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Quetta

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Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif chairs meeting of the National Economic Council in Islamabad.

Approves Rs 2.709 trillion ADP for FY 2023-24 NEC approves Rs 248 billion development budget for Balochistan

PM says govt to bring about Green Revolution to achieve self-sufficiency in agriculture: Decides to shut markets across country by 8pm to conserve energy

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Tuesday said that the government was launching a Green Revolution 2.0 to make the country achieve self-sufficiency in the agriculture field. The prime minister, who chaired the meeting of the National Economic Council here, said the government was taking all-out

measures to innovate the agriculture sector to enhance the production and per acre yield. He said economic development topped the government's priorities for which it was investing in education, health, modern infrastructure, and technology sectors. The NEC approved a reviewed Public Sector De-

velopment Program 2022-23 and national development budget for fiscal 2023-24 with an outlay of Rs2709 billion. Under the development program, the center would spend Rs1150 billion including Rs200 through public-private partnership and Rs950 billion of PSDP. The total provincial development budget would

be Rs 1559 billion. This includes Rs 426 billion for Punjab and Rs 268 billion for KP, for a period of four months as both the provinces were awaiting general elections and being ruled by caretaker setups. The NEC approved Rs 617 billion development budget for Sindh and Rs 248 billion for Balochistan. **Continued on page 2**

CJP is constitutional post: No one else can use charge of chief justice on basis of presumptions: CJP

Says Powers of chief justice or judge cannot be reduced as per requirement; Before confirming facts, can government officials accuse judges? Justice Akhtar; Is govt using resources to find out where, how audios being recorded? CJP asks.

ISLAMABAD (Online): Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) Umar Ata Bandial has remarked Chief Justice of Pakistan is a constitutional post and no one else can use the charge of chief justice on the basis of presumptions. He further observed chief justice was available in this case who was not informed about the constitution of commission. It was not in the knowledge of CJP and commission was formed. He further observed the Attorney General (AG) should first understand law

before reading the references of courts decisions. AG should tell on what basis he presumed that there is conflict between three judges among us. The second important issue is independence of judiciary. Ascertain it if the twitter handle is operating from within or outside the country. Did the government ascertain by using its resources audio's recording is being made from where and how. Who is doing all this. The constitutional petitions against formation of audio leaks inquiry com-

mission came up for hearing before a five members bench of SC presided over by CJP Umar Ata Bandial here Tuesday. It was told by AG that verification whether these audios are false or true has yet to be made by federal government. The CJP remarked what a beautiful procedure it is and what justice has been done with the judiciary. First the judges were insulted on these audios and then said " we get do the verification of veracity of these videos now. **Continued on page 2**

CM, Home Minister slam killing, seek report: Senior lawyer gunned down by unknown armed men in Quetta city

Independent Report QUETTA: A senior lawyer of Supreme Court, Abdul Razzaq Shar was brutally shot dead by unknown armed men on the main Airport Road here on Tuesday morning.

According to the police, Abdul Razzaq Shar was on his way by car to the courts from his residence located in Chiltan Scheme when he was approached by the armed men and opened indiscriminate fire on him. He sustained serious bullet wounds and died on the spot before he was taken to the hospital. However, his body was carried to the civil hospital for legal formalities and post-mortem. Soon after the brutal killing, the area police and rescue teams reached the spot. While on the other

hand, relatives and colleagues of the senior lawyer also reached the civil hospital, on hearing the tragic news of his murder. A senior police official informed that the cold-blooded murder of Abdul Razzaq Shar is being thoroughly investigated from different angles and aspects. Meanwhile, the body of Abdul Razzaq Shar was moved to his residence from the civil hospital mortuary. The police surgeon told that Abdul Razzaq Shar was hit from two sides with 9MM pistol that resulted in his death.

Meanwhile, the Chief Minister Mir Abdul Qudus Bizenjo and provincial Minister Home, Mir Ziaullah Langau have strongly condemned the fir **Continued on page 2**

Shah Mahmood Qureshi released from Adiala jail

RAWALPINDI (INP): Vice Chairman Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) and former foreign minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi was released from Adiala Jail Rawalpindi on Tuesday.

Earlier, the Lahore High Court (LHC) Rawalpindi bench ordered the immediate release of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Vice Chairperson Shah Mahmood Qureshi. High court judge Justice Chaudhry Abdul Aziz heard the case and declared the detention of PTI Vice Chairperson Shah Mahmood Qureshi as 'illegal'. The court ordered Qureshi to submit an affidavit to the Rawalpindi deputy commissioner within three days of his release.



IRAQ: Minister of Foreign Affairs of Pakistan Bilawal Bhutto Zardari in a meeting with head of Islamic Supreme Council of Iraq Dr Sheikh Humam Hamoudi during his visit of Iraq for bilateral relations in various fields of cooperation.

Pakistan, Iraq agree to strengthen ties in diverse fields

BAGHDAD (APP): Pakistan and Iraq have agreed to further strengthen their bilateral ties in diverse fields. The understanding was reached during meeting between Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari and head of Islamic Supreme Council of Iraq Sheikh Dr Hamoudi in Baghdad today.

They discussed ways to enhance bilateral cooperation in trade and investment and efforts for peace and stability of the region and beyond. Meanwhile Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari and Speaker of Iraq's Parliament Mohamed al-Halbousi on Tuesday discussed the bilateral ties between Pakistan and Iraq. During a meeting held in Baghdad, the two sides also noted that the cooperation between the parliaments would further

strengthen the brotherly relations between the two countries, said a press release issued here. The foreign minister said that the high level parliamentary exchanges between the two countries were significant which would be helpful in taking advantages of the each other's experiences. Separately, the foreign minister also held a meeting with Iraq's Hikmat Party President Ammar al-Hakeem. They discussed the political ties between the two countries and other issues of mutual interest.

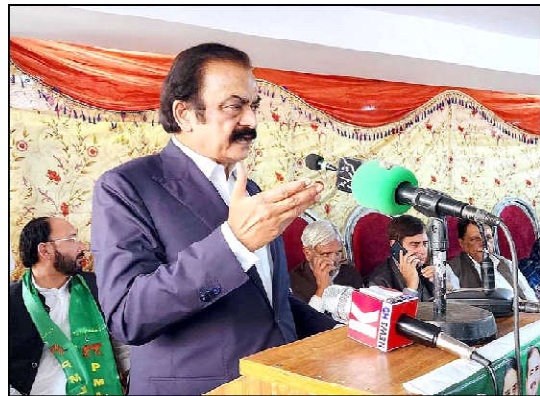
The foreign minister termed the high-level political linkages between the two countries as highly important. For the promotion of public to public relations, the political contacts between the two countries were vital, he added.

Portfolio of Minister P&D withdrawn from Noor Muhammad Dumar

Independent Report QUETTA: In an expected move, the portfolio of the Minister Planning and Development Department has been withdrawn from Noor Muhammad Dumar. The official sources said that the portfolio of the P&D was taken back from Mr. Dumar on his participation in the meeting of National Economic Council in Islamabad. While the Chief Minister Mir Abdul Qudus Bizenjo had clearly announced to boycott the NEC meeting on the "non cooperative" attitude of the federal government regarding the province. Despite this, the senior Provincial Minister went to Islamabad to participate in the NEC meeting.

Sanaullah urges AJK people to vote for PML-N as 'future belongs to it'

BAGH (AJK) (APP): Minister for Interior Rana Sanaullah on Tuesday urged the people of Azad Jammu & Kashmir to vote for the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) in the June 8 by-polls in LA-15, Bagh-II as "the future of Pakistan belongs to it". Speaking at an election gathering of PML-N candidate Mushtaq Minhas, he said the changing circumstances were favourable for PML-N, and it would resume the journey towards **Continued on page 2**



BAGH: Interior Minister Rana Sana Ullah Khan addressing a public gathering.

To stop supply of wheat and flour Section 144 imposed all over Balochistan

Independent Report QUETTA: The section 144 has been imposed all over the Balochistan province especially in Naseerabad Division in order to stop the supply of wheat and flour from the province to other provinces. This was announced in an official handout issued here on Tuesday. According to the handout, the main objective behind the initiative is to stop the movement and transportation of wheat produced in the province to

outside so that there is no shortage of wheat and flour in the province till next production season. This would also ensure stability in prices of the wheat and flour in the province. It was also mentioned in the handout that the target of wheat purchase target has not only been achieved after a long time by increasing the support price of the wheat but it is also being ensured to prevent the illegal supply of wheat from the province.



QUETTA: Governor Balochistan Malik Abdul Wali Khan Kakar being briefed during his visit to University Law College

Balochistan budget likely to be presented on June 16 Institutions can be strengthened further by pursuing merit: Governor

Independent Report QUETTA: The next financial year budget of the Balochistan province is likely to be presented on June 16, 2023.

According to the official sources, total volume of the next financial year budget of the province is expected to be upto Rs. 700 billion. The sources said that almost 5,000 new jobs would be created in the next financial year.

The 20 percent raise is expected in the salaries of the government employees in the next financial year budget. The sources also told the short term development schemes are expected to be included in the budget.

Three terrorists killed by CTD

SWAT (INP): Three terrorists were killed in retaliation after they attacked an investigation team of the Counter-Terrorism Department (CTD) and police in Swat district.

According to the CTD spokesperson, terrorists opened fire at the investigation team in Banjot village of Swat district. Three terrorists were killed in retaliation by the CTD and police officials.

Kakar visits University Law College: Institutions can be strengthened further by pursuing merit: Governor

Independent Report QUETTA: The Governor Balochistan, Malik Abdul Wali Kakar has categorically stated that the institutions can be strengthened further by pursuing merit and transparency in them.

The Governor was speaking on occasion of the visit of University Law College Quetta on Tuesday. He visited different parts of the University Law College and inspected its various sections. He also got briefing about the overall working of higher institution dealing in law education.

He said that the con-

scious and sensitive people prefer to lead life under a specific purpose instead of mere for salaries. He said that it is our responsibility to provide all necessary facilities to the future lawyers of the country and province. He also exhorted the young lawyers to benefit from the modern day technology and available resources in the present era. The Governor assured to provide necessary facilities including the transport, digital library, hostel, auditorium and mock court room in the University Law College.

Earthquake of magnitude 4 jolts Swat, Malakand, surroundings

ISLAMABAD (INP): An earthquake mild intensity jolted Swat, Malakand and surrounding areas of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) on Tuesday. People of the areas where the quake was felt rushed out of their homes, shops and other buildings in panic reciting verses from Holy Quran.

The National Seismic Monitoring Centre, Islamabad said that the magnitude of earthquake was four on Richter scale, its depth was 125 kilometres and epicentre was the border region of Pakistan, Afghanistan and Tajikistan.

Pakistan, Russia resolved to further cement bilateral ties

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan and Russia on Tuesday reiterated the resolve to further strengthen bilateral ties between both countries by enhancing bilateral cooperation in various areas including economy, trade, finance and energy and education.

The resolve was expressed during a high-level meeting between Chairman Senate of Pakistan Muhammad Sadiq Sanjrani and the Speaker of the Russian Federation Council I.V Matvienko, said a press release issued here. The Chairman Senate is on a four day visit to Russia on the invitation of Speaker of the Russian Federation Council.

The visit constitutes celebrations to commemorate the 75th anniversary of establishment of diplomatic relations between Pakistan and Russia. During the meeting, both sides emphasized the importance of parliamentary exchanges to further enhance bilateral relations between Pakistan and Russia. Chairman Senate briefed the Russian side on regional security situation and highlighted the Kashmir dispute



MOSCOW: Chairman Senate Muhammad Sadiq Sanjrani held delegation level talks with Speaker of the Russian Federation Council I.V Matvienko.

US engages with Pakistan on all issues, desires to see it prosper: State Dept.

WASHINGTON (APP): The United States gets in touch with Pakistan directly on the issues that are of importance to Washington and also to broader regional security and stability, State Department Deputy Spokesperson Vedant Patel has said. The spokesperson was responding to a question about the recent political developments in Pakistan at his regular press briefing on Monday.

"We, of course, want to see a prosperous and stable Pakistan," Patel said, adding that was in the interest of US-Pakistan relations. The U.S., he said, was engaged with Pakistan directly on several issues. The spokesperson was also asked about Dr Afia Siddiqui, the Pakistani neuroscientist who has been in US jail for over 20 years, and was recently allowed to meet her sister for the first time in over 20 years. He said he would refer the issue to relevant law enforcement authorities. "I don't have anything to offer from up here as it relates to that". To another question, the spokesperson said that he would not "speculate or hypothesize" about Dr Shakeel Afridi, who allegedly helped US operators locate Osama bin Laden, and now serving a jail term in Pakistan. "I also am not going to get into the specifics of the case given privacy concerns," he added.

NA speaker says:

Economic development lies in adoption of scientific practices for agriculture

ISLAMABAD (APP): Speaker of the National Assembly (NA) Raja Pervez Ashraf on Tuesday said that the future of Pakistan's food security and economic development lies in the adoption of modern, sustainable, and scientific agricultural practices.

"Developing practical solutions and initiatives to improve the agricultural sector and ensuring the welfare of farmers is crucial for the country's sustained progress," he made these remarks in a meeting with President Kissan Itehad Council, Khalid Mehmood Khokhar.

Speaker Ashraf emphasized that the current administration's key priorities include alleviating farmers' problems and advancing agriculture.

He said, "Farmers are

given subsidies for agricultural inputs, but further initiatives are necessary to address the problems that farmers confront as a result of high input costs and significant climate change."

The speaker emphasized the critical necessity for the introduction of farmer-friendly policies, and how they would considerably strengthen the country's agriculture sector, which is a cornerstone of its entire development.

The speaker acknowledged the importance of historical decisions in uplifting critical crops such as cotton and highlighted the Special Committee on Agricultural Products of the NA diligent efforts in understanding the problems faced by farmers and growers.

During the meeting, Raja Pervez Ashraf assured his

commitment to addressing farmers' concerns at all relevant forums.

"Arranging a meeting between farmers and Finance Minister Ishaq Dar, emphasizing the need for a collaborative approach to resolving the issues affecting the agricultural community," he hinted.

The speaker urged to devise a comprehensive plan for the improvement of the agriculture sector, given Pakistan's status as an agricultural country forced to import food items, including wheat and sugar.

"This dependence on imports has significantly impacted agricultural production and necessitates immediate action to enhance productivity within the country."

Pervez Ashraf hailed the dedicated and tireless efforts

of farmers, acknowledging them as a hardworking nation responsible for providing the fundamental necessity of food to the entire population.

The meeting concluded with a strong commitment from Raja Pervez Ashraf to prioritize the concerns of farmers and agriculture in the upcoming annual budget. He emphasized the need for a special focus on agriculture, ensuring adequate allocation of resources to support farmers and foster the growth of the sector.



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif chairs a meeting to discuss budget proposals regarding the energy sector.

Babar among ICC Player of the Month for May

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistani Skipper and prolific batter Babar Azam have been nominated in the International Cricket Council (ICC) candidates for the Men's and Women's Player of the Month Awards for May.

A competitive month of men's international matches saw the conclusion of fixtures in the ICC Super League, thus confirming the full lineup of teams set to battle it out in the ICC Men's Cricket World Cup Qualifier in Zimbabwe later this month, said a press release issued here.

In women's internationals, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh went head-to-head in May, along with a host of bilateral fixtures and the Southeast Asian Games in Cambodia which was won by Thailand.

