed in the morning shift of nine government hospitals and 1866 in the night shift,

ensuring a 67% increase in these hospitals on the instructions of Caretaker Chief Minister Mohsin Naqvi.

The meeting also reviewed the proposal to set the target of angiography/angioplasty in every government hospital to facilitate patients.

The meeting was attended by Provincial Minister Dr Javed Akram, President of the Pakistan Society of International Cardiology Dr Zaheer Akram, health secretary, Dr. Farqad Alamgir, DG Rescue 1122, and others.

Meanwhile, Caretaker Chief Minister Punjab Mohsin Naqvi chaired a meeting at his office to review the progress on Lahore's major development projects and

establish timelines for their timely completion.

Addressing the meeting, CM Mohsin Naqvi emphasized that development projects must adhere to the prescribed timelines. He instructed the officials to expedite the initiation of new projects, ensuring prompt decision-making regarding designs and other necessary matters. Any delay or negligence in public welfare development projects will not be tolerated, he warned.

To minimize inconvenience to citizens during the construction phase, the meeting emphasized the need for the best alternative traffic plans and suggested that alternative routes should be suggested for best managing traffic load.



PESHAWAR: Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Haji Ghulam Ali talking to a 30-member delegation of the Ittehad Malikan (Alliance of Maliks) which called on him here at the Governor's House.

Governor says: Era of progress, development about to begin in merged districts

PESHAWAR (APP): Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Haji Ghulam Ali has said that the era of real development and prosperity in the merged districts is about to begin now, powers and funds will be transferred to the merged districts through the elected local government representatives very soon.

He was talking to a 30-member delegation of the Ittehad Malikan (Alliance of Maliks) which called on him here at the Governor's House on Thursday.

The delegation led by Haji Lali Shah was comprising Muhammad Afzal Khan, Malik Ayaz, Malik Sultanzeb, Malik Hafizur Rahman, Haji Syed Ahmad Jan, Mufti

Hanifullah, Malik Khanzeb Malik Faqir, Malik Faqir, Malik Wali, Malik Hasib, Malik Ehsanullah, Malik Fazl Rabi, Malik Shater, Malik Usman, Malik Muhammad Shah, Malik Wazir, Malik Shirin, Malik Mashuq, Malik Nawaz Khan, Malik Abdul Nasser, Malik Hazrat Noor, Malik Umar Wahid, Malik Muhammadyar, Malik Khanzada, Abu Bakr Shah and others. Provincial Ministers Mohammad Adnan Jalil and Fazal Elahi were also present on the occasion.

The Governor said that the transfer of powers and funds will help in development of all areas of the merged districts and development initiatives will be seen at the street level.

Minister for early dredging, desilting of all nullahs

RAWALPINDI (APP): Caretaker Provincial Minister Housing and Public Health Engineering, Barrister Syed Azfar Ali Nasir Thursday directed Water and Sanitation Agency (WASA) to complete the dredging and desilting projects of all nullahs by June 30 to ensure drainage of water in case of heavy rains.

The minister directed WASA officials in a meeting held here at the Commissioner's Office, where he was given a detailed briefing on different ongoing projects and the performance of different departments.

Commissioner Rawalpindi Liaquat Ali Chatha, Deputy Commissioner, Rawalpindi, Hasan Waqar Cheema and heads of all the departments concerned participated in the meeting.

Later, addressing a press conference, the minister informed that on the special directives of the Punjab Chief Minister, the performance of the government departments was being reviewed.

"We are striving to improve individual performance of the government officials through effective monitoring."



KARACHI: Famous Industrialist and Businessman Aqeel Karim Dhedi calls on Governor Sindh Kamran Khan Tessori.

Psychiatric training session for employees of PBC, APP held

PESHAWAR (APP): Psychiatric training session for the employees of Radio Pakistan and Associated Press of Pakistan Peshawar was held here Thursday after their offices were burnt down by the violent mob on May 10 last.

The trauma training session was organized by Iftikhar Psychiatric Hospital Peshawar at the premises of Radio Pakistan Peshawar building.

Renowned psychiatrist, Professor Dr

Iftikhar Hussain shared his experience and professional knowledge with the employees of both the organizations regarding combating trauma, anxiety and depression after such horrible incidents.

He said such trauma situation could be countered through shared will power, positivity and strength. He said such tragic and catastrophic situations come on nations and it could out of it through strong belief on their own abilities.

Caretaker minister visits HR Directorate, inquired about operational matters

PESHAWAR (APP): Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Caretaker Minister for Law and Human Rights (HR) Justice (Retd) Irshad Qaisar here Thursday visited Directorate General Law and Human Rights and inquired about its working and operational matters.

Director General Human Rights Muhammad Idrees Khan briefed the minister about the working of the directorate and the status of human rights in the province.

He informed the caretaker minister about the modus operandi of inquiries and cases under KP Promotion, Protection and enforcement Act 2014. He also highlighted the

work of Media Research Wing, training courses, workshops and a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed with Islamia College and Benazir Women University.

Speaking on the occasion, the caretaker minister was directed to compile a report of problems being faced by the directorate and said that efforts would be made to resolve them. Expressing satisfaction over working in the directorate, he said that monitoring of human rights would be further improved in the province. She also suggested proposals to improve the performance of the directorate.

Murad takes up KCR project to resolve its land issues

KARACHI (APP): Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah has once again taken up Karachi Circular Railway (KCR) Project and directed the Board of Revenue (BOR) to resolve all its land issues so that a joint working group with Chinese authorities and the federal government could be constituted for further action.

This emerged in a meeting held under his chairmanship here at CM House, said a statement on Thursday.

The meeting was attended by Minister of Information & Transport Sharjeel Memon, Advisor Law Murtaza Wahab, Chief Secretary Sohail Rajput, Chairman P&D

Hassan Naqvi, SMBR Baquallah Unar, Secretary to CM Raheem Shaikh, Secretary Transport Saleem Rajput, and others.

Sindh Minister for Transport Sharjeel Memon said that the project was put on the back burner during the tenure of the PTI government. Otherwise, the project was most important to resolve the transport problem of the city.

Chairman P&D told the chief minister that the federal government, with the efforts of the chief minister, has sent the feasibility of the KCR to Chinese authorities through the Ministry of Planning & Commission of

Pakistan. Sharjeel Memon said that inclusion of KCR in CPEC and handing over of KCR Right of Way (RoW) to the Government of Sindh, the Chairman/Secretary of Railways constituted a four-member committee of Railway Officers to finalize the modalities regarding handing over of Pakistan Railway/KCR land to the provincial government. The highlights of the TORs of the Committee include negotiation of equal value of alternate and proposed land and future use of land.

Sindh Minister for Transport said that there was an issue of around 40 acres of land for which Railway authorities wanted to have an alternate land.

3 of robbers gang held, arms, stolen motorcycles recovered

KARACHI (APP): Pakistan Rangers Sindh and Police in a joint intelligence based operation in Orangi Town arrested three of an alleged robbers gang and recovered stolen motorcycles, illegal arms and ammunition from their possession.

Arrested were identified as Noman alias Chotta, Zeeshan and Moods, according to a news release issued here on Thursday.

During initial interrogation they confessed their involvement in more than 70 robberies and snatched 150 mobile phones, cash Rs. 0.5 million from citizens and stolen 10 motorcycles. Raids were being conducted to arrest their other accomplices.

