

Independent

Member APNS & CPNE

Chief Editor: Syed Farooq Shah

Quetta

Ph: 2841470/2841473 REG: No. BC-116 B/ID-445 Vol: XXIV No. 289, Zee'qad 19, 1444 AH Friday June 09, 2023 Pages 12, Price Rs.15

Unveils Pakistan Economic Survey 2022-23 Govt rescued crippling economy, averted default in face of serious inherited challenges: Dar

Says Rupee's real value is around Rs 240/\$; GDP posted a growth of 0.29% in FY23

ISLAMABAD (Online): The government's economic team headed by Finance Minister Ishaq Dar told Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Thursday while presenting the Economic Survey 2022-23 that there is no quick fix, but the decline of the economy has been stopped and the risk of default has been averted.

He maintained his argument, however, that the rupee's real value is in the 240s against the dollar. "We have stopped the decline of the economy and have prevented Pakistan from default. Now our objective is 3.5% growth for next year," said Dar. "The baseline is core inflation, which is in the range of 16-20%. The world over the

core inflation is followed and not the headline inflation," he added. Unveiling the Economic Survey, the finance minister said that the fiscal year 2022-23 was a difficult year for the economy. There are 17 chapters in the economic survey on different sectors of the economy. The report discusses in detail sectoral, socio-economic

development, agriculture, manufacturing, energy, IT, capital market, health, education and transport sectors. "Pakistan was the 24th largest economy in 2017, but has now dropped to the 47th position," said Finance Minister Ishaq Dar, adding that, "For the restoration of the economy, we have made a plan, our objective is to

restore macroeconomic stability, we need to bring it back to what it was in 2017." Higher international commodity prices (crude oil, edible oil, pulses etc), global supply disruptions, damages of major and minor crops due to flood, currency depreciation, admin-

Continued on page 2



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue Senator Ishaq Dar presents Economic Survey for fiscal year 2022-23 during a press conference.



ISLAMABAD: State Minister of Turkmenistan and Head of Turkmengaz, Maksat Babayev and Minister of Petroleum of Pakistan, Dr. Musaddiq Malik signing TAPI Joint Implementation Plan while Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif witnesses the signing.

Jahangir Tareen launches Istehkam-i-Pakistan Party with PTI defectors

ISLAMABAD (INP): Senior politician Jahangir Khan Tareen announced the formation of a new political party — Istehkam-e-Pakistan Party — during the party's first joint press conference in Islamabad on Thursday. He was flanked by former PTI leaders Imran Ismail, Aleem Khan and Ali Zaidi, among others during the press conference. A day earlier, nearly 100 former PTI members of the national and provincial assemblies joined the new party, expressing confidence in Tareen's leadership. "Today, we're announcing formation of Istehkam-e-Pakistan Party. Under one platform, we're together and will try to steer Pakistan out of current crises," Tareen said. "Today, our nation

needs hope the most so this country could achieve its true potential. No one can be allowed to attack state institutions in shape of mobs. It is not just about attacking institutions but most importantly people are losing hope." "We have to make a Pakistan where establishment, judiciary, political forces and all stakeholders are on the same page. We all want to take Pakistan towards prosperity," he added. "Today, we need to change how politics is conducted in our country. It needs a new direction. We will make joint efforts to achieve that." He emphasised that to take Pakistan out of economic turmoil, focus has to be shifted towards increasing exports and incentivising the IT sector.



LAHORE: Senior Politician Jahangir Tareen announces new political party named 'Istehkam-e-Pakistan Party' (IPP) during a press conference.

Directs to launch Health Cards instantly: CM bans holding of inaugural ceremonies of development projects in Balochistan

Independent Report
QUETTA: The Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Abdul Qudus Bizenjo has imposed a ban on holding of the inaugural ceremonies of the development projects in the province. According to an official communique issued here on Thursday, the Chief Minister directed the provincial ministers, members of provincial assembly and government high ups to avoid from holding of the foundation stone laying and inaugural sessions of the projects. He asserted that the public works are done with the resources of the masses and public exchequer. The credit of these projects should not be given to anyone but it is right of the people, adding he stressed. The Chief Minister asserted that the inauguration of public nature development projects is nothing but sheer wastage of public resources and machinery. He also said that it doesn't create a good impression from publicity and pictures of the inauguration of projects and solution of the problems is important instead of the apparent publicity and show-off, he maintained. He said that it is our responsibility to reach the fruits of development process. He said that the development projects are the right of people and it is not a sort of any kindness. Moreover, the Chief Minister directed to launch the Balochistan Health Card Programme at the earliest. He also directed not to hold any inaugural ceremony of the initiation of Health Card Programme.

Imran's arrogance & ego cause party's disintegration, says Marriyum

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Information and Broadcasting on Thursday said the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) disintegrated due to arrogance, ego and stubbornness of its chief who himself had destroyed his own politics. She cited a famous couplet of an Urdu poet on her Twitter handle, referring to the current state of the PTI and its chief. "Dil Kay Phapholay Jhal Uthay Seenay Kay Dagh Sy, Is Ghar Ko Aag Lag Gai Ghar Kay Chiragh Sy," the minister said in the tweet while calling out the PTI chief for his arrogance and ego. "The house of cards based on the idols of arrogance, ego and selfishness has faced a sudden collapse. The PTI is now spiritless with the departure of those who had laid the party's foundations," Marriyum said. She said the "arrogant man" had once stated that joining or quitting of the people did not matter for the party but he himself had now become a lesson for others (after the departure of his party leaders).

Cabinet meets today to approve federal budget

ISLAMABAD (Online): Federal cabinet will meet today (Friday) under the Prime Minister (PM) Shehbaz Sharif to accord approval to the federal budget for the next financial year of 2023-24. The meeting will take place in parliament house. Finance Minister (FM) Ishaq Dar along with his economic team will give detailed briefing in the meeting on the salient features of budget. The final decision about enhancement in pay and pension of government employees will be taken and approval thereof will be accorded in this meeting.

TAPI project to strengthen energy security of Pakistan, region: PM

Pakistan, Turkmenistan sign joint implementation plan to execute TAPI gas pipeline project

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Thursday said that being a critical component of his government's vision, the TAPI gas pipeline project would ensure energy security, economic growth and prosperity in Pakistan as well as the entire region. He said the leadership on both sides had been desirous to further promote economic and commercial relations. He underscored that Pakistan could be a gateway for quick access to Turkmenistan's rich energy reserves. The prime minister

headed by State Minister and Head of TurkmenGaz Maksat Babayev, a PM Office press release said. Welcoming the delegation, the prime minister said Pakistan and Turkmenistan enjoyed brotherly relations underpinned by common history, culture and religion. He said the leadership on both sides had been desirous to further promote economic and commercial relations. He underscored that Pakistan could be a gateway for quick access to Turkmenistan's rich energy reserves. The prime minister

Continued on page 2



TURBAT: Governor Balochistan Malik Abdul Wali Khan Kakar presiding over a review meeting during his visit of University of Turbat

Governor visits Turbat University: Concrete steps being taken to materialize dream of literate & developed Balochistan

Independent Report
QUETTA: The Governor Balochistan, Malik Abdul Wali Khan Kakar has stated that concrete steps are being taken for materializing the dream of educated and developed province. He said that education is the basis of every kind of development, this is why the incumbent government is determined to provide quality education in the province. The Governor was speaking on occasion of the visit of Turbat University

on Thursday morning. During the visit, he met the Vice Chancellor of Turbat University, Professor Dr. Jan Muhammad, Principal Secretary to Governor, Abdul Nasir Dotani and other faculty members and staff. He went round of different departments and sections of the University. He was also briefed about the overall performance and functioning of the University. Malik Abdul Wali

Continued on page 2

Protest of Govt & varsities' teachers echoed in session: Opposition leader accuses of Govt. of not realizing funds for current year PSDP

Independent Report
QUETTA: The leader of Opposition in Balochistan Assembly, Malik Sikandar Khan Advocate has stated that amount of the current financial year's public sector development programme (PSDP) and the PSDP plus has not been released yet. He said that the work

on development projects are stopped due to non-release of the funds. The Opposition leader raised the point while speaking on budget proposals for the next financial year during the session of Balochistan Assembly on Thursday. The Speaker, Mir Jan

Continued on page 2



QUETTA: Provincial Minister Mir Nasebullah Marri, MPAs Mir Zaid Ali Reki, Sana Baloch and Sardar Khan meeting with Speaker Balochistan Assembly Mir Jan Muhammad Khan Jamali

BAP not to become part of federal budget session: CM announces boycott of federal budget session of NA starting today

President BAP and Chief Minister directs members of National Assembly and Senate not to participate in budget session; urges Asif Ali Zardari, Maulana Fazlur Rehman, Sardar Akhtar Mengal and other national leaders of province to support our stance

Independent Report
QUETTA: In yet another major development after boycott of the meeting of National Economic Council (NEC), the President of ruling Balochistan Awami Party (BAP) and Chief Minister, Mir Abdul Qudus Bizenjo has announced to boycott of the federal budget session of the National Assembly due to commence today (Friday). In an official statement issued here on Thursday, Mir Abdul Qudus Bizenjo has asserted that the BAP would not become

part of the federal budget session. It may be mentioned here that Chief Minister has already boycotted the NEC meeting held in Islamabad couple of days earlier due to "non-cooperative" and "cold" attitude of the federal government towards the province. The Chief Minister maintained that the members of National Assembly and Senators would not be participating in the federal budget session. In this regard, clear directives have been issued to the members of NA and

Senate belonging to BAP for not attending the budget session. He warned that the MNAs and Senators of the party would be de-seated on violation of the party policy by taking disciplinary action against them. The Chief Minister mentioned that the NEC's meeting was also boycotted due to the "attitude" of the federal government. And the reason behind boycott of the budget session is also the cold attitude of the federal government with

Continued on page 2

CJP back in action to revive 'pre-May 9 position'

ISLAMABAD (Online): The remarks passed in the last two days suggest that the Supreme Court, led by the chief justice of Pakistan (CJP), is trying to revive its position before the May 9 violence, triggered by the arrest of the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) chairman. The May 9 mayhem had even pushed those judges, who had tried hard to hold the elections to the Punjab Assembly on May 14, on the defensive. Later, they had no choice but to show restraint in matters wherein confrontation between the judiciary and other institutions especially the parliament, executive, security establishment, etc, could have worsened. Now it is being witnessed that CJP Umar Ata Bandial has listed petitions

against the federal government's formation of an inquiry commission, led by SC's Justice Qazi Faez Isa, to investigate the audio leaks in relation to judges. While the hearing of the audio leaks commission case was underway, CJP Bandial wondered who had planted the audio leaks on social media. The bench allowed Shoaib Shaheen, the lawyer for one of the petitioners, Supreme Court Bar Association (SCBA) President Abid Zuberi, to present his arguments that the leaks were released on social media after the SC's February 16 order wherein the CJP was requested to invoke his suo motu jurisdiction over the delay in elections to Punjab and Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa (K-P) assemblies.