The Men's shortlist comprises three names that starred in the ODI format. Pakistani skipper and holder of the Sir Garfield Sobers Trophy, Babar Azam was nominated for his performances at the latter end of his side's series victory over New Zealand. Bangladesh batter Najmul Hossain Shanto is shortlisted for the first time following a prolific spell of run-scoring as his side triumphed over Ireland. The final candidate in line for the ICC Men's Player of the Month award is Ireland's Harry Tector, who continued his fine international form against Bangladesh, albeit in a losing cause.

Sri Lanka can boast two nominees for the ICC Women's Player of the Month award for May. Captain Chamari Athapaththu led the line in a series of victories over Bangladesh in ODI and T20s, scoring well in both formats.

Senior lawyer gunned down...

Continued from page 1

ing incident which claimed life of the lawyer.

The Chief Minister condemned the incident and expressed his deep sorrow over the killing of Abdul Razzaq Advocate.

The Chief Minister also directed to Inspector General Police (IGP) to take all possible measures to arrest murderers and to submit report after completion of investigations.

He instructed the IG to take steps to enhance security measures in order to ensure protection of people's lives and property.

The Provincial Minister for Home and Tribal Affairs, Mir Ziaullah Langau has taken serious notice of the murder of senior lawyer, Abdul Razzaq Shar and sought a report of the incident from Additional Chief Secretary Home within 24 hours.

In a statement issued here on Tuesday, the Minister Home expressed sorrow over the killing of the senior lawyer and said that such kind of terrorism would not be tolerated at all.

He said that lawyers are our asset. Before this, several other lawyers have become victims of the terrorism in Balochistan, he mentioned adding that we can't tolerate more loss of our people.

The Minister directed the law enforcement agencies to take tough measures to apprehend the culprits involved in the incident.

He prayed for the departed soul of the late senior lawyer. He also prayed for the bereaved family to bear the tragic loss of his murder.

At UN, Pakistan pushing for 'emergency action' to support crises-hit poor countries

NEW YORK (APP): Pakistan is pressing the United Nations (UN) for "emergency action" to support the poorest countries and also for structural changes to redress the deficiencies perpetuating inequality among and within nations, students from a United States (US) university were told Monday.

"The developing countries now face the triple food, fuel and finance crises," Ambassador Amir Khan, deputy permanent representative of Pakistan to the UN, said in a meeting with the student group from Wisconsin-Milwaukee University held at the Pakistani Mission in New York.

The crises that the Pakistani envoy spoke of stem from a series of recent external "shocks" to the world economy - the Covid-19 pandemic, the spike in the prices of commodities and goods, the growing frequency and intensity of the impacts of climate change and proliferating conflicts.

"These crises have disproportionately affected the poorest people, reversing the gains of decades of development and pushing another 100 million into extreme poverty," he added.

Pakistan, he told the students, had a long history of active participation and constructive leadership at the UN on development, security, human rights, and other issues, having served eight times on the Security Council, being elected six times as the President of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC); and almost continuously on the Human Rights Council.

"Pakistan is one of the major contributors of troops to the UN peacekeeping - contributing 200,000 troops in 47 UN peacekeeping missions - with an outstanding record of performance," he added.

At the United Nations, Aamir Khan said Pakistan's primary aim is to secure the recognized right to self-determination of the people of Jammu and Kashmir.

"We have welcomed the UN Secretary-General (SG) statement that the Jammu and Kashmir dispute should be resolved on the basis of 'the UN Charter and the Security Council resolutions', which prescribe that the 'final disposition' of the state will be determined through a free and fair plebiscite under UN auspices."

"Pakistan will continue to press for the

implementation of the Security Council resolutions," he added.

"The UN membership furthermore recognizes Pakistan's critical role in stabilizing Afghanistan by preventing a humanitarian crisis and economic collapse, promoting peace through reconciliation, and eliminating the threat of terrorism from Afghanistan's territory," he said.

"Pakistan also plays a key role in promoting Islamic causes at the UN. Pakistan led the OIC countries in the adoption by consensus of the General Assembly resolution which declared March 15, as the International Day to Combat Islamophobia."

"Pakistan has just ended its Chairmanship of the Group of 77 and China (125 developing countries) and was leading the negotiations at the CoP27 Climate Conference and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) Summit next year," he pointed out.

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LONDON: Minister for Commerce Syed Naveed Qamar holding a productive meeting with leading investment firms at the Pakistan High Commission, London.

Sanaullah urges AJK...

Continued from page 1

development - which was halted in July 2017 with the "unjustified" ousting of Nawaz Sharif - shortly after securing a two-thirds majority in the general elections.

Sanaullah, who is also the president of PML-N's Punjab chapter, claimed that whenever the country was in deep waters, PML-N came forward to steer it out of crises. PML-N supremo Nawaz Sharif ended load shedding and terrorism in Pakistan, putting it on the path to development, he added.

Shedding light on the three tenures of PML-N, Sanaullah said that Nawaz Sharif did not bother about international pressure and conducted nuclear tests in 1998. "He made Pakistan a nuclear power, and due to nuclear deterrence, our enemy cannot attack us."

However, he lamented that Nawaz Sharif was disqualified for not withdrawing a salary from his son. On the other hand, the minister added, "a foreign imported

finah (miscraent)," which was launched in 2014 and imposed on Pakistan in 2018, was continuously being given out-of-the-way favours.

He said the miscraent promoted politics of hatred and chaos in the country; he attacked the judicial complex and brought his goons along while coming for a hearing, blackmailing state institutions that if he was arrested, the public would take to the streets. Upon his arrest, the public did not show up, only his trained goons attacked military installations and desecrated martyrs' monuments.

"What happened on May 9 was not a political or protest demonstration, but vandalism and riots."

The PTI chief's dream of "bringing a sea of people" on November 26 to the Federal Capital shattered as no one showed up, Sanaullah said, adding that he waited for one and a half hours and then took a tour on a helicopter to "see the sea of people," but to his surprise, there was no crowd.

Four killed as rival gangs exchange fire over old enmity

RAJANPUR (APP): Four persons were killed after rival gangs exchanged fire in Rojhan Mazari tahsil of district Rajanpur on Tuesday.

DPO Rajanpur Captain (Retired) Dost Muhammad told APP that an exchange of fire took place between Bannu and Dulani gang members adding that both gangs had an old enmity.

Giving details, he said, Bannu gang people were returning from court after trying to secure their bail in a murder case when they came under fire attack from Dulani gang who were chasing them.

Bannu gang people also returned fire, however, Ibraheem Bannu suffered injury and died. Bannu gang, however, kept moving forward, but came under fire attack minutes later near Bandaireen Garh graveyard.



QUETTA: A delegation led by Air Marshal (Retd) Syed Athar Hussain Bukhari meeting with Governor Balochistan Malik Abdul Wali Khan Kakar

NEC approves Rs 248 billion...

Continued from page 1

The NEC has approved an increase of 17 percent in the development budget which comprised 1182 development schemes including 311 new and 871 ongoing ones.

The Ministry of Planning and Development briefed the meeting about the 4RF project. It was told that a huge amount was being spent for the reconstruction of flood-hot areas, through funding from development partners including World Bank, Asian Development Bank and Islamic Development Bank.

The NEC, which discussed and held a consultation on the overall economic situation also approved Pakistan Economic Outlook 2035.

The prime minister said that the country could not progress until all of its federating units were prosperous.

He said despite funding constraints, the federal government would fulfill the provinces' demand for development funds and ensure judicious distribution of resources.

In this regard, the prime minister said a committee has been constituted under Planning Minister Ahsan Iqbal to ensure that no discrimination was carried out

in the allocation of funds to the provinces.

Prime Minister Shehbaz said by the end of PML-N government in 2018, the development budget stood at Rs1000 billion which was reduced to Rs550 billion in 2021-22. The national development was deliberately impeded through this criminal act, he remarked.

Contrarily, the incumbent government double the development budget despite the economic challenges and allocated Rs1150 billion for the next fiscal to make Pakistan progress and the common man to reap the benefits.

The NEC was told that the growth rate stood at 0.3% despite the economic difficulties inherited from the previous government and the \$30 billion losses inflicted by the unprecedented floods.

The meeting also approved the economic growth target of 3.5% for the next fiscal year. It was told that the investment ratio stood at 13.61% during the current year which has been set at 15% for the next year.

The planning minister briefed the participants about the 5Es under which a special focus was being given to the promotion of

exports, e-Pakistan, environment, energy, and equity. Under the framework, an agenda has been devised which is inevitable for the country with the top focus on export growth.

Ahsan Iqbal said energy had become a big challenge for Pakistan and the government would reduce dependence on fossil fuels and imported oil, and give due focus on energy conservation.

He said it had been proposed that commercial areas and shops would be closed at 8 pm and replace old bulbs with LED lights. This initiative could save around \$1 billion annually, he added.

He said representatives of provincial governments were present in the NEC meeting and they had been advised to get it implemented to save precious resources. Likewise, the government would promote green energy, solar, hydel and wind energy and no new imported fuel-based project would be introduced.

The NEC approved Pakistan Economic Outlook 2035. The planning ministry, in coordination with provinces and other stakeholders, would prepare a vision document and strategy paper.

No one else...

Continued from page 1

He remarked question is this who planted these audios. Has government tried to know who is doing this.

AG told the court one among leaked audios relates to mother in law of CJP. Federal government has just constituted commission on it so far. Commission has been constituted only to ascertain facts.

Justice Munib Akhtar inquired does the federation not know if audios are authentic or otherwise. Senior cabinet member held press conference on it. Is it not correct that interior minister has held press conference on these audios. Some audios were run in the press conference too. Is it correct legally that who does not know about reality of the audios raises objection on bench.

Addressing the AG he remarked "I am asking from you about the maintainability of petition. Why did the interior minister hold press conference. Can such slackness be demonstrated. The minister is removed or he resigns after such statement."

AG took the plea can statement of one minister be taken as statement of entire government. It is not in my knowledge if some one has held press conference.

Justice Munib Akhtar remarked collective responsibility of cabinet should come to fore on such important issue. It is separate thing if the minister asks for taking tea. Here statement was issued on important issue.

Justice Munib Akhtar remarked on AG clarification it will become too easy that Make the video in the name of a judge who has to be removed from the case.

Government of Pakistan

PAKISTAN ELECTRONIC MEDIA REGULATORY AUTHORITY HEADQUARTERS, ISLAMABAD

INVITATION OF APPLICATIONS FOR REGISTRATION / ACCREDITATION OF COMPANIES FOR PROVISION OF TELEVISION AUDIENCE MEASUREMENT (TAM) SERVICES

Pakistan Electronic Media Regulatory Authority (PEMRA) invites applications from the companies registered under the Companies Act 2017 for registration / accreditation on non-exclusive basis under section 19 of the PEMRA Ordinance 2002 (Amendment Act 2007) read with relevant provisions of PEMRA Registration / Accreditation of Television Audience Measurement (TAM)/Rating Service Regulations-2018 as amended in 2019 (hereinafter referred to as TAM Regulations in short) for provision of television audience measurement (TAM)/ television rating point (TRP) Services in Pakistan.

The eligibility criteria, application form, documents required along with the application, fee structure, no. of registrations to be granted etc., can be downloaded from PEMRA website (www.pemra.gov.pk/tam.php).

Interested companies shall submit application (complete in all respects) along with processing fee of Rs. 200,000/- (non-refundable) in the form of Demand Draft or Pay Order drawn in favor of PEMRA during working hours i.e., 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM on working days i.e. Monday to Friday on or before **10th July, 2023**. Applications received will be evaluated as per the eligibility criteria given in the TAM Regulations. Registration/accreditation of the companies will be done on fulfillment of eligibility criteria and after completion of legal requirements in accordance with PEMRA Ordinance 2002 (Amendment Act 2007) / TAM Regulations. Incomplete applications will not be entertained.

The registered TAM company(ies) will be required to employ state of the art rating methodology for provision of TAM data in a transparent manner and which conforms to the best international standards.

Submission of applications shall not establish any right or claim of any applicant company whatsoever for the grant of registration/ accreditation for TAM services. The Authority reserves the right to accept or reject any application by recording reasons in writing in the light of PEMRA laws/TAM Regulations.

DIRECTOR GENERAL LICENSING (BROADCAST MEDIA-I)

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Safe food can help overcome malnutrition, stunting problems: Alvi

ISLAMABAD (APP): President Dr Arif Alvi has said that nutritional and safe food can help Pakistan overcome the problems of malnutrition and stunting, besides helping prevent various food-borne diseases. "Safe food can also help promote long-term human development as well as achieve several of Sustainable Development Goals. Therefore, I would like to emphasise that we must ensure food safety in Pakistan by following food safety standards," the president said in a message on 'World Food Safety Day' being observed on June 7.

The president further stressed that it was a shared responsibility of the government as well as all the

people involved in handling the daily food, including producers, transporters, cooks, and consumers to handle food with greater care. President Secretariat Press Wing said in a press release. He said that they needed to educate the people to properly handle and prepare food, and ensure cleanliness and hygiene at home and outside. "Our religion Islam also teaches us to maintain cleanliness in general, eat clean food and wash our hands before every meal," he opined. The president said that they must inculcate healthy habits among their people, especially the children, by teaching them

about food safety. He said the World Food Safety day was being observed this year on June 7 to draw attention towards food safety standards. It was alarming that on average 1.6 million people get sick daily due to unsafe food, whereas 340 children, under-5 years of age, die due to preventable food-borne diseases, on average, every day, he added. The president noted that the situation was avertable and hundred of thousands of lives could be saved by ensuring food standards, eliminating unhygienic food, and preventing food-borne risks. He said that the day was being commemorated to highlight the importance of food safety.



ISLAMABAD: Minister for Inter Provincial Coordination (IPC) Ehsan-ur-Rehman Mazari posing for a group photo with participants after event entitled "Early Drug Prevention Strategies, The Future of Pakistan" as Organized by KKAWF Foundation at Serena hotel in Federal Capital.

Govt to set up learning centres for transgenders

ISLAMABAD (Online): Federal Minister for Education & Professional Training Rana Tanveer Hussain has directed Federal Directorate of Education (FDE) for setting up of learning centers for Transgender community by utilizing ICT Schools as 2nd shifts. He directed FDE to also upgrade of Boys School (SSC) to Intermediate College and Girls Intermediate College to the level of Degree College at Shah Allah Ditta. According to a notification, he made these directions during his visit at Union Council Shah Allah

Ditta few days back to monitor the campaign for bringing Out of School Children back to Schools. The notification further said that the Minister also asked FDE for Installation of Water Filtration Plants in Schools (Rural areas). However, the establishment of schools at designated/ earmarked plots in Sector D-12 was also among his directions. Above directives are conveyed to quarter(s) concerned for necessary action and be included in Secretary's Task Management System for periodic review, it added.

KP's merged districts get their first-ever Model Police Stations

ISLAMABAD (APP): United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Pakistan, the Government of Japan, and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) Police jointly inaugurated the Model Police Stations in Kalaya, Orakzai District, and Ghalanai, Mohmand District, in a ceremony held in Islamabad on Tuesday. The Model Police Stations are unique police centers in merged districts, providing a range of new facilities to better serve the people of merged districts. Amongst others, these include a gender-responsive

desk to address gender-based crimes reported to the police stations, a hall to convene joint community and police meetings, an investigation room, an office for station house officers, security posts, lodging facilities to accommodate 55 police personnel and separate holding rooms for men and women, said a press release issued by the Embassy of Japan in Islamabad. Addressing the ceremony, the Ambassador of Japan to Pakistan, WADA Mitsuhiro, underlined, "Supporting security and justice sector institutions.