Indonesian Embassy to organize "A Night at Lahore Museum" on June 17

LAHORE (APP): The Embassy of the Republic of Indonesia in collaboration with the Lahore Museum will organize a week-long photo exhibition titled "A Night at Lahore Museum: Tracing the Confluence of Civilizations Between Indonesia and Pakistan", on June 17 (Saturday) at Lahore Museum.

Talking to the officials of the Lahore Museum and journalists in Islamabad, the Ambassador of Indonesia Adam Tugjo warmly invited the Pakistani friends to the Exhibition and to celebrate the rich cultural heritage of the two Muslim brotherly countries.

"Let's embrace the spirit of friendship and witness together the exciting display of cross-cultural connectivity and convergence of Indonesia-Pakistan civilization through past and present journeys".

Transgender school opened in Sargodha

SARGODHA (Online): Education department has opened school for eunuchs in Sargodha under the directives of the government. Over 25 eunuchs have got admission in the school and started educational activities. It was told that not only books, uniform and free transport facility will be provided to eunuchs but also scholarship will be granted to them. Muhammad Ilyas Bajwa, spokesperson of education department has said transgenders have appreciated this step saying for the first time a good project has been introduced by the government.



LAHORE: Senator Chaudhry Jaffar Iqbal, called on Governor Punjab Muhammad Balighur Rehman at Governor House.

Punjab Governor says: Politics of chaos is not in the interest of the country

Independent Report

LAHORE: Senator Chaudhry Jaffar Iqbal, called on Governor Punjab Muhammad Balighur Rehman here at Governor House Lahore today. Current situation of the country and issues of mutual interest were discussed in the meeting.

Speaking on this occasion, Punjab Governor, Muhammad Balighur Rehman, said that political stability plays pivotal role in economic stability, the politics of chaos is not in the interest of the country. He said that the development and prosperity of the country lies in unity and solidarity.

Governor Punjab said that the country is currently facing huge economic challenges.

He said that the government under the leadership of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif is utilizing all resources to mitigate the financial problems of the poor and middle class of Pakistan.

Governor Punjab said that the government is determined to provide relief to the people in the recent budget. Governor Punjab said that Muslim League (N) had taken steps for the welfare of the people in its previous tenures.

He said that politics is the name of selfless service to the people.



FAISALABAD: Special Assistant to Prime Minister on Religious Harmony and Chairman Ulema Council Pakistan Maulana Tahir Mehmood Ashrafi addressing a press conference.

CTP lodges 36 FIRs against encroachers

RAWALPINDI (APP): City Traffic Police (CTP) Rawalpindi, on the directives of Deputy Inspector General Traffic, Punjab Dr. Usman Anwar. CTP conducted operations under the supervision of Commissioner Rawalpindi Division and City Traffic Officer, Rawalpindi and cleared several areas while 36 FIRs were also lodged against encroachers during last month, he said.



MUZAFERABAD: Director Sheikh Mohammedbin-Rashid Al Maktoum Foundation Sheikh Saleh Muhammad Al-Mazrooqi cuts the ribbon along with Member Legislative Assembly of Kashmir Javed Ayub to inaugurate School at Hattya Bala area of Kashmir.



KARACHI: Sindh Chief Minister, Syed Murad Ali Shah presiding over a meeting regarding Karachi Circular Railways (KCR), held at CM House.

Cases of perpetrators should be taken to logical end: Javed Latif

LAHORE (APP): Federal Minister Mian Javed Latif on Thursday said that the cases against the perpetrators of May 9 incidents should be taken to a logical end as it was utmost necessary to protect security and sanctity of the state. Sparing the elements involved in the planning of this terrorist incident may cause more such incidents in future, he said adding sufficient evidence of internal as well as external conspiracy in this incident was also available.

Addressing a press conference at Model Town, Javed Latif said that no state could compromise to ensure strict punishment to the elements involved in such activities as it was a matter of national security. He alleged that the

Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) was training its workers for a year to attack state properties and military installations in case of arrest of Imran Khan. Had the foreign funding case against the PTI been concluded, May 9 incident may not have occurred since there were evidences of funding from foreign countries to the PTI in the case as the May 9 incident was also a conspiracy against the country executed by the PTI. He said today about mistreatment with women inmates involved in May 9 incidents were being raised but nobody spoke over treatment with PML-N Chief Organizer Maryam Nawaz when she was kept in death cell during the PTI regime.

CM condemns terrorist attack

LAHORE (APP): Caretaker Chief Minister Punjab Mohsin Naqvi has strongly condemned the terrorist attack on the security forces checkpoint near the Pakistan-Iran border and expressed deep admiration for the courage displayed by the security forces in thwarting the attack. He paid tribute to the brave soldiers, Hasnain Ishtiaq and Inayatullah, who fearlessly defended against the terrorists at the cost of their own lives. Their heroic sacrifice deserves the utmost respect and reverence, he said and added that the indomitable spirit of the martyred heroes has elevated their status to the highest level. The nation will forever cherish and honor the everlasting sacrifices made by the martyrs, he emphasized. The CM has extended unwavering solidarity and heartfelt condolences to the families of the martyrs.



KARACHI: Begum Samina Arif Alvi visiting the society for the Rehabilitation of Special Children Centre.

LHC nullifies detention orders of Yasmin, PTI workers including of Punjab

LAHORE (Online): Lahore High Court (LHC) has nullified detention orders of PTI workers in 11 districts of Punjab including Lahore.

Justice Safdar Salim Shahid of LHC announced 9-page decision on different petitions of identical nature under which the detention orders of PTI workers including Dr Yasmin Rashid have been declared null and void. According to decision the arrest orders of PTI workers from Lahore, Wazirabad, Jhang, Sheikhpura, Hafiz Abad, Sialkot, Mandi Baha ud Din, Gujarat, Nankana Sahib, Gujranwala, Narowal have been nullified.

It has been further said in LHC order May 9 incidents depicted the distorted picture of peaceful and democratic

country. Maintaining law and order was responsibility of government. Sorrowful reaction came all over the country on arrest of political leader. Government issued several detention orders without thinking in connection with May 9 incidents. Had government evidence then there was too much time for making arrests in criminal cases. The decision further said the allegations should have been in the knowledge of the arrested persons so that they could defend themselves. Lifting the citizens without cases and putting them into jails is sorrowful. In every notification of Deputy commissioner the citizens were sent to jail on the report of only DPO. The detention decision by deputy commissioners.

Seminar held on 'Police Tahaffuz Markaz'

SARGODHA (APP): Police and the National Commission for Human Development organized an awareness seminar on 'Police Tahaffuz Markaz' at Government Anbala Muslim College on Thursday.

District Police Officer Muhammad Faisal Kamran attended the seminar as a special guest. A large number of representatives of various organizations and students from various departments of the college participated in the seminar.

Principal Government Muslim Anbala College Professor Muhammad Mazhar Abbas, Deputy Director NCHD Umar Daraz Jhauri, District officer Population Welfare Aftab Ahmad Awan and Victim Support Officers of Police Tahaffuz Markaz expressed their views in the seminar.

PM Shehbaz says: Pakistan considered Japan as vital partner for its progress & prosperity

Invites Japanese companies to invest in Pakistan

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif Thursday said Pakistan considered Japan as an important partner for its progress and prosperity and Japanese companies should avail the immense opportunities for investment in Pakistan.