QUETTA: Inspector General Prisons Shuja Kasi meeting with Home Minister Mir Ziaullah Lango

Two policemen among three martyred in Swat

From Arif Ahmad
SWAT: Three persons, including two police personnel, were martyred in the firing by unknown persons in the main city of Swat, Mingora. According to police sources, three unidentified armed men opened fire on two policemen near Mingora vegetable market, as a result of which police constables Umara Khan and Ashraf were killed on the spot. While Bank Security Guard Musa Khan was injured and shifted to Saidu Sharif Hospital where he succumbed to his injuries. According to police sources, both policemen were posted at Mingora police station. According to SP Farman Khan, the accused fled after the incident and a search operation has been started to arrest them. "Blockades have been

imposed on the entry and exit routes of Swat and soon the accused will be caught by the police. This is an incident of terrorism and the terrorists will be arrested soon." He added. On the other hand, the relatives of the martyred police blocked Saidu Sharif road and protested. The protesters kept the bodies on the road and raised slogans against the incident. The protesters said that they had no enmity with anyone, so the police should present the accused and arrest them immediately, bringing the facts before the people. Later, after talks with SP Farman Khan, DSP Attaullah, DSP Amjad, and Additional Deputy Commissioner Sohail Khan, the protest ended. The funeral prayers of

Continued on page 2



ISLAMABAD: Head of delegation of European Union Cooperation in Pakistan Sven Ruesch meeting with Balochistan Chief Secretary Abdul Aziz Uqaili in Balochistan House

Concrete steps....

Continued from page 1

Kakar on the occasion said that the focus of government is on quality education, and for we are taking concrete measures to materialize the dream of educated and developed province.

He said that 200 scholarships have been allocated for the students of coastal areas through Higher Education Commission. The initiative is aimed at promoting higher education in the areas, he added.

The Governor appreciated the Turbat University for playing part in promotion of higher education in the coastal areas besides Turbat and adjacent localities.

However, he stressed the need to improve the educational standard and research activities in the higher education institutions.

He also emphasized that we need to pay serious attention on making the public sector universities self-sufficient. For the purpose, the public sector universities would have to generate their resources, otherwise it would be very difficult to run them in future, the Governor maintained.

CM announces boycott of...

Continued from page 1

Balochistan, he maintained. He said that we have no grudge with the federal government, but we did it on principle.

He regretfully pointed out that Balochistan is facing severe financial problems, the basic reason of which is non-cooperation of the federal government.

Mir Abdul Quddus Bizenjo added that our constitutional right is not being given despite the repeated contacts and reminders. He said that although federal government makes promises and assurances, but there would be no implementation on them.

He said that ours are not undue demands, but these are based on the constitution. He reminded that PPL has not been paying our dues for several years, which has exceeded from Rs. 45 billion now.

What's an irony that PPL's operation is continued in the Sui gas field without any agreement with the province.

He said that the administrative power of the PPL company is with the federal government, but it (federal government) is not taking any interest in payment of the dues against the company, nor it is ready to play its role in this regard, he added. He also mentioned that

Opposition leader....

Continued from page 1

Muhammad Jamali was in the chair.

Malik Sikandar demanded release of the necessary funds for the development projects. He also proposed to prefer the livestock, water supply and similar other projects in the next financial development programme.

Earlier, the opposition MPA Nasarullah Zairay pointed out towards the issue of hunger strike being observed by the government teachers outside the provincial assembly.

He said that the government teachers are observing hunger strike for their demands as such its notice should be taken.

On this, BNP's MPA Sanaulah Baloch alleged that bureaucracy is creating hurdle in the summary of demands of government teachers. He demanded of the Minister Education to end the strike of government teachers.

The Education Minister Mir Naseebullah Marri said that the Finance department has objection on the amount of up-gradation of the teachers, however, the issue would be resolved soon.

Referring the protest of the teachers and employees of the public sector universities, the Minister Education said that there is an issue of the salaries in the universities, but ironically, recruitment process is on there. He said that he is surprised that why the issue of salaries in the universities is created all of sudden?

Mariyum takes notice of journalist's residence

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Information and Broadcasting Mariyum Aurangzeb on Thursday took notice of an attack on the residence of a senior journalist, Baqir Sajjad, who claimed that his house in Islamabad was attacked by unidentified people and took away cash and jewellery.

"I have just spoken to IG Police Islamabad regarding this incident. He has assured me that he will investigate this matter as a matter of priority and will speak to Baqir Sajjad shortly," the minister said in a tweet.

TAPI project to strengthen...

Continued from page 1
newed the commitment for early implementation of the project and hoped that the TAPI gas pipeline would be completed at the earliest by optimizing all available resources by all relevant parties.

In order to expedite work on various components of the project, the prime minister nominated Special Assistant to the Prime Minister Dr Jehanzeb Khan to work as the focal person from the Pakistan side as the head of the Senior Coordination Committee. The visiting Turkmenistan delegation also included Deputy Minister of Energy Annageldi Saparov, CEO and Chairman of BOD, TPCL, Muhammetmyrat Amanov

Two policemen...

Continued from page 1

the martyred police personnel in the Mingora firing incident were performed at Kabal Police Line in which six brigade commander Sajid Akbar, DIG Malakand Nasir Mehmood Sati, DPO Swat Shafiullah Gandapur and political and social personalities participated.

Following the firing incident in Mingora, Swat Bar Association and High Court Mingora Bench Bar Association have announced a strike, both bar associations will boycott the court proceedings on Friday while also registering a protest against the incident.

Govt rescued crippling economy, averted default....

Continued from page 1

trillion in June 2022, representing a significant increase of 97%.

"Under the governance of the PTI (Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf) party, the total debt during their tenure surged from Rs 29.9 trillion in FY2018 to Rs 59.8 trillion, marking an approximate doubling of the debt (nearly 100% increase)," lamented the finance minister. He said that the final nail in the economical coffin was when commitments were not kept after the vote of no confidence.

Discussing the previous government's performance, Dar said that fiscal deficit increased from 5.8% in FY2018 to 7.9% of GDP in FY2022, trade deficit worsened to \$39.1 billion in FY2018, circular debt increased from Rs 1.148 billion to Rs 2.467 billion, public debt increased from 63.7% to 73.9% of GDP and total public debt in-

creased from Rs25 trillion in June 2018 to Rs49.2 trillion in June 2022 (a 97% increase). Global GDP growth has experienced a decline of over 50% since 2021, slowing down from 6.2% in 2021 to 2.8% in 2023.

trillion in June 2022, representing a significant increase of 97%.

creased from Rs25 trillion in June 2018 to Rs49.2 trillion in June 2022 (a 97% increase). Global GDP growth has experienced a decline of over 50% since 2021, slowing down from 6.2% in 2021 to 2.8% in 2023.

TENDER NOTICE
The Divisional Forest Officer Sibi invites bids from eligible Bidders for Supply of Good/Service providing items under Ten Billion Trees Tsunami Programme Phase-I Up-scaling of Green Pakistan Programme (Revised) of following - Bid Security 02% of the total quoted amount. Tender Fee Rs. 1000/-

TENDER NOTICE
The Provincial Disaster Management Authority Balochistan invites bids from Eligible Bidders for execution of following works for the Year 2023 based on Composite schedule rates 2018 on Percentage Rates (TSE-22230637623) Bid Security 2%, Tender Fee Rs.1000/-

TENDER NOTICE
The Executive Engineer Roads Provincial B&R Lasbela invites bids from Eligible Bidders for execution of following works for the Year 2023 based on Composite schedule rates 2018 on Percentage Rates Tender Fee Rs. 1000/- and Bid Security 2%

Table with 7 columns: S. No., Police Station, Istighasa & Date, Kind of Vehicle, Registration, Engine, Chassis, Remarks. It lists various vehicles under Section 550 PPC, including motorcycles, cars, and vans, with their respective registration numbers and engine/chassis details.

President for implementation of job quota for differently-abled in govt, private sectors

ISLAMABAD (APP): President Dr Arif Alvi on Thursday emphasised the need for implementation of job quotas for persons with disabilities (PWDs) in government and private sectors to financially empower and bring them into mainstream of society.

The president, chairing a follow-up meeting on the rights and facilitation of PWDs, said that almost 12-14% of the country's population comprised of PWDs and steps should be taken

for their skill development as well as job placement in public and private sectors.

The meeting was attended by representatives of the provincial governments, including Gilgit-Baltistan and Azad Jammu and Kashmir, as well as the senior officials of the ministries of human rights and federal education and professional training.

The representatives of the provincial governments apprised the meeting about the steps taken

by them for the education of persons with disabilities, teacher training, curriculum development, skill development, job quotas, and job placement in different fields. It was informed that NAVTTC had enrolled almost 1700 differently-abled people (DAPs) to equip them with different skills, besides providing them with free transportation and boarding facilities.

Ministry of Federal Education and Professional Training (M/o FE&PT) in-

formed that training modules for teachers had been developed to inculcate attitudinal sensitivities in them towards students with disabilities and enable them to cater to the special educational needs of PWDs.

It was told that the ministry would train 1000 teachers in this regard.

The representatives of provinces shared information regarding the total number of registration centres in their respective provinces.



ISLAMABAD: President Dr. Arif Alvi chairing a follow-up meeting on the rights and facilitation of persons with disabilities (PWDs) at Aiwan-e-Sadr.



ISLAMABAD: CEO Chromatic, Shariq Khan calls on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif.