ISLAMABAD: People are taking interest in paintings during exhibition entitled "Adornment" at local hotel in Federal Capital.

Traffic Police Unit imposes fine to 10,000 vehicles during last two weeks

ISLAMABAD: Traffic Inter-Section Unit has taken effective steps against those involved in violation of rules and issued more than 10,000 fine tickets to law breakers during last two weeks. Islamabad Capital Police (Traffic Wing) has constituted Traffic Inter-Section Unit following the directions of Islamabad Capital City Police Officer Dr. Akbar Nasir Khan in order to improve the flow of traffic in the federal capital and provide best travelling facilities to road users. The police spokesman said this unit consisting of 188 personnel in ten teams had been given motorcycles

and vehicles equipped with modern technology. It has been authorized to take measures for road discipline in the city and ensure prompt action against those breaching traffic laws. During the last two weeks, this unit issued 10,000 fine tickets to those involved in violating traffic rules including use of mobile phone and not fastening seat belt during drive, one way violation, zebra crossing violation, red signal and lane violation. Chief Traffic Officer Islamabad Dr. Syed Mustafa Tanveer said that Traffic Wing was utilizing all resources to provide the best travelling facilities to the citizens.

IHC allows girl to go with her husband

ISLAMABAD (Online): The Islamabad High Court (IHC) on Tuesday allowed a girl to go with her husband after she gave a statement of marrying at her own free will. The court was hearing the case filed by the girl's parents for her recovery. The Lodhran Police produced her before the court following its directives. Assistant Advocate General Punjab Imran Shaukat Rao informed the court that the girl, who was pregnant.



ISLAMABAD: Senator Moulana Bux Chandio, Convener Sub-Committee of the Senate Standing Committee on Interior presiding over a meeting of the committee at Parliament House.

IHC extends sealing of Grand Hayatt building

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Islamabad High Court (IHC) on Tuesday extended its stay order till June 22, against sealing of multi-story building of Grand Hayatt Hotel and the actions of NAB and FIA into the matter. Chief Justice Aamer Farooq heard the case, challenging the orders of Public Accounts Committee (PAC) for sealing the multi-story building at Constitution Avenue. The officials of Capital Development Authority (CDA), National Accountability Bureau (NAB), Federal Board of Revenue (FBR), State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) and Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) appeared before the court. At the outset, the IHC chief justice questioned if the PAC was authorized to issue orders for sealing any building.

IUI inks MoUs with fast cables

ISLAMABAD (APP): International Islamic University (IUI) inked two MoUs on Tuesday with Fast cables limited under which the former will make an annual Zakat donation of a minimum of 02 million rupees as well as it will also award a cash prize of 1 lac rupees to the students scoring high CGPA in their final year of studies. Both the MoUs were signed here on the new campus of the university by President, IUI Dr Hatha Hamoud Alotaibi and Managing Director (MD) of Fast Cables Limited Kamal Mian. It was also attended by renowned social impact investor Mansoor Shakeel Vice President of Admin.



Federal Minister for Human Rights, Mian Riaz Hussain Pirzada addressing as Chief Guest the 20th meeting of Inter-Provincial Ministerial Group in Islamabad

IPMG organizes meeting; importance of 'Gender Data Portal' discussed

ISLAMABAD (INP): National Commission on the Status of Women (NCSW) on Tuesday organized the 20th meeting of the Inter-Provincial Ministerial Group (IPMG) here, jointly with the collaboration of UN Women. Federal Minister for Human Rights Mian Riaz Hussain Pirzada attended the meeting as the chief guest. Meanwhile, Chairperson NCSW Ms. Nilofar Bakhtiar, Country Representative UN Women Sharmela Rasool, Ms. Andrea S. Hillyer Advisor Gender Security, representatives of Bureau of Statistics, Planning and Development Departments and Women Development Departments of all provinces and Provincial Commis-

sions on the Status of Women including Azad Jammu & Kashmir and Gilgit Baltistan were also in the attendees. The main agenda of the 20th meeting was to have an update on National Gender Data Portal (NGDP) and review the provincial coordination mechanism; strengthening the role of partners and identifying strategies to establish NGDP as a credible source for gender-related data and information. While addressing the meeting, the minister lauded the efforts of NCSW and UN women in providing a crucial platform in the form of IPMG, where all the relevant stakeholders from the center and provinces would

join hands to tackle the issues and challenges to achieve the combined aim of gender equality and women's empowerment in Pakistan. He said that there was a stronger need to support the provincial governments; especially the provincial women machineries working for women's development, to set strategic priorities and plans for women's emancipation. The minister expressed that women's issues were similar in all parts of Pakistan with some cultural exceptions within the different localities. IPMG had provided the underpinning for creating such a well-coordinated apparatus.

NDMA exhorts provincial authorities to update coastal on impending tropical storm

ISLAMABAD (APP): The National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) on Tuesday issued an advisory to the provincial disaster management authorities (PDMAs) of Sindh and Balochistan to ensure strict vigilance and awareness of local coastal communities amid Tropical Cyclone (TC) formation over Southeast Arabian Sea. The Pakistan Meteorological Department (PMD) has informed that a low-pressure area over Southeast Arabian Sea has intensified into a depression (strong low-pressure area) and lies 1,500 km

South of Karachi. Due to favourable conditions, the system is likely to intensify further into a tropical storm during the next 18-24 hours and move in North-Northwest direction, the NDMA advisory mentioned. The NDMA suggested measures for active monitoring including that for PDMA Sindh and Balochistan to ensure widespread awareness of masses in coastal districts. The respective district disaster management authorities (DDMAs) to undertake collaboration with local communities and spread awareness in local languages.

Court extends interim bail of Raja Khurram

ISLAMABAD (APP): An Anti-Terrorism Court (ATC) on Tuesday extended the interim bail of PTT's former MNA Raja Khurram Nawaz till June 10, in the case regarding the violent protest and vandalizing at Judicial Complex, Islamabad. ATC Judge Raja Jawad Abbas heard the case. Petitioner's lawyer Sardar Masroof Khan requested the court to direct the investigation officer that if his client was required for the investigation or not. The investigation officer informed the court that the prosecutor, in this case, was on leave due to the death of his mother.

Ethiopia, Pakistan agree on bolstering parliamentary coop.

ISLAMABAD (APP): Ethiopia and Pakistan on Tuesday agreed to enhance parliamentary cooperation through exchange of delegations between the two countries in future. This was agreed during a meeting between Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Ethiopia Jemal Bekir Abdula and Senator Saleem Mandviwalla, said a news release. Both the dignitaries

flourishing ties between the two big nations. He said a big delegation comprising Pakistani businessmen had visited Addis Ababa, Ethiopia in March to explore business, trade and investment opportunities in the land of origin. The ambassador also informed him about latest visit of a delegation from Ethiopia to Pakistan that comprised of senior government officials, and businessmen from its diverse sectors of economy including agriculture and agro processing, mining, manufacturing, ICT and tourism. Senator Saleem Mandviwalla expressed his commitment to strengthen bilateral, regional and multilateral cooperation and stressed on exchanging parliamentary delegation between the two countries to boost cooperation between the Parliaments of both the countries.



Govt to focus on people friendly budget with maximum relief: Bilal

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister's Coordinator on Economy and Energy Bilal Azhar Kayani on Tuesday said the Federal Government led by PM Shehbaz Sharif would work out all options to ensure a people-friendly budget for the next fiscal year. "The priority will be given to specific measures that are crucial to curb inflation and stabilize economy with maximum relief to the lower and middle," he said in an exclusive interview with APP. "Surely, we can opt for a popular budget, but it will adversely impact the economy and we will not go for it in the larger national interest," he added. Bilal Kayani said the budget's main focus would be on development projects as over Rs 1.1 trillion would be allocated on that count, including Rs 950 billion for the Public Sector Development Programme (PSDP)

initiatives and Rs 150 billion for the projects under the public-private partnership framework. He said the last Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf government had agreed on the "inappropriate conditions" of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and deviated from all the standard protocols. Even the then finance secretary had also voiced his opposition to these conditions, but no heed was paid. Moreover, he added, the former prime minister abruptly decided to withdraw from the IMF programme when he felt that he was going to be ousted from power, and that pushed the country on the verge of bankruptcy. However, "we had to take tough decisions that were necessary to avert the default," he remarked. He expressed the hope that the staff level agreement with the IMF would be reached soon.

ANF seize 2854 kg of drugs, arrest 18 peddlers

ISLAMABAD (APP): Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) seized over 2854 kg of drugs and 112.7 litres of Hydrochloric Acid (HCL) Chemical worth US\$ 70 411 million internationally and arrested 18 persons including a foreigner and impounded 6 vehicles while conducting 26 counter-narcotics operations throughout the country. According to a spokesperson of ANF the seized drugs included 2300.1 Kg Opium, 28.312 Kg Heroin, 45 Kg Crystal, 446.713 Kg Hashish, 34.216 Kg Methamphetamine (Ice) and 0.057 Gram Ecstasy Tabs (100 x Tabs). ANF Balochistan recovered 2506 Kg of drugs & 112.7 litres of Hydrochloric Acid (HCL) Chemicals in 7 operations while arresting 2 persons involved in drug smuggling and impounded a vehicle. The seized drugs comprised 2281 Kg of Opium, 20 Kg of Heroin, 160 Kg of Hashish and 45 Kg of Crystal. ANF Punjab recovered 8.032 Kg of drugs in 6 operations while arresting 6 persons involved in drug smuggling and impounded 2 vehicles. The seized drugs comprised 1.312 Kg of Heroin, 2.500 Kg of Hashish and 4.220 Kg of Methamphetamine (Ice). ANF KPK recovered 72 Kg of drugs in 4 operations while arresting 3 persons involved in drug smuggling and impounded a vehicle. The seized drugs comprised 1.800 Kg Opium, 69.200 Kg hashish and 1 Kg methamphetamine (Ice).

4 Corona cases reported in last 24hrs: NIH

ISLAMABAD (INP): Health officials on Tuesday said that four new Coronavirus cases were reported during the last 24 hours across the country. As per the data shared by the National Institute of Health (NIH), the case positivity ratio was 0.33 percent while six patients were in critical condition. No death was reported from the Coronavirus in the last 24 hours while 1,196 Covid-19 tests were conducted. Meanwhile, Minister for National Health Services, Regulations, and Coordination, Abdul Qadir Patel said the government has strengthened the role of Border and Health Services in Pakistan to deal with any sub-variant of Covid-19.



ISLAMABAD: SAPM and Convener, Parliamentary Taskforce on SDGs, Ms Romina Khurshid addressing during the High-Level Policy Dialogue on World Environment Day.

440 persons hired in FESCO during 2018-21

ISLAMABAD (APP): As many as 440 persons have been recruited by Faisalabad Electric Supply Company (FESCO) since 2018-2021. Out of a total of 440, 409 persons were recruited on contract and 31 on a regular basis during the said period, official sources told APP here Tuesday. The recruitment was

made in various cadres and scales from BPS 2-17, they said. Sharing the breakup, they said a total of 102 persons were recruited on contract and 10 on a regular basis during 2018, 98 contracts and four regulars in 2019, 105 contracts and four regulars in 2020 while 104 contracts and 31 regulars in 2021.

Islamabad Capital Police pays tribute to Martyrs & Ghazis

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad capital police organized a spectacular ceremony at the Jinnah Convention Center to pay tribute to the courageous martyrs and ghazis who have sacrificed their lives in the line of duty. The event was attended by Islamabad Capital City Police Officer (ICCP) Dr Akbar Nasir Khan, Secretary Interior Ali Murtaza, Chief Commissioner Islamabad and other officers and jawans in organizing the ceremony. He commended the Islamabad capital police for their unwavering dedication in ensuring the security and well-being of the citizens, particularly during times of heightened crime. The Chamber President urged the newly recruited police officers to follow the exemplary footsteps of their seniors, emphasizing the importance of serving the community and uphold-

ing the values for which the martyrs laid down their lives. Furthermore, Secretary Interior Ali Murtaza emphasized that such events not only serve as a reminder of the sacrifices made by these brave officers and remains united as one nation and one institution. In a touching gesture, honorary DSP of Islamabad capital police and renowned cricketer, Haris Rauf, expressed his gratitude to Islamabad Capital City Police Officer (ICCP) Dr. Akbar Nasir Khan for extending the invitation to the event. Rauf acknowledged the significant role played by the police in ensuring the safety

and security of the players, especially during a time when international cricket was not taking place in Pakistan. He pledged his unwavering support to the children of the martyrs, promising to provide assistance on the cricket field whenever needed. During the ceremony the Islamabad Capital City Police Officer (ICCP) Dr. Akbar Nasir Khan expressed gratitude to the nation and paid tribute to the courageous martyrs who sacrificed their lives for the freedom of Pakistan. Address-



ing a diverse gathering of citizens, Dr. Akbar Nasir emphasized the significance of maintaining and cherishing the hard-won freedom. Acknowledging the collective efforts of every individual living in Pakistan, Dr. Akbar Nasir Khan stated, "This freedom belongs to each child, sister, mother, father, young man, and elder who resides in our beloved country. It is a desire deeply ingrained in the hearts of all free citizens." He reminded everyone of the sacrifices made by the first martyrs and Ghazis of Pakistan.

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Populist budget?

There couldn't have been more challenging times than the present ones for preparing the national budget. The uncertainties related to elections and foreign funding required to cover the massive external account financing gap of about \$25bn during the next financial year, amid deepening domestic political crises and unfavourable global economic circumstances, mean that our fiscal authorities would be budgeting this year on hope rather than tangibles.

Add to that the strong compulsion the PML-N-led government must be feeling to appease voters as the monthly price inflation hits another record high of 38pc days before Budget 2024, and it becomes obvious that the present rulers really have their work cut out for them before the next general polls.

It will not be surprising if the Shehbaz Sharif dispensation decides to give a 'populist' budget, including a large fiscal stimulus in the shape of development allocations to recoup some of its lost political capital. But this will be disastrous for an economy on the brink of default.

The government has already choked the economy to avoid a default as foreign funding dries up thanks to slumping relations with the IMF.

A populist — or what Finance Minister Ishaq Dar has described as a "welfare-oriented, pro-investment and business-friendly" — budget will be fraught with the risk of Pakistan being pushed deeper into economic depression and away from multilateral and bilateral lenders.

With the country confronting stagflation — marked by flattening economic growth, soaring unemployment and spiking inflation — there has never been a more compelling case for a budget that focuses on fiscal, governance and structural reforms for longer-term economic recovery and sustainability.

Pakistan needs foreign financing, including loan rollovers, of more than \$77bn to meet its external debt payments over the next three years. That will not be possible without the IMF on board. A fiscally irresponsible budget can make a new deal with the Fund even more difficult.

Domestic revenue resources also remain scarce — they are insufficient to cover debt-servicing costs, let alone finance development, defence, salaries, pensions, etc.

That makes the proposed fiscal stimulus and 'relief' to the common man, aimed at wooing back voters, impractical unless the government is prepared to throw all caution to the wind and resort to drastically increasing domestic borrowing and accumulating more debt, bringing greater misery to the public.

The upcoming budget will be more a test of the government's resolve to stay the course and restructure the economy to steer it through uncertain conditions rather than provide temporary relief to people and businesses for short-term political gains.