The PM was speaking to President Toyota Asia Yoshiki Konishi and Chief Executive Officer of Indus Motors Ali Asghar Jamali who called on him here.

Japan's Ambassador to Pakistan Mitsuhiro Wada, Vice Chairman Toyota Indus Motors Shinji Yanagi, Minister for Finance Ishaq Dar, Minister for Industries and Production Makhdoom Murtza Mehmood, Advisor to PM Ahmad Cheema, Special Assistants to PM Jehanzeb Khan and Tariq Bajwa and high ranking officials attended the meeting.

In a briefing, the prime minister was told that

Toyota Indus Motors for the first time established a unit for the production of hybrid vehicles in Pakistan with an investment of \$100 million.

PM Shehbaz Sharif welcomed the project of Toyota to produce hybrid vehicles in Pakistan.

The production of hybrid vehicles in Pakistan would decrease the import bill resulting in saving of precious foreign exchange, he said adding the government was providing

all available facilities to the industries for investment in modern technologies in the country.

The Japanese ambassador said leading Japanese companies were desirous of further investment in Pakistan.

During the briefing, it was told that in the current year from July, Toyota Indus Motors would start export of spare parts of vehicles and these exports would make Pakistan a part of the global supply chain.



ISLAMABAD: A delegation of Toyota Indus Motors led by President Toyota Asia Mr. Yoshiki Konishi and CEO Indus Motors Ali Asghar Jamali calls on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif, Japanese Ambassador to Pakistan H.E. Mitsuhiro Wada, Federal Ministers Ishaq Dar, Makhdoom Murtaza Mehmood, SAPMs Jehanzeb Khan and Tariq Bajwa were also present in the meeting.



ISLAMABAD: Finance Minister Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar held a meeting with delegation of Islamabad Industrial Association on Budget 2023-24 proposals, at FBR.

Ambassador says: Establishment of Italian Trade Agency office to enhance bilateral trade

ISLAMABAD (APP): Italian Ambassador to Pakistan Andrea Ferraresi Thursday expressed hope that establishment of the Italian Trade Agency (ITA) office in Islamabad and assignment of the first Italian Trade Director to Pakistan would enhance trade cooperation between the two countries.

"I am pleased to share with you exciting news: that is the establishment of the Italian Trade Agency (ITA) office in Islamabad and the assignment of the first Italian Trade Director to Pakistan would be a major step towards

enhanced trade cooperation between the two countries", the ambassador said in his message on the upcoming celebration of 77th anniversary of the Republic Day, National Day of Italy.

He told the APP "We shall continue to explore the avenues with a focus on agriculture, renewable energy, textiles, construction and tourism. Collaboration in fields of textiles, agriculture, livestock, marble, pharmaceuticals, and mass manufacturing will help enhance Pakistan's industrial scope and

increase exports of value-added goods".

The ambassador further stated that the fifth Italy-Pakistan Joint Economic Commission (JEC) took place on May 29-30 in Rome, where the two sides agreed to establish a joint framework to deal with climate change and cooperation in water management.

He said both sides signed an important "Roadmap for Cooperation" which covered climate change, trade & investment, heritage & culture, agriculture.

FBR collects Rs 605b gross revenues in May

ISLAMABAD (APP): Despite challenges, the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) with its tremendous effort collected gross revenues of Rs 605 billion during the month of May, the board said in a statement issued here Thursday.

According to the statement, against a target of Rs 621 billion, FBR was able to collect Rs 572 billion net revenue, while refunds amounting to Rs 33 billion were issued during the month.

The board collected Rs 205 billion in May 2023 under the head of domestic income tax compared to Rs

131 billion in May 2022, thereby showing a growth of 57%. A healthy year-on-year growth of 28% was achieved in the domestic sales tax with collection of almost Rs 100 billion.

Around Rs 41 billion were collected as Federal Excise Duty (FED) showing a year-on-year increase of 32%.

A cumulative growth of almost 44% has been achieved in the collection of domestic taxes.

"This is despite the fact that the economy has slowed down and GDP growth rate has been revised downward.



SARGODHA: Student attends classes during Skill Summer Camp 2023 at Government College of Technology for Women.

US Deputy Chief of Mission engages stakeholders on trade, climate, green shipping

ISLAMABAD (APP): US Deputy Chief of Mission Andrew Schofer participated in a stakeholder consultation on trade, climate, and green shipping in Pakistan organized by the US Agency for International Development (USAID).

During the discussion, policy makers and private-sector leaders identified existing issues and challenges related to climate change, with a specific focus on promoting green and sustainable shipping practices in Pakistan, said a news release. The participants developed a set of recommendations and a common vision for a path forward.

"Through the US-

Pakistan 'Green Alliance' framework, our two countries are jointly preparing to meet the environmental and economic challenges of the future, especially climate change, while spurring sustainable and inclusive economic growth," DCM Schofer said.

He said, "Through events like the one today, we are encouraging bilateral dialogue on climate action, and exploring innovative solutions to build Pakistan's climate resilience." In his keynote address, Federal Minister for Maritime Affairs Syed Faisal Ali Subzwari highlighted the importance of addressing climate change and promoting sustainable shipping practices in Pakistan.



HYDERABAD: Farmers are engaged in harvesting peas in the field.

Meher Kashif says: Trade expansion between Pak, Kyrgyzstan possible

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chairman Kyrgyzstan Trade House Meher Kashif Younis on Thursday said the trade relations between Pakistan and Kyrgyzstan had the potential to grow and expand in various sectors. Talking to a delegation of industrialists led by Faran Shahid, he said, "While the current trade volume between the two countries is relatively modest, there are several areas where both nations can benefit from increased cooperation and trade," said a press release.

He said the bilateral trade between the two countries had historically been limited but has shown potential for growth, adding that in recent years, both countries had expressed their commitment to enhancing trade ties and serious endeavors for improving transportation links, simplifying customs

procedures, and strengthening trade facilitation measures, which can contribute to boosting trade volumes. He said both countries could also explore opportunities for cooperation in the agricultural, education and pharmaceutical sectors.

Pakistan was known for its agricultural produce, including fruits, vegetables, rice, and textiles, Younis said, adding that Kyrgyzstan, on the other hand, had a rich agricultural base and was known for its exports of walnuts, dried fruits, and honey. "Collaboration in this sector can lead to the exchange of agricultural products and expertise," he emphasised. Meher Kashif Younis said Pakistan had a well-established textile industry, and Kyrgyzstan could benefit from sourcing textiles and apparel products.

World now acknowledging Pakistani youth expertise in IT: IT Minister

Amin inaugurates Pakistani pavilion at GITEK Global Exhibition

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for IT and Telecommunication Syed Amin Ul Haque on Thursday said that World now acknowledging Pakistani youth expertise in Information Technology and Telecom sector.

"Pakistan's skilled IT experts, time zone, and fluent English speaking with excellent accents have unique importance in Digital World. The World is now openly acknowledging the expertise of Pakistani youth in information technology. The minister expressed these views during meetings with different International delegations on the sidelines of GITEK Africa Digital Summit, and the Global tech exhibition being held in Morocco from May 31 to June 2.

The meetings discussed global challenges including revolutionary initiatives in the IT &

Telecom sector by the Government of Pakistan said a news release received here.