Mushaal urges UN, world to declare Yasin prisoner of conscience

ISLAMABAD (APP): Mushaal Mullick, wife of jailed Kashmiri leader Yasin Malik Thursday said that the fascist Indian government was hell-bent to commit a "judicial murder" of her husband and demanded United Nations and the international community to declare him a prisoner of conscience and protective personality to prevent his unlawful execution.

In a press statement, she said the notorious Modi-led government wanted to eliminate Yasin as India's top anti-terrorism investigation agency once

again sought his death sentence in a fake and concocted case.

Mushaal, who is also the chairperson of Peace and Culture Organization, urged the UN Secretary-General António Guterres to urgently intervene and avert plot of the judicial murder of Yasin, who was being merely targeted for his political beliefs.

She said her husband's only crime was that he refused to accept the Indian dictates on Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK).

Smoke-free Pak among government's priorities: PM

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Thursday said that the incumbent government was striving to protect future generations from the unhealthy habit of smoking as a smoke-free Pakistan was among its priorities.

The prime minister, in a meeting with CEO of Chromatic Shariq Khan, lauded the services of the organisation for eliminating of smoking in the country.

Shariq Khan apprised the prime minister of his firm's anti-smoking campaign as well as the Tobacco Control Alliance for Pakistan.

SCBA expresses grave concern over disappearance of lawyer Riaz Rahi

ISLAMABAD (Online): President Supreme Court Bar Association (SCBA) has expressed grave concern over disappearance of Riaz Hanif Rahi advocate saying SCBA cannot keep its eyes shut to the disappearance of any of its member.

We express severe apprehension about safety and security of lawyers.

SCBA stresses that every citizen is entitled to equal protection of law. It is right of every one that one should discharge the obligations of one's profession fearlessly.

The basic rights of every citizen are safe under the constitution and no one is allowed to breach them. Such type of disappearance is tantamount to blatant violation of basic human rights.

Court extends interim bail of Sh. Rasheed till July 8

ISLAMABAD (APP): A local court on Thursday extended the pre-arrest bail of Awam Muslim League (AML) chief and former interior minister Sheikh Rasheed Ahmed till July 8, in a case registered by Aabpara Police Station.

The judicial magistrate Yasir Mehmood heard the case filed by AML's head regarding his interim bail. The court also granted one-time exemption from appearance to Sheikh Rasheed Ahmed on his lawyer's request during the hearing. Petitioner's lawyer Sardar Shahbaz said that police had raided at the houses.

Marri for investing more in nutritional needs of most vulnerable population

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Poverty Alleviation and Social Safety/Chairperson Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP), Shazia Marri Thursday highlighted the need to invest more in the nutrition of the most vulnerable population of the country.

As a partner in the current unity government, Pakistan Peoples Party has been constantly pushing the adaptive social protection agenda and emphasizing the need to focus on the economic needs of the people.

Rs128.9b disbursed under Benazir Kafaalat initiative from July-March FY 2023

ISLAMABAD (APP): Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP) has disbursed a total of Rs128.9 billion under the Benazir Kafaalat initiative from July-March, Fiscal Year 2023.

According to the Economic Survey 2022-23 released on Thursday, BISP is currently disbursing payments to around 9.0 million beneficiaries under the Kafaalat scheme. BISP has disbursed Rs 69 billion to 2.76 million families of flood-af-

ected areas to help them recover their financial losses. A total of Rs 400 billion were provided to the BISP to execute the Social Protection programmes in FY2023. BISP is also implementing a Wheat Seed Subsidy programme to eligible farmers with a disbursement of Rs 5,000/- per acre. Till March 2023, a total of Rs 2.94 billion have been disbursed to 122,687 farmers under this initiative.

Mutual strategy to fight diseases committed at Pak-US dialogue

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan and the United States have affirmed their mutual commitment to continue close partnership in the health sector to combat infectious and non-communicable diseases.

As per joint statement on the 2023 Pakistan-US Health Dialogue, both countries also decided to work jointly to reduce malnutrition, strengthen the primary health care system and expand quality health services across Pakistan, and support Pakistan's recovery from the devastating 2022 floods.

The United States and Pakistan held the second stand-alone U.S.-Pakistan Health Dialogue on Thursday, chaired by Abdul Qadir Patel, Federal Minister for

National Health Services, Regulations and Coordination and Isobel Coleman, Deputy Administrator, USAID.

Both countries acknowledged their long history of bilateral partnership in the health sector.

For decades, the United States has invested in Pakistan's health sector benefiting millions of Pakistanis. The United States has extended technical and financial assistance for providing clean drinking water and sanitation services to more than 300,000 people across

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Sindh provinces. The United States has donated more than 79 million safe and effective COVID-19 vaccines in partnership with

COVAX, responded to outbreaks of HIV, typhoid fever, and other diseases in Pakistan, and delivered health services to nearly 11 million women and children over the past seven years.

Pakistan has been a strong partner in efforts to improve access to quality health services, increase budget allocations for health, and invest in infrastructure to meet the health needs of the people of Pakistan. Through the Health Dialogue, the two governments are committing to work together in the ensuing years to help Pakistan continue to recover from the 2022 floods, strengthen maternal and child health and nutrition services, advance international health regulations.

Court adjourns hearing on pleas of Asad Umar, Ali Nawaz

ISLAMABAD (APP): A local court on Thursday adjourned the hearing till June 26 on a petition seeking to remove Anti-Terrorism Act (ATA) clauses from a case registered against PTI leader Asad Umar, Ali Nawaz Awan, and others. ATC Judge Raja Jawad Abbas Hassan heard the case filed by Asad Umar and Ali Nawaz Awan. The court also granted a one-time exemption.

Govt intensifies efforts to address malnutrition challenges: Survey

ISLAMABAD (APP): Various interventions and activities have been carried out by the government at the federal level during FY2023 to upscale nutrition security.

The formulation of a multi-sectoral National Nutrition Policy (MS-NNP) has been initiated with the support of nutrition partners to serve as a guiding document for multi-sectoral nutrition planning and programming in order to substantially reduce the level of malnutrition and to mainstream nutrition in national socio-economic development plans.

Early Childhood Development (ECD) Policy framework, index and standards are being finalized.

The ECD policymakers' course "Mapping ECD Entry Points and Potential Intervention" has been organized to deliberate on mainstreaming ECD interventions in government development programs/policies. Moreover, the ECD governance structure has been established at the federal and provincial levels.

Pakistan Navy observes World Oceans Day

KARACHI (INP): The Pakistan Navy celebrated "World Oceans Day" to focus on the maintenance and development of the oceans and coastal areas.

According to the Pakistan Navy news release on Thursday, oceans are very important for mankind as these are major sources of sustenance of life on earth and act as lungs to our planet as they provide more than 50% of the oxygen produced on this planet. They are also major absorbers of greenhouse gases and carbon dioxide.

World Oceans Day is observed globally on June 8 to draw focus towards the impact of human activities on the health of our oceans and sustained utilization of the ocean's resources.

This year's theme for World Oceans Day is "Planet Oceans: Tides are

Changing" which aims to highlight the challenges involved in preserving the health of oceans and measures to maintain an ecological balance.

To signify the importance of preserving the oceans, Pakistan Navy has undertaken various initiatives which include beach cleaning drives, mangroves plantation campaigns, employment of Debris Collection Barges in harbor, banning the use of destructive fishing nets, tackling oil pollution at sea, and coordinating with the industrial community to reduce waste dumping into the sea.

A number of events including harbour and beach cleaning at Karachi and Gwadar were held to highlight the spirit of the day and demonstrate seriousness about the sustainable use of oceans.

Islamabad Police hold open katchehry to address public issues

ISLAMABAD: In an effort to prioritize public concerns, Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Operations, Malik Jameel Zafar, emphasized the Islamabad capital police's commitment to organizing open katchehries.

During an open katchehry held at Golra police station, various police officials, conciliatory committees, ulema, and community leaders gathered to discuss grievances and propose solutions.

The SSP Operations promptly issued orders to address participants' issues and assured them that their suggestions would be taken

into consideration. Expressing determination to resolve residents' problems, SSP Operations highlighted the significance of these open Katchehries in fostering direct relationships with the public.

Acknowledging the positive impact of the police's improved strategies in reducing crime, he urged citizens to cooperate in crime prevention and encouraged them to promptly report any suspicious activities.

The participants extended gratitude to the Islamabad Capital City Police Officer and DIG (Operations) for organizing the productive Open Katchehry.



ISLAMABAD: Security personnel escort former Pakistan's Prime Minister Imran Khan at High Court.

Senate body on Interior meets

ISLAMABAD: A meeting of the Senate Standing Committee on Interior was held on Thursday at Parliament House, Islamabad. The meeting was chaired by Senator Mohsin Aziz and attended by Senator Samina Mumtaz Zehri, Senator Rana Maqbool Ahmed, Senator Faisal Saleem Rehman, Senator Shahdat Awan, Senator Kamal Ali Agha, Senator Seemi Ezdi and Senator Bahramand Khan Tangi and senior officers from the Ministries of Interior and Law and Justice and other concerned departments.

The meeting commenced with severe condemnation of 9th May attacks on military installations and monuments of martyrs.

A resolution condemning such incidents was passed unanimously by the Committee with the recommendation that the guilty persons should not be spared and they should be punished under the law by way of summary trial whereas the innocent persons may not be involved in such cases.

Committee acknowledged the sacrifices of LEAs in restoring peace in the country and urged that the sacrifices of martyrs for the homeland cannot be forgotten and the desecration of their monuments was strongly condemned.

GOVERNMENT OF PAKISTAN Ministry of National Health Services, Regulations & Coordination Islamabad

Applications are invited from Pakistan Nationals for recruitment of the following post on Contract basis for a period 03 years in Human Organs Transplant Authority (HOTA) under the Ministry of National Health Services, Regulations & Coordination, Islamabad. The requisite qualification, age is mentioned below:-

S#	Name of Post	Basic Pay Scale	Qualification / Experience	Age (Years)	Quota
1.	Administrator	MP-II	(i) MBBS/Medical Degree registered with PMDC. (ii) PhD in Medical Sciences or MRCP or FCPS or American Board or Equivalent Qualifications recognized by PMDC. (iii) Experience 10 years Or (i) MBBS/Degree registered with PMDC. (ii) M.Phil in Community Medicine or Medicine or DPH/MPH. (iii) Experience 20 years after M.Phil/MCPS/DPH/MPH and 10 years experience after M.Sc Medical Administration with experience of serving as MS/CO of a 500 or more bedded hospital.	45-57	Merit

TERMS & CONDITIONS:-

- Incomplete applications or received after due date WILL NOT BE ENTERTAINED.
- No TA/DA will be admissible for test/interview.
- Government employees should apply through proper channel.