Sadly, the indications so far are that the government is more likely to follow the fiscally imprudent path rather than follow through with the reforms it has promised its lenders to ensure longer-term economic stability.



Arifa Noor

Someone who entered the world of print and bore witness to the era of the electronic medium in Pakistan is a strange creature. Few of the 'printies' adapt easily to the universe of babble, where, despite the colour TV sets, the trend is to see things in black and white.

Most of us live like exiles, not really fitting in the present and yearning for a past which perhaps never existed. In our heads, the age of print has become this Camelot we continue to yearn for, even if it was perhaps not as idyllic as it now seems.

However, no age is forever. And now television is giving way to an even noisier, anarchical world of social media, where vloggers and YouTubers have taken over from the

anchors and tajzianigar (analysts) who replaced the writers and reporters.

But to assume this 'Wild West' will remain wild forever is wrong. In Pakistan, as elsewhere in the world, governments and states are figuring out ways to tame it. And as the struggle continues, there are moments when the state seems to have won, while at others, social media scores a victory or two.

Sadly, in the less developed democracies, this bid to tame is less rule-based and more coercive. For this is how we tend to deal with all matters disruptive. But that is a story for another time.

To return to social media, the coercive methods to control it are not new entirely, but their efficacy has been blunted by the changing times. This is why there might be need for a rethink — a rethink about what the goal is rather than simply just wanting to 'eliminate' what is seen as a problem.

And what is the issue? The sensationalism and inaccuracy (many of the times) at work. And

when times in Pakistan are chaotic — more than average — the 'news' on social media also tends to go haywire.

Partly, this is because the lone rangers in cyberspace do not operate within the parameters set by journalists themselves, where institutional checks include editorial filters, rules to check or determine 'sources' (the most beloved word of our profession) and the effort to maintain some distance between reporting, comment and fair comment.

Rightly so, many would point out that mainstream media has not been able to ensure these filters either. (Perhaps this is what led to the 'Wild West' going wild.)

This is both part of the problem and where the solution lies. For instead of simply trying to ban social media by blocking sites or switching off apps or the entire internet, why not try and consider what can be done to counter incorrect information? (Of course, the bleeding heart liberal in me insists on bleating that there are better ways to

bring sanity than just through bans.)

The point being made here is that a more credible mainstream media is needed as a counter to social media. Indeed, social media may be the future, but for the present, it is flourishing because of the credibility crisis of the mainstream.

The polarisation and pressures of the past few years have turned the bulk of mainstream media into a bland, homogenised space with far too much commentary of a specific strain and very little reporting.

Anecdotally, it seems few people now bother watching talk shows, preferring to only catch the few clips which are doing the social media rounds. No one, it seems, wants 40 minutes of the same group of people saying the same things over and over again on multiple screens.

This overexposure, for lack of a better word, is linked to quantity. If a large number of channels — and there are just too many — are discussing the same topics every day for nearly five hours,

everyone's views become common knowledge and add to the perception that each analyst or journalist is now biased.

All this is driving people to social media, where there is 'news', even if it is sensational. If the analysis is biased, so what? It suits the viewer's own bias, and it is not as if mainstream media is any less biased.

We can couple this with the perception (if not more) that mainstream media is not allowed to report or say more than what is sanctioned — the various Pemra advisories lend credence to this. This will have to be addressed if the noise on social media is to be addressed more meaningfully.

If there has to be 'fact-checking', then it will have to be carried out by those who enjoy far more credibility than mainstream media does at the moment; and this credibility will not simply help media houses themselves but the entire polity. But first the media will need more space; it will take time and effort to regain the credibility it

enjoyed earlier. Once it does, it may reduce the space for social media, be it YouTube channels or WhatsApp forwards. For this to happen, the industry will also have to carry out some introspection on how it lost the trust of many Pakistani people.

This is not simply a plea of a working journalist. Eventually, a credible and strong mainstream media translates into the credibility of the state. At times of crises, there are many moments when a credible media can also communicate the message of the state, especially when it comes to foreign policy. But if the fourth pillar is compromised or known to be under pressure, one may as well forget about it.

Just as an aside, it is worth considering why there is so much interest and discussion of the foreign press coverage of the latest crisis in Pakistan. Because those stories are bringing forth information and nuance missing from the coverage at home. Would it not be better for us to tell our own story and also curate it, rather than letting others do it? -- Courtesy Dawn

Nawaz Sharif as the 'Elder'



Mosharraf Zaidi

What is different about the current illegal and unconstitutional crackdown on a single political party? Because crackdowns have happened before. Parties have been 'dismantled' before. Some partisans think they haven't melted down at the speed of white lightning in the way the PTI has — but there was no Twitter or Facebook or TikTok in 1999, and no satellite television or childhood obesity in 1977 so we really don't know how fast this particular dismantling really is.

It feels faster because it's happening now — and to many, it is happening to people they don't like. That may be one difference: usually, democracy and democrats tend to be on the same side. This time, it feels like some democrats may have been less critical of the

implements of dismantling that they have spoken out very bravely against for decades.

I think it is important to call out false equivalences and to challenge deliberately (or genuine) skewed analyses about what is happening. Some friends have tried to frame the current scenario as a failure of Pakistan's human rights activists and 'liberals'. Those same friends have struggled to explain or understand Jibran Nasir's abduction. Jibran is home safely. But Imran Riaz Khan is not.

It feels odd to lump those two names together — except that both have CNICs and both are sons and husbands and both have the right to hold views that many people agree with and many people find odious. And both therefore have some basic rights. And neither's whereabouts should be a mystery. One thing that is different is that even when people on the opposite sides were victimized by the same implements of dismantling it didn't feel as odd and as hard to treat them the same.

This is exactly why I have been so uncomfortable with false equivalences. Jibran is a moral voice — consistent, sometimes to a fault. Unceasing and ceaselessly brave. Imran Riaz Khan does not have those qualities. But Jibran was gone for one day. Imran has now been missing for weeks. Which is the false equivalence? And why?

There are nine women associated with the PTI that are in custody that clearly seem to be in very serious trouble with respect to the deliberate attempt to split the Pakistani national security atom and cause fissures that this country cannot conceive of, cannot afford, and must never be tolerated. Yet some may ask how a political party came to be so powerful as to win over the otherwise disconnected super privileged elites of Lahore so thoroughly that they sought to attack the Corps Commander's residence in Lahore and provoke unfathomable divisions and weakness in the country's most important institution.

How did the PTI Nine become so potent? Who is responsible for seeding, sustaining, growing, nurturing and expanding Imran Khan's ability to dominate the public discourse to the extent that he had by May 9? Pakistanis were ready to

tear down Pakistan because Kaptana had been arrested. This feels different too.

Insafians argue that the difference is that Khan is more popular than any leader has ever been in Pakistani history. This is hyperbole that is typical of a populist wave, but it could also be true. In 1999 the coup was explicit and it was, as a poet might say, a rose that one could call a rose. How would the democrats of the PML-N and PPP want whatever is happening right now to be remembered? This certainly smells like a rose. And it sheds petals like a rose. And it has pointy sharp thorns like a rose. But no one is calling it a rose.

One clear difference is demographic. Pakistan's population in 1977 was less than 80 million. In 1999, the population was less than 155 million. In 2023, the population is around 250 million. Even in the interim from 2018 to now, there are roughly 16 million new voters that crossed the threshold of adulthood sometime after July 2018. If you turned 18 in the last five years, you probably have higher expectations of what your life will be than the same

cohort in 1999. But what you don't have is a memory of the 1999 coup, or even of Benazir the fighter, or even of the Lawyer's Movement that began in 2007 and lasted till March 16, 2009. The ones that remember these things are understandably protective of the legacy of those important events and moments and movements.

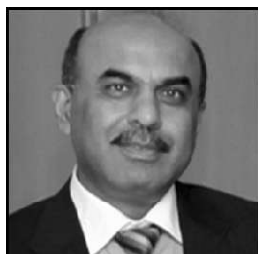
"No, no, now is nothing like then". This is true. But this much is also true: then was nothing like now. We struggle to understand and frame what is happening when the constitution has lost all meaning because we have watched it lose all meaning in real time, in slow motion. The 90-days stipulation was violated with reckless abandon and it just 'happened'. Those that protested thought they could get what they seek — a reinstatement of Imran Khan as a true national leader with no one capable of challenging him — by sowing division in the most important institution in the country.

Perhaps the most potent change or difference between all that this country has endured previously and what is in store for Pakistan in the coming

months is the concurrence of its polycrisis: economic, political, constitutional, security and climate. So what is the way out of this? I have argued for a 'grand national dialogue' in these pages since December 2020 and have sought to convince those around Pakistan's leaders of the impending doom that will descend upon the people of this country absent a new set of rules of the game that are necessitated by the collapse of the order that was shaped by the Charter of Democracy in 2006 and the success of the Lawyer's Movement in 2009.

The answer that no one, including the PML-N, wants to hear is the only answer that is realistically conceivable right now. It is Nawaz Sharif. But this answer is not to the question: who should be prime minister? That is not the key question and certainly can only be answered through a free and fair election. The answer Nawaz Sharif is to the question, "who will shepherd this weakened and broken polity through the valley of darkness that it finds itself in today?" -- Courtesy TheNews

The next monsoon



Naseer Memon

With the monsoons approaching, there is reason to feel concerned. Preoccupied with the political melodrama, few of us recall the plight of the millions of flood-affected. Their tribulations after last year's calamitous deluge, especially in Sindh, have not ended and the rainy season is once again looming. Although weather pundits expect a drier monsoon in southern Pakistan this year, climate change is all about extreme and unpredictable weather events.

Rescue and relief are the two most important pillars of any disaster-response strategy. Last year, both were lacklustre, and displayed four main gaps. There was no early warning and no transport arrangements to evacuate stranded families; pumping machines were mostly non-functional and unable to drain rainwater; and relief camps couldn't be mobilised fast enough to be able to provide for shelter, food, water and sanitation initially.

The number of displaced people mounted every day and the administration was unable to cope. Local philanthropists, relatives, friends and a few patches of dry elevated road and dykes were the last resort for the uprooted. It was only belatedly that government departments, international NGOs, religious charities and some compassionate elected representatives acted.

The towns of Johi, Mehar, Dadu, Bhan Sye-d-a-bad, Jhudo, Dighri

and Umerkot in Sindh were saved through coordinated efforts led by local communities with the assistance of elected representatives and the irrigation department. Still, over 10m end-up-red a nightmarish situation. Sindh lost more than 1,000 people, around 2m houses, 450,000 cattle heads and 3.7m acres of crop land. The Post Disaster Needs Assessment report revealed that poverty in Sindh would increase by between 8.9 and 9.7 per cent. Of the total loss and damage sustained, Sindh bore the brunt (72 per cent).

The Sindh government, with meagre federal support and international aid, is undertaking reconstruction and rehabilitation in the affected areas. Major breaches and relief cuts in the flood protection network and roads have been plugged and dykes improvised. However, communities in Mehar takka (Dadu) are anxious about the unrepaired breaches of the Suprio bund. Parts of Thari Mirwah in Khairpur Nathan Shah, Odero Lal in Matiari and some other areas are suffering from protracted inundation.

Enhancing the drainage capacity of the Manchhar lake from 10,000 to 52,000 cusecs through the under-construction Aral head regulator and the reinforcement of the Manchhar Containing Bund are significant initiatives of the World Bank-financed Sindh Flood Emergency Rehabilitation Project of the provincial government. The reconstruction of houses and livelihood restoration projects are at an early stage. But, if properly implemented, these projects can generate climate-resilient infrastructure in rural areas, where over half the katcha houses and a rickety community infrastructure are victims of climate shocks.

Before the onset of the next monsoon, district-level flood contingency plans must be developed and implemented through meaningful engagement with local stakeholders. The plan should include preparedness for emergency evacuation, well-equipped relief camps, food and medicine stockpiles, unobstructed municipal and irrigation drains, functional pumping stations with power back-up, and arrangements for people needing special focus, such as pregnant and lactating women, newborns and toddlers, the elderly, the disabled and socially ostracised segments. These short-term measures can help if disaster returns, although sustainable solutions need long-term measures.

Sindh is a vast sink for up-ream flows. Because of its flat topography, it needs a storm-water drain network on both sides of the Indus. This is a complex task, as major irrigation effluent drains like the LBOD and RBOD have not delivered. Torrential flows from the catchment area of the Kirthar hills in Sindh and Balochistan need a multidimensional flood management plan that includes small reservoirs, relief channels connected to the Indus and the safe diversion of floodwaters to the river via Manchhar. As a first step, the capacity and geographic coverage of these drains should be increased.

Blocked natural waterways are another menace. Canals, roads, villages, cropland and encroachments have clogged natural flow paths. While everyone wants these cleared, the road to remove these obstructions is itself stymied. Strong political will is required to dilate the waterways.

Most importantly, new public and private infrastructure should have resilience parameters. Settlements, houses, schools, dykes, roads, hospitals, etc, need climate-resilient engineering and sociology. Finally, local bodies have to be empowered to act as first responders to disaster. -- Courtesy Dawn

Malnutrition woes



Navaira Ali Bangash

Malnutrition, or poor nutrition, emerges when one's diet does not contain the right amount of nutrients. Poor nutrition can be broadly categorised as 'undernutrition' and 'overnutrition'. In most developing countries, like Pakistan, malnutrition usually exists as an inability to meet standard nutritional targets due to the scarcity of food generally available in the country.

Young children and pregnant or breastfeeding women are the main category of people prone to malnutrition in most of South Asia. The deficiency of micronutrients leads to complications during pregnancy, and later, malnourished newborns. Increased iron needs during these periods and decreased iron intake and absorption appear to be the most significant causes.

According to the National Nutrition Survey 2018 (NNS 2018), 40.2 per cent of children under five years of age in the country are stunted, while 17.7pc are wasted. Other effects of malnutrition are poor physical and cognitive development, impaired growth, frequent illnesses, fatigue, shortness of breath, poor school performance and reduced capacity to work even later in life. Malnutrition is thus one of our most pressing challenges. Disasters compound the problem of malnutrition, as seen in the aftermath of last year's floods.

Moreover, according to the Pakistan Nutrition

Humanitarian Overview 2022, the country has a global acute malnutrition rate of 17.7pc, exceeding the emergency threshold. Conditions such as drought and famine affect five million people in Sindh and Balochistan.

The most common deficiencies are those of iron, protein, vitamin A, vitamin D, zinc and folic acid. Iron deficiency affects children the most in the first two years of life. Among its many consequences are anaemia, low birthweight and poor weight gain.

The NNS 2018 also confirms that micronutrient deficiencies are rampant in Pakistani children. Iron deficiency anaemia was, according to the survey, most common in children between seven six to 59 months. Overall, 49.1pc of children in the country are iron deficient.

Malnutrition and food insecurity have become a crippling challenge despite multiple national interventions over the years. What starts out as a seemingly less serious condition in children, turns out to be one of the most serious health conditions among adults in underdeveloped nations. No doubt iron deficiency in children deserves far more attention than it currently garners. One way to raise awareness of the consequences of malnutrition, including iron deficiency, is to highlight the economic losses incurred. The country pays heavily for a condition that, through active policymaking and changes to existing plans, can be tackled in the earlier stages of life, and at least stem the speed of a nosediving GDP.