The Minister also held an important meeting with Secretary General Digital Cooperation Organization (DCO), Ms. Deemah Al-Yahya. During the meeting, both sides discussed bilateral issues and measure to enhance digital cooperation between the member states of DCO.

Vice President of Dubai Chamber of Digital Economy, Saeed Al-Gerghavi also met with IT Minister Syed Amin Ul Haque and discussed investment opportunities in IT and telecom sector in Pakistan.

Mr. Babajide Sanwo-Olu, Governor of Lagos, Nigeria, also called on Federal Minister for IT Syed Amin Ul Haque.

Federal Minister for Information Technology and Telecom Syed Amin Ul

Haque on Thursday inaugurated the Pakistani pavilion at the GITEK Global Exhibition summit in Morocco.

A three-member Pakistani delegation led by Minister IT Syed Amin Ul Haque comprising Member IT Syed Junaid Imam and Chairman PASHA Zohaib Khan is attending GITEK Africa Digital Summit, said a news release.

About 14 tech companies, 10 start-ups and more than 200 IT experts from Pakistan are participating in GITEK-23 Exhibition in Morocco for the first time.

Former Minister for IT and Transport of Morocco Rabbah Aziz, Huawei Africa President Colin Hu and many prominent personalities and Global tech leaders visited Pakistan's Pavilion and showed their great interest in the items displayed at the pavilion.



MOROCCO: Federal Minister for IT and Telecommunication Syed Amin Ul Haque in a meeting with Secretary General Digital Cooperation Organization (DCO) Ms. Deemah Al-Yahya on the Sidelines of GITEK Africa Digital Summit.

Acting Chinese envoy calls on Ishaq Dar

ISLAMABAD (APP): Acting Charge'd Affairs, Embassy of the People's Republic of China Ms Bao Zhong Thursday called on Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar and discussed matters of mutual interest.

The minister highlighted the deep-rooted, long-standing bilateral ties between Pakistan and China, and appreciated the Chinese support to Pakistan on multiple fronts, said a press release.

He also apprised the envoy of the economic situation of the country and the progress in the ongoing IMF programme.

Ms Bao Zhong reciprocated the sentiments about the strong bilateral ties between the two countries.

PSX loses 63 points

ISLAMABAD (APP): The 100-index of the Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) lost 63.79 points on Thursday, a slight negative change of 0.15 per cent, closing at 41,266.77 points against 41,330.56 points the previous day. A total of 99,950,613 shares were traded during the day as compared to 158,102,664 shares the previous day, whereas the price of shares stood at Rs.2,867 billion against Rs.6.167 billion on the last trading day. As many as 303 companies transacted their shares in the stock market.

FTO disposes of 2,297 complaints in 4 months

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Federal Tax Ombudsman (FTO) disposed of around 2,297 tax-related complaints during January-April 2023, showing an increase of 64.42 per cent compared to the same period of last year (2022).

According to an official document available with APP, compared to the corresponding months of 2021 during which the FTO Secretariat disposed of 769 cases, the disposal rate witnessed a 198.6 per cent increase in 2023.

"A comparison of first four months (January to April) shows a remarkable upward trend visa-a-vis registration and disposal of complaints,"

says a quarterly report released here by the FTO. According to the report, as many as 2,467 complaints were registered during 2023 compared to registration of 1,784 in 2022 and 903 in 2021, posting a considerable growth of 38.28 per cent and 173.2 per cent against 2022 and 2021; respectively.

Due to consistent efforts and effective coordination with the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR), implementation of FTO recommendations jumped to 1,513 in 2023, showing an upward trend of 172.6 per cent compared to 555 in 2022 and 179.6 per cent compared to 541 in 2021, the report says.

Railways approach govt departments to pay outstanding dues

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Ministry of Railways has expedited the efforts and approached the federal and provincial departments to recover outstanding billion of rupees dues on account of using its land and other services.

"Minister for Railways Khawaja Saad Rafique has asked the official concerned to approach the federal and provincial departments for recovering the outstanding amount as soon as possible," an

official in the Ministry told APP.

About the amount payable against the different departments, the official said that over Rs 8375million (over 8 billion) are payable by different departments on account of using its land and various services.

The federal departments had to pay an amount of Rs 709.084 million, provincial departments Rs1980.217 million and autonomous and private bodies Rs 5685.736 million.

Rupee gains 08 paisas against US Dollar

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistani rupee gained 08 paisas against the US Dollar (USD) in the interbank trading on Thursday as it closed at Rs285.38 against the previous day's closing of Rs285.46.

However, according to the Forex Association of Pakistan (FAP), the buying and selling rates of dollars in the open market stood at Rs 290 and Rs 293, respectively.

The price of the Euro increased by 19 paisas to close at Rs 304.67 against the last day's closing of Rs304.48, according to the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP).



SIALKOT: Shoab Sarwar Ambassador posted at the Embassy of Pakistan in Denmark in a group photograph with Muhammad Ejaz Ch, chairman PGMEA and Gloves exporters at PGMEA.

US-China tensions expected to dominate Asia security meeting

Monitoring Desk
SINGAPORE: Tensions between the United States and China are expected to loom over Asia's top security meeting this week, as China has declined a bilateral meeting between the superpowers' defence chiefs.

The Shangri-La Dialogue, which attracts top defence officials, senior military officers, diplomats, weapons makers and security analysts from around the globe, will take place from June 2-4 in Singapore.

More than 600 delegates from 49 countries will attend the meeting, which opens with a keynote address by Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese.

Analysts say the dialogue is invaluable for the many bilateral and multilat-

eral military-to-military meetings held on the sidelines of plenary sessions and speeches delivered by defence ministers.

China's new Defence Minister Li Shangfu, however, has declined to meet US Defence Secretary Lloyd Austin, the Pentagon said on Monday.

China's defence ministry spokesperson said in response to a query at a news conference in Beijing that exchanges between the two militaries have always been ongoing but that the US was "entirely to blame" for current difficulties.

"On the one hand, the US keeps saying that it wants to strengthen communication, but on the other hand, it ignores China's concerns and artificially creates obstacles, seriously undermining the



US House Speaker Kevin McCarthy (R-CA) wraps up a press conference in the Rayburn Room following the House vote on Fiscal Responsibility Act at the US Capitol in Washington, DC.

US House overcomes divisions, passes debt ceiling bill

WASHINGTON: In a closely divided vote, the US House of Representatives approved a bill to suspend the \$31.4 trillion debt ceiling on Wednesday.

The legislation received support from both Democrats and Republicans, enabling it to overcome opposition from conservative factions and prevent a potentially catastrophic default. The Republican-controlled House voted 314-117 in favor of the bill, which will now proceed to the Senate for enactment before the impending Monday deadline when the federal government is projected to exhaust its funds.

President Joe Biden expressed his satisfaction with the passage of the bill and urged the Senate to quickly pass it to be signed into law. The legislation, a compromise between Biden and House Speaker Kevin McCarthy, faced opposition from 71 hardline Republicans. However, with the backing of 165 Democrats, it managed to surpass the 149 Republican votes in favor and secure passage. The Republican party holds a narrow majority in the House, with a split of 222-213. The bill effectively suspends the federal government's borrowing limit until January 1, 2025. This timeline allows Biden and Congress to defer addressing this politically sensitive issue until after the 2024 presidential election. Additionally, the legislation imposes spending caps over the next two years.