INELIGIBILITY:-

- No person shall be eligible for appointment unless he is a citizen of Pakistan.
- Persons dismissed or removed from service as a consequence of disciplinary proceedings.
- Persons convicted by the Court of competent jurisdictions and NRO beneficiaries are also ineligible.

HOW TO APPLY:-

Eligible candidates may apply with CV, a covering application including one recent passport size photograph, bio-data and contact details. Application complete in all respect should reach the undersigned within fifteen (15) days of publication of this advertisement. The degrees shall be got verified from Higher Education Commission also.

Rehman Shah, Deputy Secretary (A-II)
Ministry of National Health Services, Regulations & Coordination
3rd Floor, Kohsar Block, Pak Secretariat, Islamabad Ph: 051-9245958 PID (I) No. 7622/22

Daily Voice of Masses
Independent

Friday June 09, 2023

Qureshi returns

PTI vice chairman Shah Mahmood Qureshi has been granted his freedoms back. Given how brazenly the state has targeted the party's leadership while denying them due rights and liberties, one wonders why.

On Tuesday, he simply walked out of Adiala Jail after a Lahore High Court bench set aside his detention order. There was no police escort waiting for him outside to whisk him away on an erstwhile unknown charge, as has been the norm for other PTI leaders.

Nor did he address a press conference to denounce Imran Khan, the PTI, or politics altogether — the usual price for liberty paid by those who have deserted.

Instead, Mr Qureshi used his brief appearance before the media to reiterate his commitment to stand by the PTI chief's side and to assert that he still holds "the flag of justice" in his hands and wishes to see the party succeed.

Those speculating that Mr Qureshi had only been allowed to walk because he was needed to relay an important message to Mr Khan may be on to something.

Mr Qureshi had announced a planned meeting with the PTI chairman on Wednesday, in which, he said, he would be sharing his political analysis and seeking guidance from Mr Khan on the path forward.

There was speculation that the message he was actually taking to Mr Khan was simple: excuse yourself from politics, or continue to watch your party be decimated by the state.

If true, this would be a tricky dilemma for Mr Khan. Mr Qureshi was named heir by Mr Khan himself; choice number one would see him seize the prize of the campaigning and considerable effort put in by Mr Khan into reviving his party post the 2022 vote of no-confidence. Choice number two could leave Mr Khan isolated and perhaps years away from a comeback to mainstream politics.

Presenting a popular public leader with such choices is, of course, unfair; not to mention it is unlikely to dent his actual power. The 'minus-ing' of popular politicians has been tried many times before, with the usual result that it creates lasting problems and resentments instead of providing enduring solutions.

What our powerbrokers continue to not understand is that political legitimacy is not conferred by the state that it can be taken away by it too. It is drawn from public support and can only be contested through the democratic process.

Taking the PTI chief out of the elections process may satisfy a few egos, but doing so will also make those who are lawfully entitled to make the decision regarding his political future resentful of the state. Why would anyone risk alienating a very youthful population for very short-term goals? One hopes there are better options on the table instead.

**Zeba Sathar**

The preliminary results of the 2023 census show that Pakistan has been growing at an inexplicably high intercensal population growth rate since 2017. The country's demographic statistics present an alarming picture. Fertility rates are estimated at 3.6 children per woman, a number that has not changed much over the last 15 years.

Meanwhile, other countries in South Asia are reaching replacement fertility levels (less than two births per woman), with population growth rates of one per cent or less — thus placing Pakistan among the demographic laggards of the region and possibly the world.

These alarming statistics merit serious inspection and discussion regarding the behavioural patterns

of the population as well as government policies in the country.

After all, Pakistanis are not culturally dissimilar to the citizens of Bangladesh or India — so there is nothing intrinsic to explain the vast divergence in fertility behaviour. However, the policy response of the other countries to population growth has been distinctly different from ours.

Starting in the 1960s, Pakistan did make efforts to lower fertility in order to restrain population growth rates, but successive epochs of political instability impeded the process.

It was one of the first countries in the region to announce a population programme and it provided leadership in five development plans related to population projections. However, the programme came to a halt in the Ziaul Haq period (1977-1988).

Despite the setback, the country managed to revamp its efforts and fertility rates fell quite rapidly from six to four births per woman from 1991 to 1998. It was a time when democratic governments made passionate public state-

ments in support of family planning.

Much beyond endorsement, programmes were financed and institutional machinery mobilised to measure the impact over time by following up on fertility rates. During that period, the then prime minister Benazir Bhutto launched the National Lady Health Worker Programme for Family Planning and Primary Health Care. Till today, it is one of the largest community-based programmes in the world.

So why has Pakistan not been able to lower its population growth in the last 20 years?

It can be argued that, as the years passed, the country's policy structure — dominated by politicians, the bureaucracy, power groups and international donors — deprioritised fertility decline.

It is also true that a large part of the current political leadership of Pakistan believes that a higher population size equates with political and economic power. This contradicts worldwide evidence that high population growth rates impede economic

prosperity.

Other countries have had to deal with financial and governance challenges similar to those of Pakistan, like Indonesia and India, but have worked around them to achieve population sizes that do not burden their economy.

Neither has the distribution of resources (such as Pakistan's National Finance Commission Award formula, which is highly skewed in favour of population [82pc], thus reinforcing the need for greater resources for the increasing population numbers), obstructed their efforts.

Unlike other countries, Pakistan has struggled to implement strategic reforms pertaining to governance and structural issues, such as instituting rewards for provinces for lowering population growth rate.

After the 18th Constitutional Amendment was passed in 2010, bureaucrats found it difficult to cope with the new administrative landscape that gave provinces autonomy over policy areas including population welfare and health.

The step curbed the federal government's ability to develop a long-term vi-

sion and plans, and culminated in ambiguity between the federal and provincial governments regarding resources and responsibility. In the midst of this lack of clarity, attention was diverted away from the vital issue of balancing population growth with Pakistan's resources and development priorities.

While the donor agencies' discourse is focused on issues, including maternal mortality, malnutrition and early childhood development, the reproductive health needs of women, especially fertility and family planning, have not featured as their top single priority.

How then can we resolve this impasse?

Exceptional leadership is required to design and implement policies that bring down fertility rates so that Pakistan can have sufficient resources to meet the needs of its population. Furthermore, a consensus among the country's key stakeholders has to be achieved to ensure a shared vision on population growth that is reflective of the different needs and dynamics of the population.

Population welfare

should not be reduced to jargon. It needs to be adopted as a policy tool to ensure the well-being of every individual, especially vulnerable groups such as women and children. Health services must extend to those millions of families whose children are malnourished and out of school. It will have to be directed towards millions of women who undergo unwanted pregnancies and complications during childbirth.

The federal and provincial governments must both invest in structural reforms and enhance fiscal space to expand access to family planning services to improve the shameful state of women's health. The Population Fund mandated by the Council of Common Interests in 2018, which was aimed at financing greater family planning coverage, has not been operationalised. The Fund should be expeditiously utilised to meet the unmet demand for family planning services by incentivising provincial health programmes and private-sector providers for providing easily accessible and efficient reproductive health services. — Courtesy Dawn

The fall of the pied piper?**Kamila Hyat**

Let us be clear about one thing: Imran Khan as a sportsman and cricket captain for Pakistan was a formidable figure and quite naturally a hero for millions. These fans existed in Pakistan and abroad. His leadership style — a mix of aggression and clever strategies in some places — inspired others and turned him into a major hero in the country. It was this identification as a winner — and as a leader — which helped Imran begin his political success. Of course, there were many other factors behind the events which brought him to power in 2018, and he himself has accepted his links with state institutions this time. Unfortunately for Pakistan — indeed tragically for the country — Imran's style of leadership did not work in politics. His aggression

turned into something so volatile that was rarely seen before.

From politicians we need diplomacy, patience, and an ability to think beyond the single idea of corruption in a corrupt opposition. It appears that Imran and his team did not have these skills. He was essentially a cult leader. We have historically seen many a cult figures in other parts of the world. We had the Moonies cult in Korea, Reverend Jim Jones — who led his hundreds of followers to Guyana and ordered them to drink 'Kool-Aid' laced with poisonous substance which killed 900 or so including 300 children — and other well-known cult leaders like Charles Manson and his 'family' which engaged in murder and other heinous events in the late 1960s.

Pakistan has over the years had great politicians — it would be a disservice to compare Imran to any of them. They include brave figures such as Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan who spent 37 years of his life in jail but remained firm on his ideology. His son Wali Khan followed essentially in the same tradition spending a long period of time in

jail. In Balochistan, Abdul Samad Khan spent the entire period of the Ayub Khan regime in jail because he refused to change his views or ideology. There are other figures such as GM Syed from Sindh who also spent over 30 years in jail not because of any political activity but because authorities did not like their stance and found it best to incarcerate them instead of allowing a democracy with true differences of opinion within it to grow and develop.

There are a few questions now: what will become of the cult Imran led? The fate of Imran himself will be determined by the courts, and by time. He could be disqualified or jailed, or he could be left to continue whatever remains of his career. But the way May 9 was orchestrated — presumably by the party — leading people to attack state buildings and installations on May 9 put at risk the lives of both young and older people, from lower-income and middle-income families in Lahore, Rawalpindi and other places. Some of these people — in fact many of them — remain behind bars for stealing all kinds of ob-

jects, including a peacock. Their families have nowhere to go and nothing to show for what they engage in or what they did. Certainly, no ideological belief or any kind of principle was involved. They simply thought they were following a man who acted as a cult leader, and found themselves in an extremely difficult position: children and young men who knew no better and had never been taught history or politics or creative thinking at schools.

In the future, these people will most likely think a little harder. We already have some thinking taking place even now.