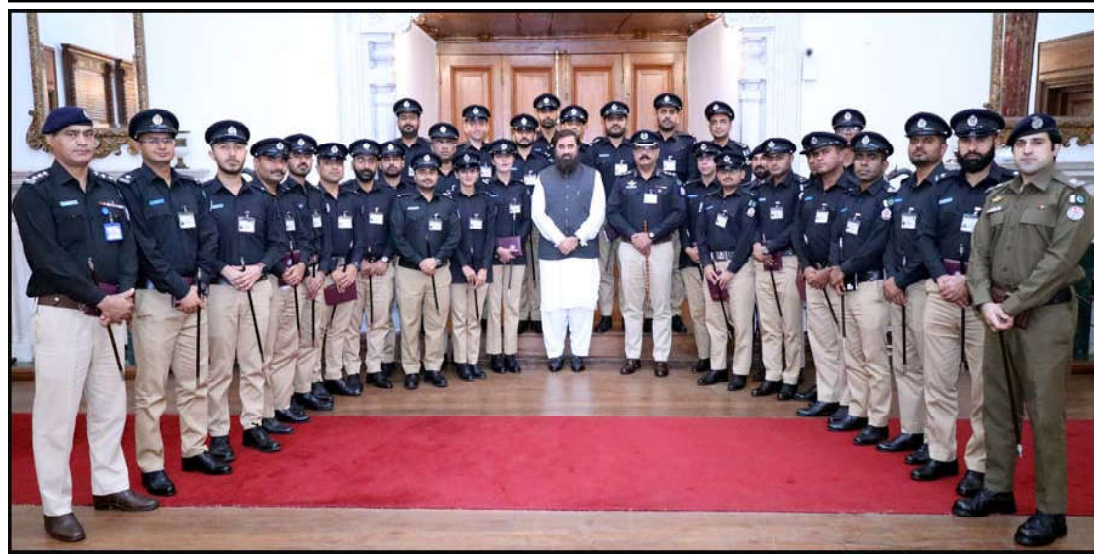
In a report — a collaboration between the nutrition section of the Ministry of Planning and the UN's World Food Programme — WFP consultant Jack Bagriansky has shared some perturbing facts. The cost of the lost future workforce in Pakistan due to underweight children, wasting and micro-

nutrient deficiency is estimated at \$2.24 billion per year. Cognitive deficits derived from childhood stunting, anaemia and iodine deficiency disorders will also result in reduced future adult productivity, which is valued at a Net Present Value of \$3.7bn per year.

Pakistan's economy relies heavily on agriculture as well as manual labour. The report indicates that anaemia in men and women who are engaged in agriculture and manual labour will lower their economic output by \$657 million per year.

Pakistan is unfortunately going through extremely tough times, with a nightmarish ban-kruptcy scenario looming on the horizon. The economic repercussions of the Covid-19 pandemic, the des-truction of the recent floods and an uncertain political climate make the situation worse. Tough decisions, farsighted po--l-i-c-y-making and re-forms in the existing strategies are the need of the hour.

Large-scale food fortification as well as fortification of widely consumed food is considered a medium- to long-term helpful strategy in increasing regular consumption of essential nutrients. Programmes like the Food Fortification Programme are playing a critical role in supporting industry to adequately fortify wheat flour and edible oil and ghee in Pakistan. We are fortunate enough to witness the breakthrough referred to as 'iron-plus', the improved iron source that enhances the absorption of iron three as compared to normal iron sources. It is a precious opportunity for underdeveloped countries like Pakistan to eradicate malnourishment in the country. This venture will require a joint effort by the government, the food industry and, last but not least, informed masses to cultivate hope for future generations. -- Courtesy Dawn



LAHORE: A delegation comprising under training Deputy Superintendent of Sindh Police at the National Police Academy Islamabad, led by DIG Police National Police Training Academy, Nauman Siddiqui photographed with Governor Punjab Muhammad Balighur Rehman at Governor House

Governor Punjab hails LEAs for defense of country

Independent Report
LAHORE: Governor Punjab Muhammad Balighur Rehman has said that role of officers and personnel of the law enforcement agencies (LEAs) in the war against terrorism is commendable. Talking to a delegation of under-training officers of Sindh police at the Governor's House here on Tuesday, he said the nation salutes the LEAs who sacrificed their lives while defending the country and the nation on the front-line. C o m m a n d a n t National Police Academy Islamabad DIG Nauman Siddiqui led the delegation comprising under-training

Deputy Superintendents (DSPs) of Sindh Police. Governor Punjab Muhammad Balighur Rehman said that the joining of police service by the young officers is encouraging and the nation has high expectations of them. He expressed the hope that the young officers would play their role in improving the police station culture and restore the confidence of people in the police.

He urged the police officers to make honesty and good conduct their motto and render their services to the fullest to ensure speedy justice to the people.



LAHORE: Senior Lawyer Aitzaz Ahsan addresses to media persons during press conference held at his residency in Lahore.

ILO to assist LWMC for workers' safety

LAHORE (APP): A delegation of the International Labour Organization (ILO) on Tuesday visited the Lahore Waste Management Company (LWMC) head office. Country Head of ILO Mr Gear had a meeting with CEO LWMC Babar Sahib Din where he was briefed on operational mechanism, employee-friendly policies, training of workers and recent interventions in the waste management system of Lahore.

Mr Gear visited the LWMC Compost Plant and Lakhodair Landfill Site and appreciated efforts of the LWMC for taking

special measures to implement an integrated solid waste management system.

He said projects like waste segregation and eco-friendly composting by the LWMC were commendable.

The ILO supports worker-friendly policies and will provide full support for safety and health training for all workers.

CEO LWMC Babar Sahib Din said that all projects being taken for welfare of the workers.

More than 9,000 sanitary workers had been provided with social security cards.

Hundreds flock to witness Kashmir festival

MUZAFFARABAD (APP): Hundreds of visitors flocked to witness a festival organized by the Pakistan Red Crescent Society (PRCS) Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) to promote the Kashmiri culture among the youth here at a local hotel. Multiple stalls including food, Gems, Kashmiri Wazwan and others were displayed at the festival to acquaint visitors from Kashmiri culture and cuisine.

While addressing the opening ceremony, Secretary PRCS Gulzar Fatima greeted the participants and said such

events bridge gaps, strengthen bonds and foster a deeper understanding of one another. "Kashmir is known for its breathtaking landscapes, majestic mountains and serene lakes," said the secretary adding the event serves as a platform to showcase and celebrate the numerous forms of arts, music, dance and cuisine that define Kashmir. "We are currently facing multiple challenges in the modern era and I strongly believe that our youth can play a pivotal role to address these challenges and shaping our present and future".

Climate change poses negative impacts on seasonal fruits

PESHAWAR (APP): Highly vulnerable to climate change, Pakistan witnessed excessive rainfalls last month, which caused negative impacts on the overall production of seasonal fruits orchards and vegetables besides adversely affecting farmers' income.

Breaking the past 63 years' rainfalls record, the May 2023 excessive torrential rains coupled with hailstorms have negatively impacted the production of summer fruits including watermelon, melon, banana and mangoes besides tomato and other seasonal vegetables in the country including Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP).

The Met Office spokesman told APP on Tuesday that the national rainfall recorded last month was excessively high and above average i.e. plus 127pc and stands second wettest rainfall in May during the past 63 years as 34.30 mm of rainfall was recorded in 1987.

Agriculture Department official told APP on Tuesday that the record-breaking rainfall and hailstorms have badly affected the production of watermelon and melon in Charsadda, Nowshera, Swabi, Mardan and DI Khan districts.

He said that the standing rains water in low laying areas has slowed down the pace of growth

Caretaker cabinet meeting on June 8

PESHAWAR (APP): The sixth meeting of the caretaker cabinet of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa would be held on June 8.

Caretaker Chief Minister Azam Khan will preside over the meeting which would consider a 12-point agenda said an official letter from the Establishment Department here on Tuesday.

The agenda items include framing of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Probation and Parole Rules 2022, appointment as administrative judges of anti-terrorism courts and regularization of contract employees of the Health Department.

The other items to be discussed were providing funds for the repair of Mall Road and Fort Road and the appointment of Commissioner Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Right to Public Service Commission.

Two held, valuables recovered

RAWALPINDI (APP): In an operation against anti-social elements, the police here on Tuesday arrested two street criminals and recovered four snatched mobile phones, weapons, and other items from their possession.

According to a police spokesman, Gungmandi police arrested two members of a street criminal gang namely Adil, the ringleader, and Kamal, who were wanted in various heinous cases.

He informed that the police team constituted under the supervision of Station House Officer (SHO) Gungmandi Police Station on the directives of the Superintendent of Police (SP) conducted a raid and managed to net the accused.

Police also recovered four snatched mobile phones, weapons, and other items from their possession.

As per the preliminary police record, the criminals were also involved in other heinous crimes. "The accused have been shifted to jail for an identification parade," he added.

KP govt to ensure people friendly reforms, good governance: Afridi

PESHAWAR (APP): Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Caretaker Minister for Excise and Narcotics Control, Haji Manzoor Khan Afridi has welcomed the reforms and modernization of his department and made it clear that apart from ensuring good governance.

The provincial government was also trying its level best to align all its departments with contemporary requirements and make them more people-friendly, wherein the cooperation of the international community has also been commendable.

He was talking to the Sub National Governance (SNG) team of the foreign-funded reform organization from Islamabad that called on the provincial minister with the team leader and former Secretary Excise Raheel Siddiqui at his office. Civil Secretariat Peshawar on Tuesday. The team apprised him of the

progress made so far in the reforms and legislation side.

Haji Manzoor Afridi praised the performance of the team for supporting reforms and drafting valuable legislation in 2020 in four important KP departments including Excise, Local Government, Finance, Revenue and Planning & Development.

He also expressed satisfaction that the team has started working on a public-friendly application called Zama KP through which people can avail services of the Excise Department and pay dues and taxes with a fingertip through their mobile phones.

He was pleased that more than 31,000 vehicles have been registered under the e-payment gateway in Motor Vehicle Registration, while soon the scope of this pilot project will be extended to all other sectors including property tax.

50,000 more families in DI Khan registered with BISP during last year

DERA ISMAIL KHAN (APP): As many as 50,000 more families from Dera Ismail Khan have been registered with the Benazir Income Support Program (BISP) during the last year.

According to a press release issued here, the number of beneficiary families in Dera Ismail Khan has increased from 135,000 to 185,000 due to the special efforts of the Minister of State for Poverty Alleviation and Social Safety Faisal Karim Kundi.

Meanwhile, the number of beneficiary students under the Waseela-e-Taleem program, with an increase of 37,000, has reached to around 150,000 in the district.

Minister of State for Poverty Alleviation and Social Safety Faisal Karim Kundi, while talking to different public delegations, said that most

of the BISP cards of deserving women have been restored which were blocked in past. The stipend of BISP beneficiaries has been increased from 8,000 to 9,000.

The BISP beneficiary women were not only getting financial assistance but the facilities were being provided to them under the Nasonuma program in case of pregnancy and the Waseela-e-Taleem program for their children's education.

Under the Waseela-e-Taleem Program, the children of each deserving family were given a stipend of Rs 3,500 which has also been increased to Rs 4,000.

Similarly, under the Nasonuma program, the additional assistance of Rs 2,000 and a special food package as per international health standards.



PESHAWAR: Residents of Upper Dir District are holding protest demonstration against missing of Raees Ahmed and demanding for his recovery, held at Peshawar Press Club.

250,000 youths registered for IT courses: Sindh Governor

KARACHI (APP): Governor Sindh Kamran Khan Tessori has said that the air-conditioned marquee was in the final stages of construction and it would house information technology students of the entrance test and classes till the time of construction of the convention centre at Governor House.

He was addressing a press conference at the marquee at gate number 4. IT experts Sir Zia Khan and Daniyal Nagori, JDC Head Zafar Abbas and IT

Consultant of Governor House Muzammil Ather were also present on the occasion.

The Sindh governor said, "The media has been invited to witness the progress of the construction of the marquee and inform the doubters that the initiative of IT training of 50,000 youth was not a false claim but it is a promise which soon would become a reality." The overwhelming response from youth for registration on the website

www.governorsindh.com was very encouraging where as many as 250,000 youths have registered themselves for the entrance test, he added.

The Sindh governor said that 400 computers would be installed in this marquee where Sir Zia Khan and his team would start classes after the selection of youth based on the entrance test. "I am also very thankful to Sir Zia and Daniyal Nagori for extending their services free of cost for this vital

initiative", he added. Tessori said, "For the first time in the history of Pakistan, such a big marquee is being erected for education purposes as before no such arrangements were made for a political gathering or any entertainment event."

He said that at the time when the IT training programme was announced, some quarters raised objections claiming that it is unimplementable. But as the doors of Governor House.



KARACHI: Police officials barricade protesters when they tried to move towards red zone area during the protest demonstration of Government Retired Employees Association for acceptance of their demands, held nearby Karachi Press Club.

13 dead, 1,181 injured in 1,142 accidents in Punjab

LAHORE (APP): At least 13 people were killed and 1,181 injured in 1,142 accidents in Punjab during the last 24 hours.

According to the Rescue 1122, 573 drivers, 52 underage drivers, 142 pedestrians, and 479 passengers were among the victims of the road traffic crashes.

The statistics showed that 271 accidents were reported in Lahore which affected 268 people placing the provincial capital at top of the list followed by 95 in Faisalabad with 94 victims and at third Multan 68 with 61 victims.

According to data, 1,005 motorcycles, 60 rickshaws, 106 cars, 26 vans, eight buses, 30 trucks and 92 other vehicles besides slow-moving carts were involved in the accidents.

Police, PS take action against arms carriers

LAHORE (APP): In a joint operation, police and the Punjab Safe Cities Authority (PSCA) successfully apprehended an accused involved in arms carriers.

According to a spokesman for the PSCA, through monitoring and vigilant checking of the safe city cameras and social media monitoring an accused was captured. On identification by the Safe Cities surveillance, police arrested Abdullah and recovered 30 bore pistols with ammunition. A case has been registered against the suspect.

Ten women injure as wall collapses

MULTAN (APP): At least ten women were injured after wall of the house caved in near Qureshi square here on Tuesday morning.

Rescue source said as reported by eye-witnesses that the wall fell down when rope of tent was being tied with the shed of the home located at Tarkhan Walla.

Three women were given emergency aid following minor injuries.

Governor says: Federal govt to present people friendly budget

PESHAWAR (INP): prices of daily commodities including ghee has been witnessed in the open market.

The governor said that the business community was supporting the government's austerity measures and economic policies and wanted to end unnecessary expenditures of government organizations for the stability of the economy.

He said Pakistan has all resources and we need to work hard tirelessly in our respective professions to make it economically developed and prosperous. He said elections would be definitely held and people would know once its date was announced.

Due to the government's successful policies, he said the significant decrease in

Health facilities under Sehat card to continue: Riaz Anwar

PESHAWAR (Online): process. Earlier, a survey report on Sehat Card released by Agha Khan University revealed that 63 percent people of KP got treatment from private hospitals under the facility while only 37 percent patients went to the government hospitals.

It said that 10 percent of the population of KP was still deprived of the facility due to domicile or other technical issues, adding that an average Rs 31,395 expenses incurred on a patient's treatment.

It said that 10 percent of the population of KP was still deprived of the facility due to domicile or other technical issues, adding that an average Rs 31,395 expenses incurred on a patient's treatment.