Ukraine says Russia again blocking Black Sea grain export deal

Monitoring Desk
KYIV: Ukraine's ministry of renovation and infrastructure said on Thursday the U.N.-brokered Black Sea grain export deal had been halted again because Russia had blocked registration of ships to all Ukrainian ports.

The United Nations and Turkey brokered the Black Sea Grain Initiative between Moscow and Kyiv last July to help tackle a global food crisis aggravated by Russia's invasion of Ukraine, a leading global grain exporter.

Russia agreed in May to a two-month extension of the deal but has said the initiative will cease unless an agreement aimed at overcoming obstacles to Russian grain and fertilizer exports is fulfilled.

"The Joint Coordination Centre in Istanbul (which oversees the initiative) has announced that it is impossible to draw up an inspection plan for June 1 due to another unjustified refusal of the Russian delegation to register the incoming fleet for participation in the Initiative," the Ukrainian ministry said on Facebook.

It said Russia had registered only one incoming ship for inspection in the last two days of May and had given no explanation for the move, which the ministry said was a "gross violation" of the initiative.

Russia did not immediately comment on the ministry's statement.

Ukrainian officials have said that since mid-April, Russia has "unreasonably restricted" the work of the Black Sea grain deal. It said 50 vessels are waiting for inspection in Turkish territorial waters and that they were ready to deliver 2.4 million tonnes of Ukrainian food abroad. Some vessels had been waiting for inspections for more than 3 months.



Chinese Foreign Minister Qin Gang meets with Noeleen Heyzer, special envoy of the secretary-general of the United Nations (UN) for Myanmar, in Beijing.

Nato secretary general to travel to Turkiye to discuss Sweden's Nato membership

Monitoring Desk
OSLO: Nato Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg said on Thursday he would soon travel to Turkiye to discuss Sweden's Nato membership, in a bid to close a process that has been delayed due to objections from member countries Turkiye and Hungary.

Speaking during a two-day meeting of Nato foreign ministers in Oslo, Stoltenberg said he had spoken earlier this week to Tappin Erdogan, who was re-elected as Turkiye's president on Sunday.

"I will also travel to Ankara in the near future to continue to address how we can ensure the fastest possible accession of Sweden," Stoltenberg told reporters.

Some Nato foreign ministers expressed optimism that now the election was over, Ankara would lift its objections to Stockholm's bid to join the military alliance. Turkiye ratified Finland's Nato accession in March, but says Sweden harbours members of militant groups it considers terrorists.

"Now that Turkish elections are over, it is important that Turkiye goes on with the ratification process," said Finnish Foreign Minister Pekka Haavisto.

NK leader's sister says US hypocritical for criticizing failed satellite launch

Monitoring Desk
SEOUL: The powerful sister of North Korean leader Kim Jong Un on Thursday accused the United States of "gangster-like" hypocrisy for criticizing her country's failed launch of a military spy satellite and insisted a successful launch will be made soon.

Kim Yo Jong said North Korea's efforts to acquire space-based reconnaissance capabilities were a legitimate exercise of its sovereign right and restated the country's rejection of U.N. Security Council resolutions that ban it from conducting any launch involving ballistic missile technology. Her comments on state media came a day after the rocket carrying the satellite failed. North Korea said the rocket lost thrust after a stage separation and crashed in waters off the Korean Peninsula's western coast.

Washington, South Korea and Japan had quickly criticized the launch. Adam Hodge, a spokesperson at the U.S. National Security Council, said Washington strongly condemns the North Korean launch because it used banned ballistic missile technology, raised tensions and risked destabilizing security in the region and beyond. In her statement, Kim Yo Jong briefly mentioned Hodge's comments before saying the United States "is letting loose a hackneyed gibberish prompted by its brigandish and abnormal thinking."

"If the DPRK's satellite launch should be particularly censured, the U.S. and all other countries, which have already launched thousands of satellites, should be denounced. This is nothing but sophism of self-contradiction," she said, using the initials of North Korea's formal name, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. She noted how the United States closely monitors the North through its own reconnaissance satellites and other aerial assets, calling the Americans a "group of gangsters" who would deem it as "illegal and threatening" had North Korea attempted to send a satellite into space by balloon.

UN chief implicitly criticizes Cambodia's upcoming elections after top opposition party ban

Monitoring Desk
UNITED NATIONS: U.N. Secretary-General Antonio Guterres implicitly criticized Cambodia's upcoming elections Wednesday for failing to be inclusive, after the top opposition party was not allowed to register. The Candlelight Party would have been the sole credible challenger to the governing Cambodian People's Party in the July elections, but the country's Constitutional Council last week refused to overturn a ban on its registration in a decision that cannot be appealed.

"The secretary-general reiterates that inclusive elections, in which a plurality of views and voter choices is represented, are impor-

US 'warned' of action against Australia over Afghan war crimes

Monitoring Desk
SYDNEY: Australia's defence chief said on Wednesday the United States warned him in 2021 that allegations Australian special forces soldiers killed prisoners and civilians in Afghanistan may trigger a law prohibiting assistance from the United States.

The United States is Australia's biggest security alliance partner and Angus Campbell's comments are the first time it has been publicly disclosed there was a disruption to defence ties. Asked by Greens Senator David Shoebridge how long the US Department of Defence had suspended engagement with Australia's special forces, Campbell told a parliamentary committee: "There was a precautionary period where we looked to our arrangements."

Lebanese army court charges 5 men allegedly linked to Hezbollah for Irish peacekeeper's death

Monitoring Desk
BEIRUT: Lebanon's military tribunal on Thursday charged five men with the killing of an Irish U.N. peacekeeper in December, a senior judicial official said. The official, speaking on condition of anonymity in line with regulations, alleged all five are linked with Lebanese militant group Hezbollah.

The indictment followed a half-year probe after an attack on a U.N. peacekeeping convoy near the town of Al-Aqbiya in Lebanon's south, a stronghold of Hezbollah. The shooting resulted in the death of Pvt. Sean Rooney, 24, of Newtown Cunningham, Ireland, and seriously wounded Pvt. Shane Kearney, 22. The wounded peacekeeper was medically evacuated to Ireland. Two other Irish soldiers sustained light injuries.

The indictment includes evidence from bystanders' testimonies, as well as audio recordings and video footage from surveillance cameras, the Lebanese official said. In some of the recordings of the confrontation, the gunman reportedly could be heard telling the peacekeepers that they are from Hezbollah.

Hezbollah has denied any role in the killing, and a spokesperson for the group declined to comment on the indictments Thursday.

One of five indicted, Mohamad Ayyad, is currently in custody of Lebanese authorities. The four others facing charges - Ali Khalifeh, Ali Salman, Hussein Salman, and Mustafa Salman - are at large.



Security checkpoints at the venue of the 19th Shangri-La Dialogue in Singapore.

UAE withdraws from US-led maritime coalition

Monitoring Desk
ABU DHABI: The United Arab Emirates has withdrawn from a US-led maritime coalition tasked with securing Gulf waterways that are vital to the global oil trade, it said on Wednesday. The UAE "withdrew its participation" in the 38-nation Combined Maritime Forces two months ago, a foreign ministry statement said, without giving reasons for the move. "As a result of our ongoing evaluation of effective security cooperation with all partners, two months ago, the UAE withdrew its participation in the Combined Maritime Forces," said the statement carried by the official WAM news agency.