There are those who ask whether the May 9 events can be justified. Even those who had a role to play in them or who knew people who participated, have condemned the assault on public buildings, the burning of an ambulance and the other violent events which took place. They see the attack on sensitive buildings as dangerous. In Punjab, a majority of people have high respect for the armed forces and recognize it as a major defence force. The men in uniform stand tall in their eyes. We wonder how Imran stands now that he has been

defeated and left to pick up the pieces of his shattered political career.

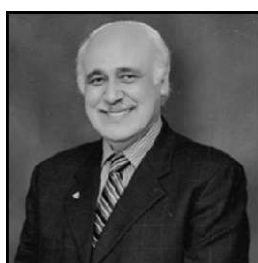
The events of the coming days will be interesting. We will closely analyze how the groups already breaking away from the PTI will take a shape of their own. One of them will, of course, become the new 'King's Party'. We do not know if the Elahi family or Iareen or someone else will become the chosen leader of this group. But it is likely that the group will do well and just as Imran was pushed into power, they will receive the same boost and similar assistance in their effort to acquire power. For Pakistan, the real question is what they will do with it and how they will handle things.

There are other questions as well. It is quite obvious that separation of powers needs to be practised in the country. This is extremely difficult and has not happened throughout Pakistan's history of over seven decades, with hybrid regimes being the order of the day — year after year and decade after decade. There is still too much movement of various players on the chessboard to determine precisely what has to happen next and how.

But we know that Imran is unlikely to play a major role in Pakistan's politics again. Already, people are criticizing how he put the lives of other people at risk while protecting himself.

How he asked his supporters to protect him in Zaman Park, allowing them to face the police while he remained within his home protected by his supporters who had come out on May 9 in hundreds. These 'hundreds of people' will not be enough to bring Khan to power. The fact that more people did not come out shows that people know right from wrong and know that what happened on that day is wrong and should not have taken place. This is something from which all political parties can learn and gain wisdom.

The wisdom perhaps should match that of men from outside Punjab such as Baba Jan from Gilgit-Baltistan, who has protested for the rights of people in the region despite a long term in jail. These are real heroes. We need to recognize them and put them aside from mere cult figures such as Imran and others like him who we have seen throughout our political history. — Courtesy TheNews

Au revoir, Noah**F.S. Aijazuddin**

The Biblical scriptures tell us that Noah loaded his Ark with a pair of every species, especially rodents. He calculated that if his Ark was ever in danger of sinking, rats would be the first to jump ship.

The recent exodus of the senior leadership from the PTI is unparalleled in the history of Pakistani politics. Over the seven decades of our dyslexic democracy, every political party, whenever it came under pressure, has challenged it, or withstood it, or made sacrifices despite it. None more so than the Pakistan Peoples Party, to whom prison became a home away from home.

Never before, though, have so many in the PTI owed so much to so few; in fact, to one sole benefactor — their leader Imran Khan. Yet, they have deserted him with unseemly alacrity. Even the leadership of the Nazi Party in Germany waited until it was clear that the Second World War had been lost before they abandoned Hitler.

Here, the PTI high command when in government had postured, pretending to be leaders with a lofty mission to effect 'true change' in the country. Then, suddenly on a caprice, they quit parliament, effectively abandoning their constituencies, and, after the shameful events of May 9, within days, one by one, they betrayed their modern messiah. Gethsemane became a rout. Disciples became turncoat Judases — all but one, that is. The only one who remains by him — his senior

vice chairman Shah Mahmood Qureshi — continues to pledge his feigned allegiance. What must Imran Khan be feeling now, when even a nonentity like Usman Buzdar, whom he disinterred from obscurity and made chief minister Punjab, resigns from the PTI? Buzdar's elevation in 2018 inevitably drew comparisons with the legendary nomination by the Roman emperor Caligula of his horse, Incitatus, to the Roman Senate. Mr Z.A. Bhutto's selection of G.M. Kharas governor Punjab in 1971 evoked similar derision amongst those who understood the pun on his name.

Was the elevation of both Khar and Buzdar a deliberate slight to the Punjabi elite, or simply an extreme example of cronyism?

Imran Khan's faulty selection of his team (some of whom are padding up to play for the other side) makes one appreciate why the Pakistan Cricket Board uses a panel to select players who will play for the nation. Favouritism has no place in any game, especially not in one as dangerous as politics.

Recent machinations have made it clear that Mr Jahangir Tareen — the Croesus kingmaker who helped make Imran Khan prime minister in 2018 — is mobilising his resources to create another realm. For whom? For himself? Before he can enter the fray, though, he needs to be rid of the ban that prohibits him and Nawaz Sharif (PML-N's king across the waters) from contesting elections.

Once these gilded handcuffs have been removed from both of them — it has to be before the next general elections — one should expect to see Nawaz Sharif reigning in the presidency and Jahangir Tareen (health permitting) ruling if not from, then certainly behind the throne in Islamabad.

Switching loyalties or changing parties is not a Pakistani phenomenon. It has happened wherever there is a functioning democracy and a choice of causes — in India, the United States, even in the United Kingdom, where, in that mother of parliaments, the father of parliament Winston Churchill began as a Conservative, crossed the floor to become a Liberal, and then returned to the Conservatives.

Do such changelings have a 'predictably insecure future'? As Churchill's subsequent career demonstrated, apparently not. In Pakistan, being a political turncoat is almost a qualification. Take the revolving door loyalties of Sheikh Rashid: 1988, the Islami Jamhoori Ittehad; 1990, against IJI ticket; in 1993, PML-N; then PML-Q; his own brainchild the Awami Muslim League; and, most recently, cohabitation with the PTI.

Or the voluble Fawad Chaudhry? All Pakistan Muslim League; PPP, 2012; PML-Q, 2013; PTI, 2016.

The list is endless, as is the queue to quit the PTI. Now, the issue in Pakistan is not who wins the next general election but who thinks he is another Kemal Ataturk or Recep Erdogan, with a mandate strong enough to rehabilitate the economy, to modernise a hierarchical society, and to put khaki back in the barracks. It will require a superhuman effort in a nation that has no superheros, only papier-mâché Caligulas.

The truth is that the public has lost faith in its politicians and all other organs of government. They have seen it too often to take elections seriously. They can foretell from experience that when any modern Noah reaches Mount Ararat, he will find the same rats waiting for him on dry land. — Courtesy Dawn

Ghost in the machine**Rafia Zakaria**

The already heated debate around the potential and pitfalls of artificial intelligence reached fever pitch last week, when some of the most respected leaders working in the field got together to say that AI was improving at such a rate that it could potentially lead to an 'extinction' event. This means that AI technology is improving at a pace faster than human beings can come up with ways to govern these new frontiers of machine capability. So what is now ChatGPT and other similar language-based chatbots could soon make the need for human endeavours redundant.

Some of those to sound the alarm are industry leaders whose companies are benefiting from the progress. Together, they issued a statement released by the Centre for Artificial Intelligence Safety: "Mitigating the risk of extinction from AI should be a global priority alongside other societal-scale risks such as pandemics and nuclear war." The executives who signed on include Sam Altman, who is the chief of OpenAI, Demis Hassabis the CEO of Google DeepMind, and Dario Amodei of Anthropic.

Besides these leaders, 350 other researchers, engineers and scientists also signed on to the statement because they too believe that the risk of AI technology progressing into realms that are no longer governable by human beings is a very real possibility and even a likelihood. Altman has suggested

that the world is in need of an overseer agency to govern AI in the same way as the International Atomic Energy Agency monitors the use of atomic technology and prevents those it sees as bad actors from obtaining technology that can be used to construct bombs, which could destroy the world. This parallel should particularly resonate here in the subcontinent, where the technology to build atomic bombs has defined everything for decades now.

Imagine if an arms race for AI was also underway, with errant actors threatening to use the most menacing aspects of AI to derail other countries' transportation systems, flight-operating systems, utilities and all kinds of other mechanisms. Just as the constant threat of terrorists getting control of the atomic bomb frightens people today, so too would the prospect of AI on the march towards human beings' extinction frighten people tomorrow. Add to this the fact that atomic governance was actually something initiated at a moment when constitutional liberalism reigned and international cooperation was considered valuable in itself, and the picture gets more worrisome for many.

In today's times, the world cannot even agree on basic means with which to arrest the cataclysmic pace of climate change. It appears even more unlikely that a whole new frontier could be regulated and governed on the basis of common principles. A grim estimation of this state of affairs would be taking bets on whether it would be a climate catastrophe and a too-hot-to-inhabit planet, or AI-induced extinction of the human race that would end the world as we know it first.

Nevertheless, a word must be said here about just how tantalising AI-generated

tools are. When one American university professor was questioned about how she was dealing with students using ChatGPT, she shrugged her shoulders and said she wasn't doing anything about it. Instead, she responded, the quality of writing taught in American high schools had become so poor and the legibility of student papers was plummeting at such a rate that she would be pleased if they used the tool and produced a readable paper.

Many in the group called GenZ, who do not remember a time when the internet did not exist, have already accepted the tool and put it to use doing all the onerous non-creative sort of writing, such as producing instruction manuals or giving directions from one place to another. It is not difficult to envision a time when this generation, saved from all the 'from scratch' tasks, will not be able to imagine a world without the existence of AI.

Some hope for AI can be drawn from the fact that Sam Altman and others in the industry emphasise that the reason to invest in AI technology is simply that it has the potential to create a better world. The ability to synthesise vast troves of information — whether it is in biomedicine, education or energy — can drastically reduce waste of all sorts and vastly improve the utilisation of limited resources.

No one can stop AI from being developed further, and many say that it is precisely its potential for great good that is driving so many companies into the race to build better in a machine-run world.

At the same time, it is also necessary to point to just how large the gap between those with access to technology and those without it is becoming. Even as AI promises new frontiers of efficiency and optimisation, a drastic reduction in the utilisation of labour is in sight. — Courtesy Dawn

Governor KP says: Despite difficulties PDM's government will provide relief in fiscal budget

ABBOTTABAD (APP): Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Haji Ghulam Ali Thursday has said that despite the fact that PDM's federal government is facing difficult economic conditions but fiscal budget 2023-24 will provide relief to the public without the assistance of the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

He expressed these views while talking to the media at Abbottabad Press Club.

The Governor further said that the government has already provided relief to the masses in the prices of flour, petroleum product and pulses before the budget. The federal and provincial governments are actively engaged in finding

solutions to the difficulties faced by the nation, adding he said.