Relief deptt starts mock exercises to deal with emergencies in monsoon

PESHAWAR (APP): The Department of Relief, Rehabilitation and Resettlement Khyber Pakhtunkhwa has started mock exercises with the line departments as part of a comprehensive plan chalked out to deal with the possible rains and flood situation in the monsoon season. The spokesperson of the Relief Department said here on Tuesday that under the supervision of Secretary Relief Abdul

Basit, the two-week exercises are being conducted with the participation of the representatives of PDMA, RESCUE-1122, Civil Defense and District Administrations.

The exercises included evacuation, flood emergency search and rescue, camp management and other flood situations, said the spokesperson, adding that the safety of children and women.



KARACHI: Visitors showing their keen interest in handicrafts during 13th Sartayoon Sang Crafts Exhibition organized by the Sindh Rural Support Organization (SRSO) in collaboration with the Sindh Government to facilitate better incomes for the women artisans of rural Sindh.

PM for inclusion of mega incentives for IT sector in fiscal budget

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Tuesday directed relevant authorities to include mega incentives for the Information Technology sector in the fiscal budget 2023-24 to boost country's IT export.

Chairing a high-level meeting on promotion of the IT sector, he directed to prepare a big package for the sector in the upcoming fiscal budget.

The prime minister decided to introduce fixed tax regime for the sector in

the budget and also constituted a committee on it, besides directing the body to submit its recommendations immediately, PM Office Media Wing said in a press release.

The meeting also accorded approval in principle for providing special incentives to new business start-ups in the sector.

Special concessions for promotion of business and trade through modern technology were also approved.

During the meeting, it was also decided to take the initiatives that were crucial to encourage youth for starting their own businesses.

The prime minister approved a major decision of creating special training IT zones for promoting entrepreneurship.

He said that the government would spend huge amount on the training of youth in the sector.

Currently, a total of 45,000 young people across the country were

being trained in the sector, he added.

The prime minister further said that in the upcoming fiscal budget, the government would distribute 1,00,000 laptops among the youth on merit basis.

During the previous tenure of the PML-N government, they had distributed laptops among the country's youth and by utilizing this facility, the young people brought foreign reserves during the Covid pandemic, he observed.



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif chairs a meeting on budget proposals regarding IT and Telecom Sector.



PESHAWAR: Governor Khyber Pakhtoonkhwa Haji Ghulam Ali handing over cheque of Rs. 100 million to FPCCI Peshawar Branch. Caretaker Provincial Ministers and representatives of business community are also present

Khurram Dastagir says: Power sector being made consumer-friendly through implementation of AMI

FAISALABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Energy Engineer Khurram Dastagir Khan on Tuesday inaugurated Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI) cell at computer centre of the Faisalabad Electric Supply Company (Fesco) headquarters and termed it a revolutionary step to enable the company as well as consumers simultaneously for accessing to real-time monitoring of meter data.

According to a press release issued by the Fesco, the minister said that the power sector was being made consumer-friendly through implementation of the state-of-the-art technology of the AMI.

He said the AMI would not only help to

control electricity theft and technical losses, but would also play a pivotal role in eliminating over-billing. The AMI would also be helpful in fault tracing and immediate restoration of power supply in case of power failure, he added.

During the briefing, Chief Executive Officer Fesco Engr Bashir Ahmed & DG (IT) Abdul Hayee said that due to real-time provision of complete information regarding the usage of electricity on smart mobiles and computers of the consumer, there would be an end to wastage of electricity due to effective control of the consumer's electricity usage times and bills.

They said the Fesco was replacing all industrial and agricultural electricity meters with its own resources under a phase manner to provide better service to its consumers and more than 6,000 consumers had been shifted to this technology so far.

The Fesco chief said that the establishment of AMI section would escalate and improve performance of the project and all functions related to the AMI would be possible under one roof.

Meanwhile, the CEO briefed the federal minister about performance of the company and said that there was no single power transformer overload of the Fesco jurisdiction.

Naveed shares Pakistan's investment potential with leading firms

ISLAMABAD (INP): Federal Minister for Commerce, Naveed Qamar held a meeting with the leading investment firms in London and shared with them the investment potential of Pakistan in various fields of the economy.

High Commissioner Moazzam Ahmad Khan and Commerce Additional Secretary, Ahsan Ali Mangi accompanied the minister in the meeting, according to a press statement issued by the commerce ministry here Tuesday.

The investment firms deal primarily in equity financing, fintech, startup and venture capital funds, it added.

The Minister highlighted the significant economic reforms undertaken by the government to enhance the ease of doing business and ensure a secure and profitable environment for investors. Minister Qamar provided a comprehensive overview of Pakistan's key investment sectors, including energy, infrastructure development, manufacturing, agriculture, information technology, and financial services.

He underscored the country's strategic location, skilled workforce, and market potential as compelling factors for investment.

China to work with Pakistan to boost bilateral trade through land transportation: Wenbin

BEIJING (APP): China on Tuesday welcomed quality agricultural products from Pakistan to enter its market and stands ready to continue to work with Pakistan to boost bilateral trade through land transportation.

As all-weather strategic cooperative partners, China and Pakistan have engaged in close cooperation in trade and other fields, Chinese foreign ministry spokesperson Wang Wenbin said in response to a question raised by APP about import of seafood through land route.

Last week, Pakistan first-ever seafood cargo container arrived in

Kashgar city of Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region through Karakoram Highway.

This is the first time that seafood containers from Pakistan have been transported by road from Karachi to Kashgar city along the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), a flagship project of Belt and Road Initiative (BRI).

"We welcome quality agricultural products from Pakistan to enter China's market and stand ready to continue to work with Pakistan to boost our trade through land transportation, achieve sustainable growth, bilateral trade and deliver

more benefits to our two peoples," he added.

While commenting on the seafood export to China, Pakistan Ambassador to China, Moin u Haque said that Pakistani and Chinese governments were making joint efforts to bring more Pakistani seafood and agriculture products through Karakoram Highway to the Chinese market.

"We are working together to bring more Pakistani seafood and agro products through this land route to the Chinese market," he said.

As the world second largest consumer market, China embraces more high-

Pakistan, China review progress of strategic ML-1 project

BEIJING (APP): Pakistan and China on Tuesday reviewed the progress of the multi-billion dollar strategic Mainline-1 (ML-1) project and reaffirmed their commitment to its early implementation.

Pakistan Ambassador to China Moin ul Haque held a meeting with the administrator of China National Railway Administration (NRA), Fe

Dongbin here. We reviewed the progress of the strategic ML-1 project, and reaffirmed our commitment to its early implementation, the ambassador tweeted. The ML-1, the flagship project of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) is aimed at revamping and modernizing the country's age-old railway infrastructure.

Gold prices decline by Rs.2,300

ISLAMABAD (APP): The per tola price of 24 karat gold decreased by Rs2,300 and was sold at Rs228,100 on Tuesday against its sale at Rs230,400 the previous day.

The price of 10 grams of 24 karat gold also decreased by Rs1,972 to Rs195,559 from Rs197,531 whereas the price of 10 grams 22 karat gold went down to Rs179,262 from Rs181,070, All Sindh Sarafa Jewellers Association reported.

The price of per tola silver decreased by Rs100 to close at Rs2,650 and ten-gram silver also decreased by Rs85.74 to close at Rs2,271.94 respectively.

However, the price of gold in the international market increased by US\$24 to \$1964 against its sale at \$1940, the association reported.



Chief Executive Officer of NPO, Muhammad Alamgir Chaudhry addressing a press conference about development initiative to promote industrial productivity in Islamabad.

PAJCCI terms Barter Trade approval b/w Pak, Afghanistan, Iran & Russia as dream come true

PESHAWAR (Online): Chairman Pakistan Afghanistan Joint Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PAJCCI), Zubair Motiwala while welcoming Pakistan's government decision of initiating Barter Trade with Afghanistan, Iran and Russia has termed the development as 'dream come true'.

In a press statement issued here on Tuesday, Chairman PAJCCI stated that fruitful consequence of a series of meetings, since 2021 by PAJCCI has started bearing fruits.

PAJCCI has been recommending several measures to facilitate economic activity with

Afghanistan including waiver of E-Form & EIF requirement for extended period till finalization of alternate mechanism, opening up of new border crossings, increase in timings at existing border crossings, reducing multiple and manual checks, adding items to PKR trading category, barter trade mechanism implementation, exploring new items for trade, cross-stuffing.

Finally, dreams come true as PAJCCI welcomes Barter Trade mechanism approval between Pakistan, Afghanistan, Iran and Russia, Zubair reiterated.



ISLAMABAD: Senator Sardar Muhammad Shafiq Tareen, Chairman Senate Standing Committee on Science and Technology presiding over a meeting of the committee at Ministry of Science and Technology.

Senate body directs to resolve long standing issues of MoST, CUI

ISLAMABAD: The Senate Standing Committee on Science and Technology in a meeting held on Tuesday directed the officials concerned to resolve the long-standing issues pertaining to the Ministry of Science and Technology and COMSATS University Islamabad (CUI).

The meeting was held under the chairmanship of Senator Muhammad Shafiq Tareen at the Ministry of Science and Technology.

While taking briefing by Prof. Dr Sajid Qamar, Acting Rector CUI regarding fixing salaries of regular employees and daily wages/contract employees according to federal government Basic Pay Scales, the Chairman committee remarked that an internal meeting between the staff and the administration must be conducted to reach a settlement on salaries.

While making a comparison between the salaries of the government basic pay scale (BPS) 2022 and CUI Pay scale 2021 is variant and inconsistent.

The administration of the university pledged that the salaries are being based and settled on the basis of available funds, however, a meeting would be conducted to resolve the matter.

Similarly, on the matter of assigning interim charge as Acting Registrar and regaining Treasurer, after completion of his term, the Chairman committee said that the information provided by the ministry in this regard is incomplete and sought more detail on the subject matter.

It was apprised that the Senate CUI has drafted the summary and put up the case in the Prime Minister's office.

Rupee sheds 37 paises against US Dollar

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistani Rupee on Tuesday witnessed 37 paise devaluation against the US Dollar (USD) in the interbank trading as it closed at Rs 286.56 against the previous day's closing of Rs 286.19.

However, according to the Forex Association of Pakistan (FAP), the buying and selling rates of dollars in the open market stood at Rs 303 and Rs 306 respectively.

The price of the Euro increased by 49 paises to close at Rs 306.59 against the last day's closing of Rs 306.10, according to the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP). The Japanese Yen went up by 01 paise and closed at Rs 2.05, whereas an increase of 82 paises was witnessed in the exchange rate of the British Pound, which traded at Rs 355.92 as compared to its last day's closing of Rs 355.10.

The exchange rates of the Emirates Dirham and the Saudi Riyal increased by 10 paises.

NPO to assist industries' ministry to improve productivity

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Ministry of Industries and Production has launched a development project to improve the productivity of the industrial, manufacturing, services and education sectors through the assistance of the National Productivity Organization (NPO), its Chief Executive Officer, Muhammad Alamgir Chaudhry said on Tuesday.

The NPO would train the stakeholders to increase productivity and make them productivity specialists in their sectors concerned as it had been accredited the status of

certification body by the Asian Productivity Organization (APO) Japan, first time for the period of four years, the NAP CEO told a press conference.

After getting training from NPO, quality, competitiveness and sustainable social economic development, he added.

He said the productivity movement was the first-ever developmental initiative funded by a public sector development programme (PSDP) to improve competitiveness through sustainable national productivity, said a press release.

Pakistan, Poland agree to take measures to boost bilateral trade

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan and Poland have agreed to take practical measures to intensify cooperation in diverse areas of mutual interest to boost bilateral trade and diplomatic ties.

The two sides, at the 8th round of Pakistan-Poland Bilateral Political Consultations held here on Tuesday, reviewed the entire gamut of bilateral relations and agreed to enhance high-level exchanges and dialogue.

The Pakistan delegation was led by Additional Foreign Secretary (Europe), Ambassador Muhammad Saleem, while the Polish

delegation was led by Under Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Poland, Wojciech Gerwel. The Polish Ambassador to Pakistan Maciej Pisarski also attended the Consultations.

They reaffirmed their mutual desire to intensify cooperation in the areas of trade, investment, energy sector, dairy and agriculture, financial sector, defence, migration & mobility, higher education and harmonization of visa regime.

It was also agreed to encourage cooperation between the media house and chambers of commerce of the two countries.

PSX stays bullish, gains 255 points

ISLAMABAD (APP): The 100-index of the Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) continued with bullish trend on Tuesday, gaining 255.52 points, a positive change of 0.61 per cent, closing at 41,923.46 points against 41,667.94 points the previous day. A total of 240,829,334 shares were traded during the day as compared to 145,177,892 shares the previous day, whereas the price of shares stood at Rs.7.152 billion against Rs.4.682 billion on the last trading day. As many as 331 companies transacted their shares in the stock market; 198 of them recorded gains and 114 sustained losses, whereas the share price of 19 companies remained unchanged. The three top-trading companies were WorldCall Telecom with 24,434,530 shares at Rs.1.15 per share.

Sindh Abadgar Ittehad urges IRSA to release required water

HYDERABAD (APP): The Sindh Abadgar Ittehad (SAI), a farmers' lobbying group, has urged Indus River System Authority (IRSA) to release the required quantum of water for Sindh.

A meeting of the group, chaired by its President Nawab Zubair Talpur here on Tuesday, expressed deep concern over the prevailing water shortage in the province for irrigation. The meeting also expressed concern over the growing of rice in the command area of Sukkur Barrage in violation of the government's ban and sought action.



RAWALPINDI: Chairman standing Committee of Real Estate of Chamber of Commerce and Industry Sardar Tanveer Server addressing press conference at Press Club in City.

KP Governor urges Politicians to form 'Charter of Economy' for economy strengthening

PESHAWAR (APP): Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Haji Ghulam Ali on Tuesday suggested the formation of 'Charter of Economy' to be signed by all the political parties with the objective of strengthening the economic condition of the country.

He said in view of the destruction of public and private properties due to vandalism unleashed by stalwarts of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) on May 9 and 10, its time for politicians to form a charter of economy for keeping trade and commercial activities unaffected by such happenings in future.

He expressed these

views while speaking with media persons at a function held in Governor House for the presentation of cheque of Rs. 10 million to Federation of Pakistan Chamber of Commerce for the construction of its office in Peshawar. A large number of provincial ministers, advisers to Chief Minister KP, leading businessmen, and media men were present at the ceremony. "Political differences should exist in the country which is the beauty of democracy but this should not be taken to a level of animosity and holding of insane protests, not showing any regard for belongings to public and private," Ghulam Ali remarked.



QUETTA: Vendor displaying mangoes to attract customers at Double Road.

Iran presents its first hypersonic ballistic missile: state media

Monitoring Desk
TEHRAN: Iran presented what officials described as its first domestically-made hypersonic ballistic missile on Tuesday, the official IRNA news agency reported, an announcement likely to heighten Western concerns about Tehran's missile capabilities.

Iranian state media published pictures of the missile named Fattah at a ceremony attended by President Ebrahim Rahisi and commanders of Iran's elite Revolutionary Guards Corps.

"The precision-guided Fattah hypersonic missile has a range of 1,400 kilometres and it is capable of penetrating all defence shields," Amirali Hajizadeh, the head of the Guards' aerospace force, was quoted as saying by Iranian state media.

Hypersonic missiles can fly at least five times

faster than the speed of sound and on a complex trajectory, which makes them difficult to intercept. Last year, the Islamic Republic said it had built a hypersonic ballistic missile and out of the atmosphere.