The Bahrain-headquartered CMF was established in 2001, initially as a partnership between 12 nations. It is active in crucial but troubled Gulf waters where tankers have been seized and attacked in recent months.

A spokesperson for the Combined Maritime

Berlin orders closure of four Russian consulates

Monitoring Desk
BERLIN: Germany said on Wednesday it will drastically reduce Moscow's diplomatic presence on its soil in response to a similar move from Russia, in the latest escalation of tensions over the war in Ukraine.

Berlin has ordered four of Moscow's five consulates in Germany to close, a foreign ministry spokesman told a regular government press conference.

"This was communicated to the Russian foreign ministry today," the spokesman said.

The move comes after Moscow put a limit of 350 on the number of German personnel allowed in Russia, according to the spokesman.

This will mean that hundreds of civil servants and local employees working for German institutions in Russia will have to leave the country.

Danish PM delivers speech partly written by AI

Monitoring Desk
COPENHAGEN: Danish Prime Minister Mette Frederiksen on Wednesday delivered a speech to parliament partly written using artificial intelligence tool ChatGPT to highlight the revolutionary aspects and risks of AI.

The head of the Danish government was giving a traditional speech as parliament gets ready to close for the summer. "What I have just read here is not from me. Or any other human for that matter", Frederiksen suddenly said part-way into her speech to legislators, explaining it was written by ChatGPT. "Even if it didn't always hit the nail on the head, both in terms of the details of the government's work programme and punctuation... it is both fascinating and terrifying what it is capable of", the leader added.

ChatGPT burst into the spotlight late last year, demonstrating an ability to generate essays, poems and conversations from the briefest of prompts. The programme's wild success sparked a gold rush with billions of dollars of investment into the field, but critics and insiders have raised the alarm. Common worries include the possibility that chatbots could flood the web with disinformation.

NASA talks UFOs with public ahead of final report on unidentified flying objects

Monitoring Desk
CAPE CANAVERAL: NASA held its first public meeting on UFOs on Wednesday a year after launching a study into unexplained sightings and insisted it's not hiding anything.

The space agency televised the four-hour hearing featuring an independent panel of experts who vowed to be transparent. The team includes 16 scientists and other experts selected by NASA including retired astronaut Scott Kelly, the first American to spend nearly a year in space. "I want to emphasize this loud and proud: There is absolutely no convincing evidence for extraterrestrial life associated with unidentified objects, NASA's Dan Evans said after the meeting. Still, hundreds of questions from the public that poured in ahead of time were skeptical and veered into conspiracy theories.

NASA launched the study to probe what it calls UAPs — short for unexplained anomalous phenomena — in the sky, in space or under the sea. Optical illusions can explain some of this, said Kelly, a former Navy fighter pilot. He recalled a Tomcat flight off Virginia Beach years ago during which his radar intercept officer in the back seat was convinced they'd flown past a UFO.

"It turns out it was Bart Simpson, a balloon," Kelly said. "And in my experience, the sensors kind of have the same issues as the people's eyeballs." Evans pointed out that the livestream of the meeting led to considerable trolling. That comes on top of "online abuse" directed toward several committee members. Harassment detracts from the scientific process and reinforces the stigma surrounding the topic, said Evans, adding that NASA security is dealing with it.

"It's precisely this rigorous, evidence-based approach that allows one to separate the fact from fiction," he said. The group is looking at what unclassified information is available on the subject and how much more is needed to understand what's going on in the sky, according to astrophysicist David Spergel.

Taiwan donates \$5 mln towards rebuilding Ukraine with Lithuania

Monitoring Desk
VILNIUS: Taiwan has donated five million dollars to help rebuild Ukraine, a Lithuanian government investment agency said on Wednesday.

The funds will be spent towards rebuilding a school in Borodianska and a kindergarden in Ipin, Central Project Management Agency said in a statement.

Lithuanian government has spent 9.8 million euros (\$9.2 million) towards the rebuilding, and the Taiwanese contribution will be used to purchase educational equipment.

"Taiwan sees Ukraine as our own image in a different continent. We both face authoritarian regimes which do not shy from using force to impose its world view", Taiwanese Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Roy Chun Lee said introducing the donation in Vilnius.

"If one day Taiwan is facing an increased level of military intimidation from China, we will be looking for your assistance as well, just as we are helping Ukraine", he added.

In 2022 China downgraded its diplomatic ties with Lithuania, and told multinationals to sever ties with Lithuania or face being shut out of the Chinese market, after the opening of a representative office by Taiwan in Vilnius.



People attend the funeral of five members of a Palestinian group Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command members, in Damascus, Syria.

President Alvi for boosting cooperation to synergise efforts for differently abled children

KARACHI (APP): President Dr. Arif Alvi, on Thursday, stressed upon coordination and cooperation among all stakeholder and organisations working for differently abled children to synergise their efforts so that rehabilitation of special children could be carried out in a holistic and inclusive manner.

The president expressed these views in a meeting with representatives of Association of Retarded Children Karachi (ARCK) here at Sindh Governor House.

First Lady Begum Samina Arif Alvi was also present in the meeting.

Dr. Arif Alvi noted that government as well as charitable organisations had taken a range of measures for rehabilitation, education and vocational training of

special children and their financial empowerment and integration in the society.

He said that differently-abled children above the age of 9 years could be registered with NADRA with special status that enabled their access to special facilities being offered by the government.

Awareness about the special children and their specific needs had raised in previous years but considering the number of such children in the country more initiatives and interventions were required, he maintained.

The president appreciated ARCK for its contributions for the cause of education, training and rehabilitation of retarded children for more than 50 years and encouraged the association to look into possibility of

joining other organisations working for the same cause to strengthen their efforts and outreach.

Begum Samina Arif Alvi, at the occasion, also emphasized the need of coordination among all relevant associations and organisations to reinforce the efforts aimed at rehabilitation of special children through education and vocational training.

The ARCK delegation briefed the president about performance of the association, facilities available at their school and issues being faced.

Later, President Dr. Arif Alvi, along with Begum Samina Arif Alvi, also observed handicrafts and artefacts prepared by special children of ARCK and appreciated their hard work and artistic beauty.



KARACHI: President Dr. Arif Alvi and Begum Samina Arif Alvi posing for a group photo with delegation of Association of Retarded Children Karachi and special children at Governor House.

Pak Navy Ship conducts rescue operation in Arabian Sea

KARACHI (APP): Pakistan Navy Ship (PNS) SAIIF while carrying out a routine patrolling in the Arabian Sea, expeditiously responded to a distress call by a stranded Fishing Vessel AL ZUBAIR and saved the valuable lives of six fishermen.

The fishing vessel had suffered engine failure and subsequent flooding due to rough sea conditions, a Pakistan Navy news release said.

PNS SAIIF swiftly responded to the distress call at night and safely recovered six stranded fishermen.

Medical assistance was provided onboard and the fishermen were subsequently shifted to Gwadar. The fishermen's community has lauded the efforts of the Pakistan Navy in saving precious lives at sea.

and intimidating the Kashmiri people. It is a manifestation of India's unending and pervasive oppression in IIOJK where political leaders and human rights defenders are routinely incarcerated on trumped up and baseless charges. She remarked we urge the Indian authorities to bring an end to this farce of a trial of Mr. Yasin Malik. He must be provided quality health treatment and allowed to live freely among his people and family. India must also immediately and unconditionally release the Kashmiri leadership and human rights defenders who are being unjustly held in prisons in IIOJK and across India. She held at the invitation of President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif will attend the inauguration ceremony.