Ghulam Ali stated that the previous government has ruined the healthcare system and their every step during the government demanding probe, they hired people to sit at home and abuse others and malign institutions.

Talking about provincial assembly elections the governor said that the Supreme Court of Pakistan has also ordered to hold the election on the same day and urged the political parties to decide collectively, which is a positive development.

Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Haji Ghulam Ali, said that the PTI government has misused public resources

by forming boards, government institutions should not exceed their authority and neither they should neglect their responsibilities.

He said that the incident of 9th May is the result of the indoctrination of the young generation for the past 10 years which has created hatred in the minds of young people against the army and police.

Haji Ghulam Ali said that the nation is living in peace and progressing due to the efforts of the Pakistani army, rangers, and police and after the May incidents the nation has proven that it stands with the Pakistani army and those who are safeguarding the constitution.



ABBOTTABAD: Governor of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Haji Ghulam Ali addresses to media persons during press conference held at Abbottabad press club.

School health screening program to be proved game-changer: Minister

LAHORE (APP): Caretaker Punjab Health Minister Dr. Javed Akram has said that the present government's initiative school health screening project will be proved historic and game changer. This was expressed by him while jointly presiding over a meeting with Health Minister Dr. Nasir Jamal, held in the Department of Specialized Healthcare and Medical Education here on Thursday.

He said that the program would protect the present and future generations from dangerous diseases in the province.

He said that for the first time in the history of Pakistan, children were

going to be screened on such a large scale.

Caretaker Punjab Minister of Primary and Secondary Health Care Department Dr. Jamal Nasir said that the PHC would audit all the laboratories regarding the health screening of children.

Families of patients suffering from dangerous diseases like thalassemia go through extreme pain every day, he said. The minister said that parents could save their children from lifelong disabilities through school health screening program. Earlier, the ministers reviewed the health screening of the 9th grade students in educational institutions of Punjab.

Plan to maintain cleanliness during Eid-ul-Azha discussed

BAHAWALPUR (APP): Secretary Local Government South Punjab Muhammad Amin Owaisi Thursday said that maintaining cleanliness on Eid-ul-Azha will be a challenge and Bahawalpur Waste Management Company should complete all the arrangements for providing sanitation facilities on Eid as soon as possible.

He was chairing a meeting held to discuss the Eid operational plan in the committee room of the Local Government and Community Development Secretariat, South Punjab.

Chief Executive Officer Bahawalpur Waste Management Company Muhammad Naem Akhtar

said that the company has a strategy for the proper collection and transportation of animal waste.

He said that all company officers and sanitary workers will perform their duties during the Eid ul-Azha holidays. He said that 34 Eid camps will be set up in all the union councils. He said that 90 vehicles of the company will also be active in the field.

The company will deliver 100,000 free plastic bags for disposing of animal waste before Eid. For public convenience, awareness camps would be organized and waste bags will be provided to people coming to buy animals.



LAHORE: Evacuee Trust Property Board (ETPB) members warmly welcomed to the Sikh pilgrims at Wagah as a large number of Sikh Yatries arrived in Pakistan through Wagha Border to participate in religious rituals on the occasion of Joor Mela. Sikhs from across the country and abroad poured into Gurdwara Punja Sahib in Hassanabdal on the 417th death anniversary of the fifth of 11 Sikh gurus, Guru Arjan Dev Ji.



KARACHI: Sindh Governor, Kamran Khan Tessori along with others are laying Foundation Stone during ceremony of the new building of the Karachi Metropolitan Corporation, held in Karachi. SWAT: Funeral prayers of policemen who martyred during firing by terrorists near Sabzi Mandi being offered at Javed Iqbal Shaheed Police Line

CM gives Rs 1.5m each for families of 8 accident victims

PKLI given responsibility of hospitals waste disposal

LAHORE: Caretaker Chief Minister Punjab Mohsin Naqvi has announced Rs.1.5 million financial assistance each for the families of eight youths of Ichhra, who died when their jeep fell into River Neelum.

During a meeting with the families of the deceased at CM office on Thursday, he said the deceased youths were a source of dependence and support for their families. Family members of three injured youths in an accident namely Muhammad Fahad, Moin Ali and Muhammad Hasnain were also present.

Mohsin Naqvi remarked that financial

assistance on behalf of the Punjab government was not a substitute to the lives of their loved ones.

The CM expressed his deep sense of sorrow and grief over the sorrowful incident with the heirs of deceased youth Ghulam Miraan, Azhar Ashraf, Umair Ahmed, Shah Nawaz, Bilal Jilani, Waleed Abrar, Raheel Mahmood and with the heirs of Rahim Khan.

Mohsin Naqvi offered Fateha for the departed souls, consoled with family members of the deceased and also prayed to grant fortitude to the heirs to bear the irreparable loss.

Provincial Minister

for Heath Dr. Javed Akram will himself monitor the treatment of the injured. Mohsin Naqvi lauded that the Rescue-1122 worked day and night to search the dead bodies.

Meanwhile, in an effort to elevate healthcare standards, the caretaker Chief Minister Punjab Mohsin Naqvi has issued instructions to enhance hygiene protocols and diagnostic procedures in teaching hospitals.

Recognizing the significance of scientific waste management, the CM has given in-principle approval to delegate the responsibility of hospital waste disposal to the Pakistan Kidney and Liver Institute (PKLI).

KU inks MoUs, MLT students to get internships

KARACHI (APP): The University of Karachi and CDC Laboratories, Muhammadiyah Welfare Foundation, One Health, and Tabba Kidney Institute signed four different memoranda of understanding (MoUs) according to which students enrolled in the evening programme of the physiology department will get the opportunity to work in private companies as interns.

KU Vice Chancellor Professor Dr. Khalid Mahmood Iraqi, Director CDC Lab Musa Khan,

Chief Operating Officer Muhammadiyah Welfare Foundation Mehdi Rizvi, Director One Health Dr. Ismail Vohra, and Managing Director Tabba Kidney Institute Dr. Bilal Jamil inked the MoU documents at the VC Secretariat on Thursday.

Chairperson Department of Physiology Dr. Taseer Ahmed Khan briefed the meeting that according to these MoUs, students enrolled in BS Medical Laboratory Technology in the evening program would get the internship opportunities.



PESHAWAR: Khateeb Masjid Muhabat Khan Molana Tayyab Qureshi is addressing the press conference.

Meeting held to review performance of dept, security measures

KARACHI (APP): Additional Inspector General of Police - Karachi Javed Alam Odho on Thursday chaired a high-level meeting at Karachi Police Office (KPO) to review the performance of the department and security measures.

Zonal Deputy IGPs, DIGP-Admin, DIGP CIA, DIGP - Traffic, District SSPs, SPs Headquarters, SPs Investigation and other senior police officers attended the meeting.

The zonal DIGPs briefed the police chief about the performance of their zones and informed about the security

measures of police lines and headquarters and other important installations.

During the meeting, the law and order situation, and actions against fugitives and proclaimed offenders were also considered.

The officers concerned were directed to take stern actions against the elements involved in drug peddling, gambling, gutka business and other social evils including street crime.

The police chief issued orders to further tighten the security of police headquarters, police lines and police offices.

BISE Multan to commence annual exams from March next year: Chairman

MULTAN (APP): Board of Intermediate and Secondary Education (BISE) Multan will start conducting annual exams from March next year for better scheduling and keeping in view the weather intestines.

Chairman BISE, Hafiz Muhammad Qasim announced this while holding a news conference here on Thursday.

Accompanied by Controller Examination, M. Hamid Saeed Bhatti and Secretary Khurram

Quraishi, he informed that the Board administration had always tried their level best to make the best arrangements for the Secondary School Certificate (SSC) and Higher Secondary School Certificate (HSSC) exams adding that no private educational organization staffer was engaged for it unlike other BISEs. The Chairman highlighted a number of initiatives taken this year to make the examination process more transparent including water.

PHC CJ directs judicial officers to dispose off petty nature cases swiftly

PESHAWAR (APP): Justice Musarrat Hilali, the Chief Justice of Peshawar High Court on Thursday visited District Jail, Judicial Lockup and district courts, Hangu.

She inspected each barrack personally and heard the problems of the prisoners in detail. The District and Sessions Judge, Senior Civil Judge (Admin) and District Police Officer, Hangu accompanied her during the jail visit.

Some of the prisoners complained about their non-release due to the non-availability of sureties despite their being admitted to bail therefore directions were issued for completing their trials at the earliest.

She directed the judicial officers for paying surprise visits to the judicial lockup and disposal of petty nature cases at the earliest.

Judicial officers were further directed for keeping the cases of under-trial prisoners and family cases on the fast track for their early disposal.

She issued directions to the Deputy Commissioner and District Police Officer, Hangu for the operationalization of the newly constructed district Hangu jail as the judicial lockup is presently overcrowded and lacks facilities.

Directions were also issued for the proper medical facilitation and treatment of the inmates. The Chief Justice presided over a meeting with the Judicial Officers of the district judiciary Hangu.

The District & Sessions Judge, Hangu briefed the Chief Justice regarding the pendency and disposal of the district Judiciary and steps are so far taken for the operationalization of District Jail Hangu.

The chair appreciated the performance of the district judiciary regarding disposal of the under-trial prisoners and family cases. It was further directed that the judicial officers shall pay surprise visits to the police stations so that innocent people may not be illegally detained and tortured.



KARACHI: Sindh Chief Minister, Syed Murad Ali Shah exchanges views with Auditor General of Pakistan, Mohammad Ajmal Gondal during meeting held at CM House in Karachi.

IGP directs authorities to swiftly complete safe city, police force welfare projects

RAWALPINDI (APP): Inspector General of Police (IGP) Punjab Dr. Usman Anwar here on Thursday directed the authorities concerned to complete all the ongoing projects including safe city authority and police force welfare projects within shortest possible time frame.

Addressing officers and officials at Civil Lines, Police Headquarters here he said, "I am delighted to inform that the hurdles in the recruitment process have been removed and now, the children of the martyrs are being provided jobs."

"Endowment fund for the welfare for the martyr's families had been established, he said adding, the promotions of the cops from constable to DSP were pending but, now more than 1000 promotions had

been made during last four months.