State TV said Iran's Fattah missile can target "the enemy's advanced anti-missile systems and is a big generational leap in the field of missiles".

"It can bypass the most advanced anti-ballistic missile systems of the United States and the Zionist regime, including Israel's Iron Dome," Iran's state TV said. Fattah's top speed reached mach 14 levels (15,000km/h), it added. Despite US and European opposition, the Islamic Republic has said it will further develop its defensive missile programme. However, Western military analysts say Iran sometimes

exaggerates its missile capabilities.

Concerns about Iran's ballistic missiles contributed to then-US president Donald Trump's decision in 2018 to ditch Tehran's 2015 nuclear pact with six major powers.

Trump reimposed US sanctions on Iran after exiting the nuclear pact, leading Tehran to resume previously banned nuclear work and reviving US, European and Israeli fears that Iran may seek an atomic bomb. Iran has consistently denied any such ambition. Indirect talks between Tehran and US President Joe Biden's administration to salvage the nuclear deal have stalled since last September.

Israel, which the Islamic Republic refuses to recognise, opposes efforts by world powers to revive Tehran's nuclear deal and has long threatened military action if diplomacy fails.



A man casts his vote for National Assembly elections at a religious school in Sabahiya district, Kuwait.

US slaps sanctions on Iranian, Chinese targets over Tehran's missile, military programs

Monitoring Desk
WASHINGTON: The United States on Tuesday imposed sanctions on over a dozen people and entities in Iran, China and Hong Kong, including Iran's defense attaché in Beijing, accusing them of running a procurement network for Iran's missile and military programs.

Ae U.S. Treasury Department statement said the network conducted transactions and enabled the procurement of sensitive and critical parts and technology for key actors in Iran's ballistic missile development, including Iran's defense ministry and Armed Forces

Logistics (MODAFL) agency, which is under U.S. sanctions.

Among those hit with sanctions in the action, which comes as Washington ramps up pressure on Tehran, was Iran's defense attaché in Beijing, Davoud Damghani, whom the Treasury accused of coordinating military-related procurements from China for Iranian end-users, including MODAFL subsidiaries.

"The United States will continue to target illicit transnational procurement networks that covertly support Iran's ballistic missile production and other

military programs," Treasury's Under Secretary for Terrorism and Financial Intelligence, Brian Nelson, said in the statement.

Iran's mission to the United Nations in New York and China's embassy in Washington did not immediately respond to requests for comment.

China and Iran in March 2021 signed a 25-year cooperation agreement to strengthen their long-standing economic and political alliance. China has been a major buyer of Iranian oil despite U.S. sanctions designed to choke off these exports.

Philippines, Japan, US hold first trilateral coast guard manoeuvres

Monitoring Desk
OFF BATAAN PROVINCE: Small boats of armed men in grey camouflage fatigues and balaclavas speed towards a Philippine ship before climbing aboard and scanning the deck with small rifles at the ready.

Moments later, its crew are marched away with their hands on their heads, concluding a simulation of a counter-terrorism operation in the South China Sea between the coast guards of the Philippines, and allies the United States and Japan.

Tuesday's manoeuvre is part of an inaugural trilateral coast guard exercise between the three countries, coming at a time of growing unease over China's maritime conduct in the region.

The drill was a mock interception of a vessel carrying weapons of mass destruction, where Philippine coast guard personnel encounter armed resistance while boarding the vessel and are tasked with bringing the situation under control. "All the exercises we do, we help one another to prepare for anything that may possibly happen in the future," said John Ybanez, a spokesperson for the Philippine coast guard. "We do get our assets and training from these two countries, so what they want is, they want to see how much we've improved." The exercises in waters off Bataan province involve more than 500 coast guard personnel and also include search and rescue and counter-piracy scenarios.



Philippines, Japan, US hold first trilateral coast guard manoeuvres.

Situation at nuclear plant under control after dam blast: Ukraine atomic agency

Monitoring Desk
KYIV: The destruction of the Kakhovka dam in southern Ukraine poses a threat to the Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant, but the situation at the facility is under control, Ukraine's state atomic power agency said on Tuesday.

The U.N. nuclear watchdog, the International Atomic Energy Agency, said on Twitter it was closely monitoring the situation but that there was "no immediate nuclear safety risk at (the) plant" which is also in southern Ukraine.

Explosions at the Soviet-era Kakhovka dam in Russian-occupied territory on Tuesday unleashed floodwater across an area that is now a war zone, according to both Ukrainian and Russian forces who blamed each other for the

destruction. Energoatom said the Russian invaders had blown up the dam.

It said the water level of the Kakhovka Reservoir was rapidly lowering, posing an "additional threat" to the Russian-occupied facility - Europe's largest nuclear power plant - which both sides have blamed one another for shelling.

"Water from the Kakhovka Reservoir is necessary for the station to receive power for turbine capacitors and safety systems of the ZNPP (Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant)," Energoatom said in a statement on the Telegram messaging app.

"Right now the station's cooling pond is full: as of 8:00 a.m., the water level is 16.6 meters, which is sufficient for the

Sixty Afghan girls hospitalised after school poisoning

Monitoring Desk
KABUL: Around 60 Afghan girls were hospitalised after being poisoned at their school in northern Afghanistan, police said on Monday.

The poisoning, which targeted a girls' school in the Afghan province of Sare Pol, comes after intense scrutiny of girls' education in the war-torn nation since the Taliban took over and barred most teenage female students.

"Some unknown people entered a girls' school in Sancharak district ... and poisoned the classes, when the girls come to classes they got poisoned," said Den Mohammad Nazari, Sare Pol's police spokesperson, without elaborating on which substance was used or who was thought to be behind the incident.

At least 42 dead in Haiti floods, landslides

Monitoring Desk
PORT-AU-PRINCE: At least 42 people were dead and 11 missing in Haiti after weeks of heavy rains at the weekend triggered flooding and landslides, civil protection officials said on Monday.

The bad weather hit seven of the 10 departments in the country which is already plunged into a protracted humanitarian crisis fuelled by gang violence, political collapse and economic stagnation.

According to the UN, the severe rains affected 37,000 people and displaced 13,400.

The town of Leogane, located 40 kilometres (25 miles) southwest of the

capital Port-au-Prince, was particularly badly hit, with damage caused by three flooded rivers. At least 20 people died there, according to Haitian officials. "The residents are desperate. They have lost everything. The waters have ravaged their fields, washed away their livestock," Leogane Mayor Ermon Henry told AFP.

Thousands of families were affected in the town, he said, stressing that the population urgently needed food, drinking water and medicine. The floods caused extensive material damage across the country, destroying hundreds of homes and damaging several roads.

Finland says to expel nine Russian diplomats

Monitoring Desk
OSLO: Finland will expel nine diplomats working at the Russian embassy in Helsinki, accusing them of working on intelligence missions, the Finnish president's office said on Tuesday.

"Their actions are contrary to the Vienna convention on diplomatic relations," the president's office said in a statement, adding that it would inform the Russian ambassador of the expulsions.

The decision was made at a meeting between Finnish President Sauli Niinisto and the country's ministerial committee on foreign and security policy.

Kuwait, only Gulf Arab nation with a powerful assembly, holds another election mired in gridlock

Monitoring Desk
DUBAI: Voters in Kuwait were casting ballots on Tuesday for a third time in as many years, with little hope of ending a prolonged gridlock between the ruling family and assertive lawmakers after the judiciary dissolved the legislature earlier this year.

Kuwait is alone among Gulf Arab countries in having a democratically elected assembly that exerts some checks on the ruling family.

But in recent years, the political system has been paralyzed by infighting and unable to enact even basic reforms. "People on the ground are not very optimistic right now about change, and that's why you see this frustration and probably a low voter turnout and low number of people running," said Dania Thafer, executive director at the Gulf International Forum, a Washington-based think-tank.

The polls will close at 8 p.m. and the results are expected on Wednesday.

"We need to bridge the gap and people can talk to each other and reach a consensus for the interest of Kuwait," said Badr Al-Turaiji, one of the thousands who braved the searing heat to cast his vote.

The last election, held a mere eight months ago, delivered a mandate for change, bringing 27 new lawmakers into the 50-member assembly, including conservative Islamists and two women. Some had served in earlier parliaments.

But in March, Kuwait's Constitutional Court annulled the decree dissolving the previous parliament, which was elected in 2020, effectively restoring it. A few weeks later, the ruling Al Sabah family dissolved that parliament for a second time, setting up this week's vote.

OpenAI CEO suggests international agency like UN's nuclear watchdog could oversee AI

Monitoring Desk
ABU DHABI: Artificial intelligence poses an "existential risk" to humanity, a key innovator warned during a visit to the United Arab Emirates on Tuesday, suggesting an international agency like the International Atomic Energy Agency oversee the groundbreaking technology.

OpenAI CEO Sam Altman is on a global tour to discuss artificial intelligence. "The challenge that the world has is how we're going to manage those risks and make sure we still get to enjoy those tremendous benefits," said Altman, 38. "No one wants to destroy the world."

OpenAI's ChatGPT, a popular chatbot, has grabbed the world's attention as it offers essay-like answers to prompts from users. Microsoft has invested some \$1 billion in OpenAI.

ChatGPT's success, offering a glimpse into the way that artificial intelli-

gence could change the way that humans work and learn, has sparked concerns as well. Hundreds of industry leaders, including Altman, have signed a letter in May that warns "mitigating the risk of extinction from AI should be a global priority alongside other societal-scale risks such as pandemics and nuclear war."

Altman made a point to reference the IAEA, the United Nations nuclear watchdog, as an example of how the world came together to oversee nuclear power. That agency was created in the years after the U.S. dropping atom bombs on Japan at the end of World War II.

"Let's make sure we come together as a globe—and I hope this place can play a real role in this," Altman said. "We talk about the IAEA as a model where the world has said 'OK, very dangerous technology, let's all put some guard rails.'"

Judge holds Australia's war veteran responsible for 3 Afghans' murder

Monitoring Desk
SYDNEY: Australia's most decorated soldier was "complicit in the murder" of three Afghan men on deployment, a judge said, elaborating on his finding against the former SAS special forces corporal in a blockbuster defamation trial.

Ben Roberts-Smith, holder of the Victoria Cross and other top military honours, was also "not an honest and reliable witness in... many areas" and a bully toward other Australian soldiers, Federal Court Judge Anthony Besanko said in his full judgement released on Monday. Besanko on Thursday threw out Roberts-Smith's defamation case against three Australian newspapers which had accused him of unlawful killings in Afghanistan. Besanko said the media outlets had proven substantial truth in their reporting.

Over 100 dead bodies remain unclaimed after Indian rail disaster

Monitoring Desk
NEW DELHI: Indian authorities made fervent appeals to families on Tuesday to help identify over 100 unclaimed bodies kept in hospitals and mortuaries after 275 people were killed in the country's deadliest rail crash in over two decades. The disaster struck on Friday, when a passenger train hit a stationary freight train, jumped the tracks and hit another passenger train passing in the opposite direction near the district of Balasore in the eastern state of Odisha.

Following non-stop efforts to rescue survivors

and clear and repair the track, trains resumed running over that section of the line on Sunday night.

Till Monday evening around 100 bodies were yet to be identified, a senior state health department official told Reuters. Bijay Kumar Mohapatra, health director of Odisha, said authorities were trying to source iceed containers to help preserve the bodies. "Unless they are identified, a post mortem cannot be done," Mohapatra said, explaining that under Odisha state regulations no autopsy can be conducted on an unclaimed body until 96 hours had passed.

Saudi wealth fund to take control of Ronaldo's club

Monitoring Desk
DUBAI: Saudi Arabia's sovereign wealth fund will take control of four of the kingdom's top soccer clubs including Al-Nassr, which Cristiano Ronaldo plays for, as the government revives a plan to privatise several state-owned sports clubs.

The Public Investment Fund (PIF) will own 75 per cent of al-Ittihad, Al-Ahli, Al-Nassr, and Al-Hilal, the sports ministry said on Twitter on Monday following a report by state news agency SPA that Saudi Arabia will privatise several sports clubs from the fourth quarter.

All are in the top-flight Saudi Professional League, except Al-Ahli which is in the second-tier Saudi First Division.

Report says 2.3 billion people globally use polluting fuel to cook; 675 million have no electricity

Monitoring Desk
UNITED NATIONS: Up to 2.3 billion people around the world are still using polluting fuels to cook and 675 million don't have electricity, according to a report released Tuesday by five international organizations.

The report said that at current rates, 660 million people are projected to be without electricity and 1.9 billion won't have clean cooking opportunities by 2030.

Heatwave in Bangladesh leads to school closures

Monitoring Desk
DHAKA: A searing heatwave in Bangladesh spurred the closure of primary schools this week and triggered frequent power cuts, worsening conditions for residents unable to run fans to cool themselves as weather officials warned relief was not imminent.

The maximum temperature soared to nearly 41 degrees Celsius (105.8 Fahrenheit) from 32 degrees Celsius 10 days ago. The Bangladesh Meteorological Department warned that there was no end in sight to the heat. Scientists have said climate change is contributing to more frequent, severe, and longer heat waves dur-

ing summer months. Bangladesh could face power cuts for two more weeks, said Nasrul Hamid, minister of state for power, energy and mineral resources, as a fuel shortage sparked shutdowns of several power-generating units, including its biggest coal-fired plant. "Due to the global energy crisis and the unprecedented surge in international currency markets, we are exposed to this unwanted load shedding," Hamid said in a Facebook post late on Monday.

The heatwave comes as the country already grapples with power cuts that have hurt its economy in recent months.



Heatwave in Bangladesh leads to school closures

South Africa eyes virtual BRICS summit to dodge Putin arrest warrant

Monitoring Desk
JOHANNESBURG: South Africa is considering hosting the headline meeting of leaders from BRICS nations entirely online to avoid Russian President Vladimir Putin participating in person, people familiar with the matter told Semafor Africa.

The International Criminal Court issued a warrant for Putin's arrest in March for alleged war crimes in Ukraine which South Africa, as a member of the ICC, is officially obliged to enforce. It's hosting the 2023 annual summit of the BRICS nations — Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa — in late August, to which Putin is invited. But Pretoria would rather he not show up, to prevent a diplomatic headache. The virtual summit approach has been discussed by a committee of ministers ap-

pointed by President Cyril Ramaphosa to resolve issues connected with Putin's arrest warrant, three people with direct knowledge of the proposal — a senior civil servant and two business leaders — told Semafor Africa. Under the plan, most summit events would still take place in South Africa, such as the high profile BRICS Business Forum and the meeting of foreign ministers. The meeting of heads of state would be the only part held online.

The cabinet may make a decision on the proposal as early as this week, the people said. South Africa's foreign ministry did not immediately respond to requests for comment. South Africa is a signatory of the Rome Statute and a member of the ICC. That means the country would be theoretically obligated to arrest the Russian president if he entered the country.

Top Polish court rules minister's abuse of power case should be reopened

Monitoring Desk
WARSAW: Poland's top court ruled on Tuesday that a case involving a minister convicted of abuse of power when fighting graft in a previous role should be reopened, a blow to government hopes that the proceedings could be laid to rest before elections.

Parliamentary elections are scheduled for October or November, with polls suggesting the ruling nationalist Law and Justice (PiS) party may fall short of a majority amid a conflict over democratic standards in the EU member state.

Tuesday's ruling appeared to fly in the face of a Constitutional Tribunal verdict handed down on Friday that said President Andrzej Duda was within his rights to pardon Mariusz Kaminski, the current interior minister, before an appeal had been concluded, potentially drawing a line under the matter.