Pak, UAE discuss ways to strengthen economic cooperation

ISLAMABAD (Online): We are deeply concerned over India's latest move seeking death penalty for prominent Kashmiri leader, Yasin Malik.

This was said by Foreign Office (FO) spokesperson Mumtaz Zahra Baloch in weekly press briefing here Thursday.

She held last year, Yasin Malik was awarded life sentence in a contrived case, marked by fabricated charges and denial of fair trial. He is being held in inhumane conditions in the notorious Tihar jail despite his deteriorating health. Mr. Malik is being denied access to family members, privileged access to lawyers and quality health treatment.

India's latest move is another instance of political vendetta aimed at silencing the Kashmiri leadership

Pak, UAE discuss ways to strengthen economic cooperation

ISLAMABAD (APP): Ambassador of the United Arab Emirates, Hamad Obaid Ibrahim Salim Al-Zaabi, called on Federal Minister for Finance & Revenue Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar.

During the meeting, they conversed about the deep rooted brotherly ties and discussed various areas of common interest for further strengthening the trade and economic ties between the two countries, said a press statement issued by finance ministry.

BPPRA officially launches its e-procurement software in Morocco

Independent Report

QUETTA: The Balochistan Public Procurement Regulatory Authority (BPPRA) achieved a significant milestone on the global stage as it officially launched its e-procurement software, branded as "Tender Expert," at the JETIX Africa Digital Summit in Morocco.

The e-procurement software, introduced by BPPRA, is a comprehensive procurement solution tailored for suppliers, procurement agencies, and regulators.

It serves as a unique tool for governments to ensure transparency, economic growth, fair competition, and value for money.

More than 15 companies and startups from Pakistan are actively participating in the digital summit. The Balochistan delegation was welcomed at the Pakistan Pavilion by Federal Minister for Information Technology and Telecommunication, Syed Amin ul Haque.

The delegation from Balochistan, led by Minister for Finance, Engineer Zamarak Khan Achakzai, is participating in the JETIX Africa Digital Summit.

Earlier, Federal Minister for Information Technology and Telecommunication, Syed Amin ul Haque, inaugurated the Pakistani Pavilion at the JETIX Global Exhibition Summit in Morocco on Thursday.

BHC announces summer vacation for Sibi and Makran benches

Independent Report

QUETTA: According to an official statement from the Balochistan High Court, the Sibi and Makran Benches will observe summer vacations for a period of two months, specifically from June 5, 2023, to August 4, 2023. During this time, all routine judicial proceedings will be suspended.

As per the statement, the working hours of the Sibi and Makran Benches' offices will be from Monday to Thursday and Saturday, from 9:00 AM to 1:00 PM and from 9:00 AM to 12:00 PM, respectively. On Fridays, the courts will remain closed.

The Sibi Bench will follow this schedule according to the roster, while the working hours of the Makran Bench will be from Monday to Thursday and Saturday, from 9:00 AM to 12:00 PM, and on Fridays from 9:00 AM to 11:00 AM.

The court vacation period allows esteemed judges to conduct hearings on essential cases during these vacations at the Principal Seat in Quetta.

MCKRU computer science degree to get NCEAC accreditation soon

Independent Report

QUETTA (APP): The Computer Science program of Mir Chakar Khan Rind University (MCKRU) will soon get registration of National Computing Education Accreditation Council (NCEAC).

It was disclosed by Dr. Bakhtiar Khan Kansari, a professor of Balochistan University of Information Technology Engineering and Management Sciences (BUITEMS) during his visit to MCKRU along with NCEAC officials, a press release Thursday said.

He interacted with the

Ayesha Zehri inspects under-construction mosque in Nasirabad

Independent Report

NASIRABAD: Deputy Commissioner Ayesha Zehri visited the Chakhdara neighborhood to assess the progress of the construction work on an under-construction mosque, on Thursday.

Following a court case related to the mosque's renovation, the Deputy Commissioner granted approval for the mosque's architectural plans. Tehsilidar Majeer Rehman, esteemed religious scholars, and community members were also present during the occasion.

During discussions, Deputy Commissioner Ayesha Zehri emphasized that no encroachments on the mosque's land would be tolerated. The land has been dedicated for the mosque as an endowment (waqf). This mosque holds historical significance as one of the ancient mosques of Dera Murad Jamali. Therefore, the local community has initiated reconstruction efforts to restore the mosque's glory. The district administration of Nasirabad is committed to ensuring the mosque's land remains free from any unauthorized occupation.

Nazar Baloch says Institute of Ombudsman operates independently to facilitate the masses

Independent Report

QUETTA: Governor Malik Abdul Wali Khan Kakar addressed a one-day seminar titled "The Role of Ombudsman in Safeguarding Public Rights and Good Governance" organized by the Accountability Institution, Thursday.

The special guest at the seminar was the President of Pakistan, Dr. Arif Alvi. The event was attended by Governor Balochistan, Malik Abdul Wali Khan Kakar, Federal Ombudsman Ejaz Qureshi, Members of the Assembly, former judges, lawyers, representatives from civil society, students, and officers from the Accountability Institution.

During his speech at the seminar, Advocate Nazir Mohammad Baloch explained the purpose of establishing the Ombudsman institution, highlighting the difficulties faced by the people in remote areas of Balochistan in accessing justice. He emphasized that the establishment of the Ombudsman institution was aimed at addressing these challenges so that individuals who fear bias in official proceedings or encounter legal complexities and financial constraints in pursuing their cases could have immediate and free access to justice in their own districts.

Governor Balochistan stated that the institution of Ombudsman operates independently, receiving complaints and initiating investigative actions. The responsible officers and representatives of relevant institutions are called for questioning regarding the complaints, and after a thorough process, decisions based on justice and the law are made.

Gwadar connected to national grid

GWADAR (INP): The isolated Makran division grid has been connected to the national grid, providing another 100 megawatts electricity to Gwadar.

This was disclosed by Jawwad Akhtar Khokhar, Advisor Maritime Affairs at the Planning Commission of Pakistan, while talking to Gwadar Pro.

Khokhar said that the 286-kilometre long, 132kV dual-circuit transmission line through Naal-Basima-Naag-Panjgur was energised on May 30. Gwadar now receives a total of 300MW of electricity through three transmission lines, two from Iran and the new one from the national grid, he said.

In addition, the official said that the 1.2 million gallons per day water desalination plant being completed with the Chinese grant of Rs2 billion will be inaugurated on June 30.

PML-Q requests SC to reject petitions filed against SCPPA

Independent Report

ISLAMABAD (Online): PML-Q has requested the Supreme Court (SC) to reject the petitions filed against Supreme Court Practice and Procedure Act (SCPPA).

In its 12-page reply filed through advocate Zahid F Ibrahim, PML-Q has taken plea that the act will enhance the independence of judiciary rather than curtailing it. Earlier the opportunity for reforms was lost after lawyers' movement in the country.

Section 4 of act broadens the jurisdiction of SC. Section 3 of the act does not belittle use of powers under section 184 (3) by judiciary.