Special legal aid fund had been established to provide help and assistance to the families of Police Officers and Officials facing cases.

He said, "We will fight bravely, serve the nation and the country."

Regional Police Officer, Rawalpindi, Syed Khurram Ali, City Police Officer, Rawalpindi, Syed Khalid Hamdani, DPOs of Attock, Jhelum and Chakwal, SSP Special Branch, CTO Rwp, SSP Patrolling, RO CTD Senior Officers, SDPOs, SHOs and personnel from all the units of police were present on the occasion.

The IGP said that early completion of different projects including Safe City Rawalpindi would be ensured.



SWAT: Funeral prayers of policemen who was martyred during firing by terrorists near Sabzi Mandi being offered at Javed Iqbal Shaheed Police Line.

PIC implants first pulmonary valve in teenager without cut

PESHAWAR (APP): Peshawar Institute of Cardiology (PIC) has successfully performed Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's first Pulmonary Valve Implantation procedure in a child without a cut.

PIC is the first public sector cardiac hospital in the province which has achieved the milestone by successfully performing the first-of-its-kind implantation of a pulmonary valve to a 17-year patient and brightened the life hopes of children suffering from complex heart diseases in the province, said a spokesperson of PIC Riffat Anjum. She said that Prof. Dr. Ijaz Hussain, Head of Pediatric Cardiology of PIC along with his teams performed the implantation procedure.

Edu. vital for eradicating extremism, violence from society: Dr. Ayaz

PESHAWAR (APP): Chief Excellence and Assistant Prof. Amjad Rebaa was also present on the occasion.

Dr. Ayaz Khan said that Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Centre of Excellence on Countering Violent Extremism had been established under the National Action Plan (NAP), a historic document signed by the consensus of all stakeholders to eradicate extremism and terrorism from the country.

He said that today our country and region were facing the challenges of extremism and violence, which had threatened the peace and stability of the society.

Education and educated youth could play an important role in eliminating extremism and violence, he added.

Director of the institute Prof. Dr. Inamullah Khan and senior educationists also addressed the seminar while faculty members and students participated in it.

Director of Administration, Waqarullah of Centre of

USAID official Pak has tremendous potential to overcome economic challenges

ISLAMABAD (APP): USAID Deputy Administrator Isoble Coleman on Thursday said despite all facing difficulties on economic fronts, Pakistan had tremendous potential to overcome all the challenges.

Talking to the media, she said, "When I look at Pakistan's economy, yes I see high inflation, but I also see enormous opportunities to see IT sector exports grow and enhance food security. The US wants to see a stable and prosperous Pakistan."

Responding to another question, she said that Pakistan needed to

follow robust economic reforms agenda to come out of the current economic crisis.

However, she said the private sector and other stakeholders during meetings with her expressed hope for coming out from the current economic challenges.

The USAID official said she held meetings with the private sector working in various groups. She said the US and Pakistan enjoyed cordial relations for the last 75 years.

To a question, Isoble Coleman said soon after her arrival in Pakistan she visited flood-affected areas and witnessed that the

situation on the ground was not good enough.

She said flood-affected areas of Sindh province were facing the worst situation due to damaged infrastructure, washed away crops and livestock.

She said the USAID had pledged an additional \$16.4 million in funding to bolster the recovery and resilience of communities in Pakistan devastated by the unprecedented floods of 2022. She said these catastrophic floods affected an estimated 33 million people, wreaking havoc on vital infrastructure, crops, livelihoods, and livestock

across the nation.

The newly allocated funds, she said, would provide support to over 20 million individuals affected by the floods, facilitating their recovery, enhancing risk reduction measures, and fostering resilience.

"The assistance will tackle the growing challenges of food insecurity, malnutrition, and disease outbreak prevention." Moreover, she said the funding would empower humanitarian partners to deliver nutritious meals to mothers and children, aid in the reconstruction of local infrastructure to mitigate future disasters and expand



ISLAMABAD: Finance Minister Ishaq Dar and the economic team presenting Economic Survey of Pakistan for FY-2022-23 to Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif.



LAHORE: A delegation of All Pakistan Business Forum led by Syed Maaz Mehmood photographed with Governor Punjab Muhammad Balighur Rehman after a meeting

Round Table discussion on 'African Continental Free Trade Area' held

ISLAMABAD (APP): The African Missions in Pakistan, in collaboration with the Centre for Afghanistan, Middle East & Africa (CAMEA) at the Institute of Strategic Studies (ISSI), organized a Round Table Discussion on African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA).

The Heads of African Missions in Pakistan and Heads of Pakistan Missions in Africa also spoke on the occasion. Senior Officers from the Foreign Office and Ministry of Commerce, academics, area specialists and members of the business community and students participated in the event.

In his keynote address, the Dean of the African Group/Ambassador of Morocco, Mohamad Karmoun, said that Africa had a significant role to play in driving inclusive growth

and sustainable development globally.

"AfCFTA is the common will of the 54 African countries to build a common market for goods and services, unlock the potential for the development of the Continent, and increase the inter-state trade among African countries," the Envoy added.

He stressed that the main objective of AfCFTA was the Continent's economic integration and development. While talking about Pakistan, he said that business communities from Africa and Pakistan can collaborate in order to benefit from numerous opportunities on the Continent. He said that the implementation of the AfCFTA will undoubtedly unveil an excellent potential for further growth in Pakistan-Africa trade and economic relations.



RECA General Secretary Adil Bhatti presenting the shield on the occasion of a meeting with Minister of State for Finance Ayesha Ghos Pasha.

Masood emphasizes bolstering trade potential with Texas

WASHINGTON (Online): Pakistan's Ambassador to the United States Masood Khan has called for bolstering existing potential of trade and commerce and promotion of people to people exchanges.

He made these remarks while talking to Salman Bhojani, elected member House of Representatives US State of Texas, whom he received at the Embassy in Washington.

The Ambassador said technology, oil and gas and other sectors provided a solid base to forge robust business linkages and bringing our people closer to each other.

He felicitated Salman Bhojani on being elected as member of Texas Assembly, observing that his achievements and his

work make the entire community proud.

Discussing his priorities, Representative Bhojani said that he was working to bring the communities together.

He said that he considered all Muslims and Pakistanis living in Texas as his constituents and was focused on promoting love and compassion among them.

Expressing satisfaction over the increasing number of Pak-American parliamentarians at the state as well as federal level, Masood Khan observed that the elected representatives could play a huge role in encouraging Pakistani-Americans to invest in Pakistan. They can also facilitate Pakistani students in visiting the United States and learn from US expertise in advanced disciplines.



NIMA conducts seminar on sustainable resource and blue economy on the occasion of world oceans day.

Govt taking all possible measures to make country economically strong, stable

Independent Report
LAHORE: A delegation of All Pakistan Business Forum led by Syed Maaz Mehmood called on Governor Punjab Muhammad Balighur Rehman here today at Governor House Lahore. In the meeting, measures regarding promotion of business and industries in the country were discussed.

Speaking on the occasion, Governor Punjab Muhammad Balighur Rehman said that the government under the leadership of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif is taking all possible measures to make the country economically and economically strong and stable. He said that the business community is a great source of generating employment opportunities in the country.

Governor Punjab said

that the economic development and prosperity of the country comes with the promotion of industrialization and business. He said that in this modern era, the use of modern machinery in the field of agriculture is inevitable.

Governor Punjab said that the country gets a lot of foreign exchange from cotton and its related products. In order to promote the textile sector and increase exports, there is a need to focus on the cultivation of cotton crop.

He said that the government is making all-out efforts to increase the cultivation of cotton crop and improve the quality of the seed. Governor Punjab Muhammad Balighur Rehman said that as the Governor, he has formed a consortium to strengthen links between the industry and the academia.

FBR tax collection increases by 16.1% to Rs 5637.9b in 10 months

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Board of Revenue (FBR)'s net provisional tax collection has increased by 16.1 percent during the first ten months of the fiscal year 2022-23 to Rs 5637.9 billion against Rs 4,855.8 billion same period last year.

According to the Economic Survey 2022-23 launched here on Thursday, the domestic component of tax revenue collected by the FBR increased by 20.2 percent and stood at Rs 4,886.1 billion in the first ten months of the current fiscal year as compared to Rs 4,064.0 billion last year.

The net collection of direct tax has registered a growth of 44.2 percent from Rs 1,743.7 billion to Rs 2,514.9 billion during July-April FY2023.

The bulk of the tax revenues of direct taxes is

realized from income tax. The major contributions of income tax have come from contracts, imports, and profit payout.

The tax payments with tax declaration and collection on demand have also shown high growth, it added.

The gross and net sales tax collection during the period under review has Rs 2327.5 billion and Rs 2090 billion showing growths of around 1.7 percent and 1.2 percent, respectively.

Around 64 percent of total sales tax was contributed by sales tax on imports during the same period, while the rest was contributed by the domestic sector.

According to the Economic Survey, the collection of Federal Excise Duty (FED) during the ten months of FY2023.



KARACHI: Daily use items are being selling at shop while people are being worried for purchasing, as the price of daily used general items have touched up to sky due to price hiking in country and citizens are expecting relief in upcoming Budget 2023-24, at Jodia Bazar in Karachi.

Property tax rate lowest in Pakistan: Excise Minister

FAISALABAD (APP): Caretaker Excise and Communications Minister Bilal Afzal has said that although the property tax rate was lowest in Pakistan as compared to other countries of the South Asia, yet the people still avoided from paying taxes.

He was addressing a briefing arranged to review performance of Excise & Taxation Department (ETD) Faisalabad here on Thursday.

He expressed concern over the collection of tax less than its target and said that ETD Faisalabad would have to work hard to meet tax collection targets. He added that only those inspectors who had

excellent performance should be appointed in the areas to overcome the issue of low tax recovery rate. In this connection, a special media awareness campaign should also be launched to motivate the people for paying taxes, he suggested.

The minister assured that he would extend all possible support to resolve the shortage of staff and other problems in ETD Faisalabad. Director Excise Noman Shaikh while giving a briefing said that the target of Rs.4.93 billion was fixed this year and out of it, 70 percent tax had been collected so far. However, efforts were accelerated to achieve the target.

Naveed invites British Pakistanis to invest in Pak

LONDON (Online): Commerce Minister Naveed Qamar has invited British Pakistanis to invest in Pakistan to benefit from profitable business opportunities and business friendly environment in the country.