"The Supreme Court is of the opinion that the judgment of the Constitutional Tribunal of June 2

this year... did not produce any legal effects," Judge Piotr Mirek said.

The Supreme Court sent the case back to a district court to be re-examined.

PiS spokesman Rafal Bochenek condemned the decision. "This is open subversion on the part of the Supreme Court and an anti-constitutional act that is intended to lead to complete legal chaos," he told private broadcaster RMF FM.

In 2015, weeks after PiS came to power, Duda, a PiS ally, issued a pardon to Kaminski who had been found guilty of abuse of power while serving as head of the anti-corruption agency. He was sentenced to three years in prison.

Lawyers questioned whether Duda had the right to do so before the appeals process had concluded and opposition politicians branded the move political. A final conviction would have prevented Kaminski from holding government office.



President Dr. Arif Alvi addressing the 3rd Lahore Chamber of Commerce and Industry (LCCI) IT Excellence Recognition ceremony, at Aiwan-e-Sadr, Islamabad.

Redefined priorities, swift decision-making inevitable for development: President

ISLAMABAD (APP): President Dr Arif Alvi has said that the redefined priorities and swift decision-making were inevitable to make Pakistan join the bandwagon of the fast-developing world.

The president, addressing the 3rd LCCI IT Excellence Recognition Ceremony in Islamabad on Tuesday said that the creation of talent and investment in human capital was the fastest route to achieve progress. It was organised by the Lahore Chamber of Commerce and Industries, which marked the distribution of awards among the excellent IT startups and companies.

The president, impressed by the remarkable progress of artificial intelligence, also shared with the audience a comprehensive presentation on exponential growth in AI prepared by ChatGPT within just six minutes which otherwise could take days or even weeks. He said information technology was the only sector in which Pakistan could achieve excellence by investing in human capital as in the modern era, the human intellect was far more important than natural resources. He said the establishment of IT industry took considerably lesser time than establishing a brick-and-mortar industrial unit.

Exemplifying the process of genome sequencing, the president said IT sector provided exponential growth, thus creating numerous opportunities to excel.

He said, on the one hand, the world felt scared of tremendous progress made AI and was thinking to decelerate its pace, but on the other hand, Pakistan has not yet joined that bandwagon which needed to be given serious thought.

President Alvi said that based on the fast pace of AI, one could predict that the AI would write software by itself and also achieve the capability to read human minds within the next 10 years.

Recalling his efforts to promote artificial intelligence and quantum computing in Pakistan, the president said the country needed more inspiration and creating talent.

Bilawal for exploring huge trade, investment potential between Pakistan, Iraq

ISLAMABAD (APP): Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari on Tuesday said the current bilateral trade was not commensurate with the huge potential with Iraq which needed to be explored to expand bilateral trade volume.

Addressing the Pakistan-Iraq Business Council in Baghdad, he said Pakistan's Single Country Exhibition held in March 2022 in Baghdad saw deals worth of US\$ 20 million which showed the great business potential, between the countries.

He expressed the confidence that this Pakistan-Iraq Business Forum would ensure a similar opportunity for government to government (G2G) linkages and business networking amongst potential investors and trade partners from both sides.

Bilawal stressed for enhancing collaboration and mutual investment in five prioritized fields including IT, food security, energy, construction and medicine. During the event, an MoU was also signed between Federation of Pakistan Chamber of Commerce (FPCCI) and their Iraqi counterpart.

The foreign minister said the establishment of Pakistan-Iraq Business Council comprising chambers of commerce and key business representative entities from both the countries would help expanding the bilateral economic ties.

"Through this entity, we can follow-up on programs, policy suggestions, roadmap, and special initiatives for enhancing trade and investment between the two countries," he said.

The foreign minister also assured the government's full cooperation to the work of this proposed Business Council.

He said economic diplomacy was at the heart of the Pakistan's foreign policy. "We want to build mutually beneficial economic ties. Let our partnership be led by the burgeoning and vibrant business community from both sides, paving the way for prosperity and progress of both the countries."

Bilawal said during his interaction with President, Prime Minister and his Iraqi counterpart, he discussed expanding cooperation in diverse areas including enhancing bilateral trade and investment, collaborating with Iraq in rebuilding and re-construction of their infrastructure and sharing of expertise in water management and agriculture.

12 MW approved for new Gwadar Int'l Airport

QUETTA (INP): In a groundbreaking development, approximately "12 MW" of electricity has been approved for New Gwadar International Airport (NGIA) to fulfill all its electricity needs for 24 hours without any interruption. On special directives of the Ministry of Planning, Quetta Electric Supply Company (QESCO), National Power Distribution Company that deals with the power supply system in Baluchistan, has formally sanctioned 12 MW to energize New Gwadar International Airport (NGIA) and has commenced full-scale execution by deputing its special teams on the site.

QESCO official told

Gwadar Pro that tenting and commissioning process is likely to be completed within 10 days as all required paraphernalia like pollerectations, transmission lines, and electrical input and output circuits have already been aligned with the installed power system.

To keep power supply smooth and free from power breakdown, 12 MW will remain available to NGIA round the clock as three power transmission lines will be feeding NGIA.

"It means if one goes out of function then the second will be automatically connected and if the second goes haywire then the third will be present in the system as a backup arrangement," he added.

Malaysian tourists rally reach Quetta from Iran; proceeds for Multan

Independent Report

QUETTA: A rally of the heavy motorbikes and four wheelers comprising a group of 35 Malaysian tourists reached Quetta from Iran via Taftan on Tuesday morning.

The rally named after EUROASIA consisted of seven heavy bikes and 10 vehicles had started from France on May 1, 2023.

It took around 36 days to reach Taftan, the border town at Pak-Iran border on Monday covering some 16 countries. From where the tourists, part of the rally, moved towards Quetta and reached the metropolis on Tuesday.

Later, the participants of rally proceeded for next destination Multan via Quetta, Killa Saifullah, Loralai, Fort Manro and DG Khan.

The rally would also visit Lahore and the northern areas of Pakistan on way to India.

The rally is scheduled to enter India via Wahga border on June 12, 2023 and they would reach its final destination Malaysian capital on July 4 after covering around 19 countries.

According to the participants of the rally, they have enjoyed their voyage so far. They particularly referred to the marvelous hospitality and traditional food enjoyed on way to Quetta from Taftan.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Law and Justice, Senator Azam Nazir addresses during the opening ceremony of Islamic Law Orientation Course for the Lawyers of Islamabad organized by Federal Shariat Academy in collaboration with Islamabad Bar Association.

CM grieved over death of Abdul Wahid Bandeeg

Independent Report

QUETTA: The Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Abdul Qudus Bizenjo has expressed deep grief and sorrow over death of prominent Balochi language literary person and former Chairman Balochi Academy, Abdul Wahid Bandeeg.

In a condolence statement issued here on Tuesday, the Chief Minister paid tributes to late Abdul Wahid Bandeeg saying that the late performed valuable services for the Balochi language and literature.

Mr. Bizenjo said that his (Abdul Wahid Bandeeg) death has created a vacuum in the Balochi language literature.

Azam Tarar says: Educating young lawyers indispensable for improving standards of legal profession

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Law and Justice Senator Azam Nazeer Tarar on Tuesday said educating the young lawyers was the real task and indispensable for further improving the standards of legal profession.

Addressing the opening ceremony of Islamic Law orientation course for the lawyers of Islamabad organized by the Federal Shariat Academy in collaboration with the Islamabad Bar Association, he shared his views regarding the importance and role of legal education and training in further improving the professional standards in the legal sphere.

The minister said the profession of law was the noblest duty, which had its own history. Acquiring legal education and training was necessary for understanding its technicalities and to serve the clients in the best possible manner.

He appreciated the efforts of the Federal Shariat Academy's management and the Islamabad Bar Council in educating the young lawyers.

Such exercises, he added, further enhanced the skills of legal practitioners.



QUETTA: A delegation of Joint Action Committee University of Balochistan led by Nazeer Ahmed Lehri meeting with Governor Balochistan Malik Abdul Wali Khan Kakar

Council of Islamic Ideology convenes two-day meeting to address pressing issues

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Council of Islamic Ideology on Tuesday commenced a crucial two-day meeting to deliberate on a wide range of topics, encompassing the May 9 incidents of mob violence, and the recent verdict of the Federal Shariat Court regarding the Transgender Act.

Led by Chairman Dr. Qibla Ayaz, the council aims to address these pressing matters and devise potential solutions. During the meeting, a comprehensive 26-point agenda will be thoroughly discussed, reflecting the council's commitment to addressing critical issues affecting society.

The session commenced with a solemn moment of prayer to honor the martyrs who have sacrificed their lives.

Prominent figures attending the meeting include Hafiz Muhammad Tahir Mahmood Ashrafi, Syed Ziaullah Shah Bukhari, Justice Zafar Iqbal, Justice Altaf, Dr. Umair Mahmood Siddiqui, Allama Hussain Akbar, Pir Syed Muhammad Habib Irfani, Dr. Abul Hasan Shah, Sahibzada Hasan Haseebur Rehman, and Advocate Muhammad Jalaluddin.

Flood victim heir gets Rs 1mln relief cheque

QUETTA (APP): Deputy Commissioner (DC) Jhal Magsi Muhammad Ramzan Pulal on Tuesday gave an Rs one million relief cheque to the heir of a flood victim Shehzadi Bibi's Rastum Khan on behalf of the Balochistan government on Tuesday.

The victim Shehzadi Bibi was martyred last year due to the worst floods in history and heavy monsoon rains in the Qazi Ismail area of Jhal Magsi.

The DC expressed his grief and condolence to the heirs of the girl on the occasion.



QUETTA: Coordinator of Chief Minister Balochistan Bilal Kakar meeting with DG PDMA Jahanzeb Pathan

Pak, China sign MoU for Dev. of water resources, environmental protection

BEIJING (APP): Pakistan and China on Tuesday signed a memorandum of understanding for bilateral cooperation in the utilization and sustainable development of water resources and environmental protection. The MoU between Chang Jiang Water Resources Commission (CWRC) and Water and Power Development Authority (WAPDA) was signed in a ceremony held at the embassy.

Pakistan Ambassador to China, Moin Ul Haque and Vice Commissioner of CWRC, Wu Daoxi signed the agreement. The MOU covers wide areas of cooperation including water conservation, watershed planning, flood control and drought relief, development of water resources, management and operation of water projects, ecological protection along the rivers.

Ghee price decreases across the country: USC

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Utility Store Corporation (USC) has reduced the prices of subsidized ghee provided under the Prime Minister's Relief Package by Rs 80 per kg across the country.

According to USC Spokesperson, the subsidized ghee, which was earlier being sold at Rs 490 per kg, would now be available at Rs 410 per kg, said a press release issued here on Tuesday.

He said that ghee would be provided at Rs 300 per kg for the registered users under Benazir Income Support Program (BISP).

It should be noted that USC is providing special subsidies on basic commodities (flour, sugar, ghee, rice, pulses) under the Prime Minister's Relief Package.



QUETTA: Provincial President PPP Mir Changez Khan Jamali meeting with Chief Executive Officer QESCO Engr. Abdul Karim Jamali

BNP striving to provide facilities to people at their doorstep

QUETTA (APP): Balochistan National Party (BNP) Loralai leaders on Tuesday said that BNP was taking all possible measures to provide basic facilities to people at their doorstep in the province.

These views were expressed by Haji Khairjan Bangulzai, Malik Bashir Ahmad Shahwani, Chairman Mohammad Hassani, Agashkil Shah Sheikh Hussaini, Obaidullah Muhammad Hassani, Comrade Atta Mohammad Bangulzai in their joint statement issued here.

They also thanked Member of Provincial Assembly (MPA) Malik Naseer Ahmed Shahwani for starting development projects including blacktop roads and drains in Killi Lalabad Muhammad Hassani and other areas of his constituency.

The completion of ongoing development projects would provide maximum amenities to people in the area, they said adding that for the last several decades, Killi Lalabad and other areas were neglected in terms of development works and the people of the area were deprived of basic facilities even in the 21st century.

According to media reports IMF executive board meeting scheduled on 14 June and due to failure in making staff level agreement Pakistan's issue was not included in schedule.

According to reports deadlock on loan program between Pakistan and IMF is still there however government is hopeful for staff level agreement till June 30.

Court issues non bailable arrest warrants against Shahbaz Gill

ISLAMABAD (APP): A local court here on Tuesday issued non-bailable arrest warrants against PPT's leader Shahbaz Gill in a case pertaining inciting people against the institutions.

Additional Session Judge Tahir Abbas Sapra heard the case against Shahbaz Gill.

During the course of proceeding, the court inquired about the attendance of the accused at which the lawyer said that appearance of Shahbaz Gill was not possible so far as his wife went through a surgery.

The lawyer also filed a request seeking one-time exemption from appearance to the accused.



NASEERABAD: Residents of Dera Murad Jamali are holding protest demonstration against shortage of drinking water during summer season.

PAC directs to arrest real culprits of May 9 incident

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Public Accounts Committee (PAC) Tuesday directed the authorities concerned to arrest the miscreants, who incited public to take to streets on May 9 tragic incidents and attack the national institutions.

In the meeting, the audit objections of the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) of 2018-19 and 2019-20 were reviewed.

The PAC urged the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) to conduct the Departmental Accounts Committee (DAC) immediately to ensure transparency in the system.

He further directed that innocent people should not be harassed.

Guru Arjan Dev meet Pakistan issues visas to India's 215 Sikh pilgrims

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Pakistan High Commission in New Delhi has issued 215 visas to Sikh pilgrims from India to participate in the annual event scheduled on the eve of the martyrdom day of Guru Arjan Dev Jee, being held in Pakistan from June 8-17.

The issuance of visas is in line with the government of Pakistan's commitment to fully implement the Bilateral Protocol on Visits to Religious Shrines of 1974. Every year, a large number of Indian pilgrims visit Pakistan to observe various religious festivals and occasions.

Hamzazai urges govt to establish veterinary university in Loralai

QUETTA (APP): Provincial Leader of Pakistan People's Party Shams Hamzazai urged the Balochistan government to build veterinary university in Loralai district to boost livestock sector in the province.

The local leader asked the provincial government to include the project in the next Public Sector Development Programme (PSDP).

He said lack of proper knowledge of livestock and dairy development was the main issue, and for this purpose, the government should approve the project to establish the livestock university in the province.

Shams Hamzazai said that the objective of the establishment of the university was to provide better opportunities of education and research in the livestock sector to the students, adding that it would help promote the sector on modern lines.

Expressing best wishes for the livestock sector, he said that the province has the potential to export domestic animals to gulf countries and earn precious foreign exchange.

Replying to a question, he said Balochistan was environmentally different from other provinces of the country and businessmen were being encouraged to promote livestock farming in the province.

He said the government should formulate long term policies to increase dairy and meat production. The department has unable to provide proper treatment to the animals by ensuring vaccination.

The livestock of Balochistan province comprised of one of the unique cattle species and required urgent attention of authorities concerned to promote livestock activities in the province having around 34 million hectares range land.

He said it was revealed by a recent census conducted by statistics division of Pakistan that over 70 percent of the locals in Balochistan directly and indirectly rely on livestock.



QUETTA: Chairman Voice for Baloch Missing Persons Nasrullah Baloch, Mama Qadeer Baloch and others addressing a Press conference