Former chief justices Itikhar Chaudhry, Gulzar Ahmad and Saqib Nisar used powers mercifully.

15 lives lost in 767 traffic accidents reported on N-25 in May: MERC

Independent Report

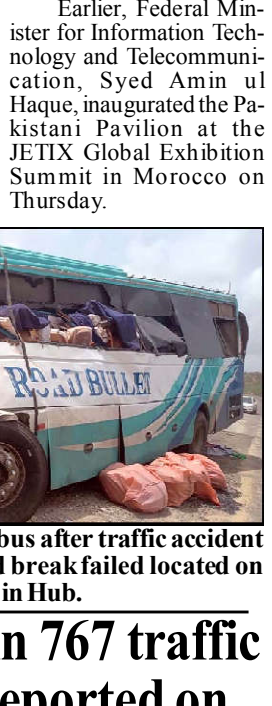
QUETTA: The goddess of death continues to march on Balochistan's blood-soaked highways due to the absence of dual carriageways, claiming countless valuable lives every year.

According to the monthly report released by the Medical Emergency Response Center, Rescue 1122 Balochistan, in the month of May, a series of traffic accidents occurred on Balochistan's national blood highways, resulting in 767 incidents. Tragically, these accidents claimed the lives of 15 individuals, while leaving 1,104 injured.

As per the monthly operational report of the Medical Emergency Response Center, Rescue 1122 Balochistan, the highest number of accidents were reported on the N-25 near the Winder-Lasbela junction. The report reveals that a total of 158 incidents involving various traffic accidents occurred at the Winder and Lasbela Tire junctions. Among these incidents, three individuals lost their lives, and 197 individuals sustained injuries, who were promptly rescued and provided with first aid by the Medical Emergency Response Center 1122 at Winder and Tire Junction centers.

The monthly operational report released by the Medical Emergency Response Center, Rescue 1122 Balochistan, sheds light on the performance and statistics of Balochistan's national highways, including N-25, N-50, N-85, N-65, and N-70.

HUB: View of damaged bus after traffic accident due to over speeding and break failed located on Karachi Quetta Highway in Hub.



Police recovers stolen vehicle in 24 hours

QUETTA (APP): Shalkot Police Thursday recovered a stolen vehicle within 24 hours snatched from the driver by unknown thieves near the Hazarganji area of the district.

According to police sources, the victim had lodged a complaint with Shalkot Police Station that unknown robbers snatched his Suzuki Pickup after tying him with rope in the Saadat Market area of Hazarganji and fled away.

The police team cordoned off the entire area and recovered the stolen pickup after conducting a search operation. Further investigation was underway.

Siachen glacier world's highest battlefield melting faster: Sherry Rehman

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Climate Change Senator Sherry Rehman on Thursday said Siachen was the highest battlefield in the world, and the Siachen glacier was melting very fast which was directly jeopardising the local communities facing severe glacial lake outburst floods (GLOFs).

She was addressing the concluding session of the second day of the Leaders in Islamabad Business Summit titled "Changing Narratives".

Senator Rehman said when glacial lakes erupt, they wash away bridges and small dams. The government was informing the local communities on im-

Siachen glacier world's highest battlefield melting faster: Sherry Rehman

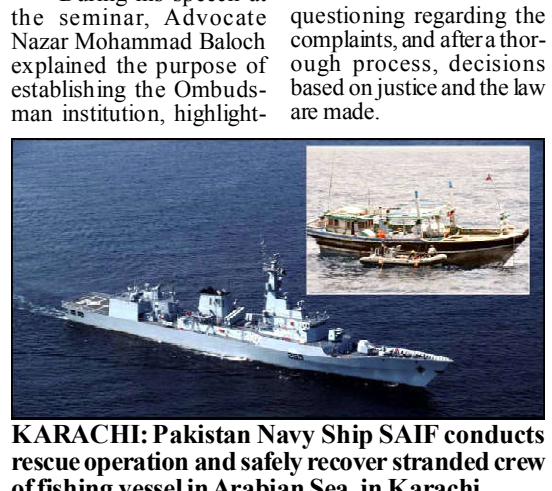
pending risk of GLOF through an early warning system being put in place that indicated expected GLOF event.

She added that water scarcity would not happen now, but there was a need to control the use of this water.

"Pakistan is facing serious environmental challenges and is not ready for future in terms climate and environment. It has suffered heavy losses," Sherry Rehman said.

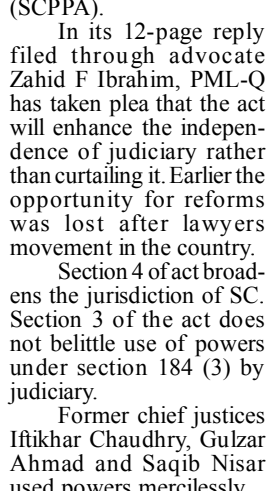
She queried, "Are developed countries doing anything for climate financing?" However, a conference on climate financing in France would be held in June, she added.

Pak Navy Ship SAIIF conducts rescue operation and safely recover stranded crew of fishing vessel in Arabian Sea, in Karachi.



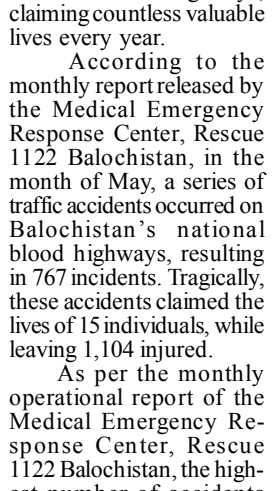
KARACHI: Pakistan Navy Ship SAIIF conducts rescue operation and safely recover stranded crew of fishing vessel in Arabian Sea, in Karachi.

Business Summit 2023: The Big Rethink



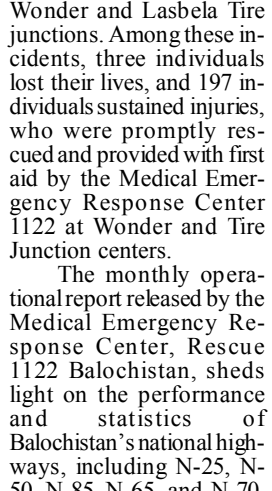
ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Climate Change Senator Sherry Rehman addressing the concluding session of the second day of the Leaders in Islamabad Business Summit.

Business Summit 2023: The Big Rethink



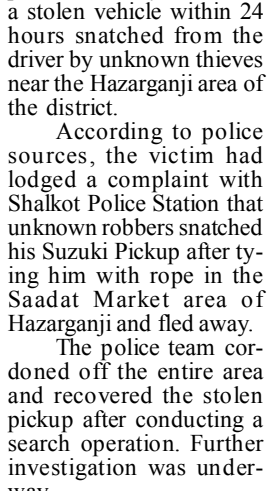
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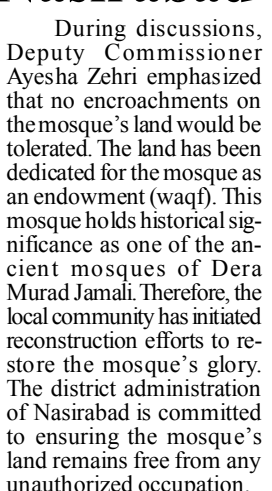
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