He was addressing a reception hosted by High Commissioner Moazzam Ahmad Khan at the Pakistan High Commission London.

The event brought together UK Parliamentarians, British Pakistani community, and businesspersons.

During his speech, Minister Qamar called upon the British Pakistanis to explore the diverse investment opportunities in Pakistan and highlighted the potential for lucrative profits.

He regarded Minister

of the favorable business environment in Pakistan, mentioning the presence of successful British companies operating in the country.

The Minister expressed his appreciation for the positive contributions of the Pakistani diaspora in the progress and development of Pakistan, as well as their instrumental role in fostering strong bilateral ties between Pakistan and the United Kingdom.

Earlier, in his welcome remarks, High Commissioner Moazzam Ahmad Khan underscored the deep-rooted and longstanding relationship between Pakistan and the United Kingdom.

Qamar's visit as a testament to the enduring strength of this special bond between the two nations.

Highlighting the remarkable progress made in trade and investment, the High Commissioner shared that Pakistan's exports to the UK had surpassed the historic milestone of \$2 billion for the first time in history.

This outstanding achievement represents a remarkable increase of 197%. The High Commissioner also expressed his admiration for the invaluable contributions of the British Pakistani community in supporting Pakistan and fostering friendly relations between the two countries.



QUETTA: Pakistan Association of Exhibition Industry (PAEI) Chairman, Khurshid Barlas addresses media persons during press conference regarding 2nd International Property Expo held at Chamber of Small Industries in Quetta

activity at Port Qasim

KARACHI (APP): Five ships namely, Maersk Pelepas, MSC Tian-ping, Al-Karama, Orange Victoria and Kanha carrying Containers, Coal, Gas oil and LPG, berthed at Container Terminal, Bulk Terminal, Oil Terminal and Engro Terminal respectively.

A total of 11 ships were engaged at PQA berths during the last 24 hours, out of them five ships, Maersk Pelepas, MSC Tian-ping, Milaha Ras Lailan, LNG Ogun and Kanha sailed out on Thursday morning, MT RSG, Haj Mohammed and Ji-Li-669 are expected to sail on today.

Cargo Volume of 149,257 tonnes, comprising 108,056 tones imports Cargo and 41,201 tonnes export cargo, including containerized cargo carried in 2,484 Containers (636 TEUs imports and 1,848 TEUs export) was handled at the port during last 24 hours.

Bangladeshi envoy vows on furthering trade ties

HYDERABAD (APP): Deputy High Commissioner of Bangladesh S. M. Mahbul Alam on Thursday said Pakistan and Bangladesh have brotherly relations and efforts are being made to strengthen bilateral trade relations.

Addressing the members of the Hyderabad Chamber of Small Traders and Small Industry (HCSTSI) here, he said there are more than twenty trade, cultural, social, civil aviation, and other agreements between both countries. Bangladesh is the eighth largest population in the world with a literacy rate of more than 80 percent due to free scholarships and facilities for students, he informed.

Responding to the request of HCSTSI President Farooq Shaikhani to facilitate the visa process for businessmen, he assured that he would personally

write a letter to the Bangladesh Ministry of Foreign Affairs for the issuance of visas to the business community of Hyderabad and hoped that visas would be issued as soon as possible so the business community of Hyderabad can participate in trade and exhibitions in Bangladesh.

He invited HCSTSI to form a delegation to visit the Bangladesh High Commission in Karachi and said Bangladesh is a global market and the businessmen of Pakistan can take full advantage of the trade policies of Bangladesh.

He informed that annual export of Bangladesh is 50 billion dollars, which he hoped would increase to 100 billion dollars by 2030. This is mainly because of ready-made garments, he said and added Bangladesh is the second largest exporter of ready-made garments in the world.

Economic Survey Agriculture sector grew 1.55% in 2022-23

ISLAMABAD (APP): The agriculture sector in the country recorded about 1.55% growth during 2022-23 as against the growth of 4.27 percent of the same period last year.

According to the Economic Survey of Pakistan 2022-23 launched here Thursday, the contribution of important crops recorded at 18.23 percent to value addition in agriculture sector and 4.18 percent to GDP. Other crops contributed 14.49 percent in value addition of agriculture sector and 3.32 percent in GDP.

To lessen the miseries

of flood affects and revival of the agriculture sector, the government announced Kissan Package-2022, consequent upon the floods-2022, the Rabi season crops have shown higher yield, which compensated the crop damages of the Kharif season, leading to an overall growth of agriculture sector to 1.55 percent. During the period under review, wheat output grew by 5.4 percent as total output reached to 27.63 million tons during current season, whereas the sugarcane output grew by 2.8 percent.

Russia says top UN court should dismiss Ukraine's case over Crimea and terrorism funding

Monitoring Desk
THE HAGUE: Russia urged judges at the United Nations' highest court on Thursday to throw out a case brought by Ukraine against Moscow over the 2014 annexation of the Crimean Peninsula and the arming of rebels in eastern Ukraine before Russia's full-scale invasion in February 2022. "We appear before you today in order to demonstrate that Ukraine's application must be dismissed because it is without any legal foundation. Nor does it have any factual evidence to back it," Russian Ambassador to the Netherlands Alexander Shulgин told judges at the International Court of Justice. Lawyers for Ukraine said as hearings in the case opened Tuesday that Russia bankrolled a "campaign of in-

timidation and terror" by rebels in eastern Ukraine starting in 2014 and sought to replace Crimea's multiethnic community with "discriminatory Russian nationalism." Ukraine filed the case in 2017, asking the world court to order Moscow to pay reparations for attacks and crimes such as the shooting down of Malaysia Airlines flight MH17 by a Russian missile fired from territory controlled by Moscow-backed rebels on July 17, 2014, killing all 298 passengers and crew. The Ukrainian government alleges that Russia breached two treaties: the International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism and the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination. Addressing the terrorism-funding allegation, Michael Swainston, a British lawyer representing Russia, said Ukraine's legal team failed to establish that actions by pro-Moscow rebels in eastern Ukraine could be considered terrorism. "It is imperative to distinguish between terrorists who deliberately target civilians and soldiers who foresee that civilians will be killed as collateral damage while striking a military target," Swainston said. "The former is a war crime, while the latter represents lawful conduct. And of course, soldiers also make mistakes."



Antoine Armand, center, deputy for the Savoie region, in the French Alps, speaks at the National Assembly.

China, India must step back from Himalayan border confrontation: Indian FM

Monitoring Desk
NEW DELHI: India and China must find a way to step back from potential confrontation in the western Himalayas, India's foreign minister said on Thursday, fearing that the militarised, disputed border could lead to conflict between the nuclear-armed neighbours. Both militaries have fortified positions and deployed large numbers of troops and equipment in the last three years, after a clash in which 20 Indian soldiers and four Chinese soldiers were killed in hand-to-hand fighting, without a shot being fired. "The two of us have to find a way of disengaging because I don't believe this present impasse serves China's interest either," Foreign Minister Subrahmanyam Jaishankar told reporters in New Delhi. "The fact is the relationship is impacted, and the relationship will continue to be impacted. If there is any expectation that somehow we will normalise where the border situation is not normal, that's not a well-founded expectation," he said. Several rounds of military and diplomatic talks have helped ease tensions between the two opposing armies, but Jaishankar had in March described the situation there as fragile and dangerous. Jaishankar said the two governments remained in touch, and there were several military and diplomatic mechanisms in place for both sides to communicate.

24 killed after van falls into ravine in Afghanistan

Monitoring Desk
KABUL: Twenty-four people, including 12 women and eight children, died on Wednesday when the van they were travelling in fell into a ravine in northern Afghanistan, police said. "Due to the neglect of the driver, the vehicle deviated from the road and fell into a ravine. Twenty-four people are dead," said Den Mohammed Nazari, a police spokesman in Sar e Pol province. No further details were available about the cause of the accident.

Finland's Foreign Minister Haavisto to run for president

Monitoring Desk
HELSINKI: Finland's Foreign Minister Pekka Haavisto said on Thursday he will run for president in next year's election, hoping to succeed Sauli Niinisto who is stepping down after two terms. It will be Green Party member Haavisto's third attempt at becoming Finland's head of state, having been the runner-up in both 2012 and 2018. "Recently, many Finns from very different backgrounds have contacted me and appealed for me to become a candidate in next January's presidential election," Haavisto told a press conference, adding that he would run as an independent. A poll in daily Helsingin Sanomat on May 22 found that 36% of Finns favoured Haavisto to become president, making him a narrow favourite ahead of Bank of Finland Governor Olli Rehn at 31% and foreign policy think tank chief Mika Aaltola at 24%. Haavisto is expected to step down as foreign minister later this month after the centre-left government of which he is part lost April's parliamentary election. The first round of Finland's presidential election is due on Jan. 28 next year.

'AI doctor' better at predicting patient outcomes, including death

Monitoring Desk
WASHINGTON: Artificial intelligence has proven itself useful in reading medical imaging and even shown it can pass doctors' licensing exams. Now, a new AI tool has demonstrated the ability to read physicians' notes and accurately anticipate patients' risk of death, readmission to hospital, and other outcomes important to their care. Designed by a team at NYU Grossman School of Medicine, the software is currently in use at the university's affiliated hospitals throughout New York, with the hope that it will become a standard part of health care. A study on its predictive value was published on Wednesday in the journal Nature. Lead author Eric Oermann, an NYU neurosurgeon and computer scientist, said that while non-AI predictive models have been around in medicine for a long time, they were hardly used in practice because the data they needed requires cumbersome reorganisation and formatting. But "one thing that's common in medicine everywhere, is physicians write notes about what they've seen in clinic, what they've discussed with patients," he said. "So our basic insight was, can we start with medical notes as our source of data, and then build predictive models on top of it?" The large language model, called NYUTron, was trained on millions of clinical notes from the health records of 387,000 people who received care within NYU Langone hospitals between January 2011 and May 2020. These included any records written by doctors, such as patient progress notes, radiology reports and discharge instructions, resulting in a 4.1-billion-word corpus.



Police said in a statement arrests have been made on suspicion of breaching public peace.



French Prime Minister Elisabeth Borne and French Interior and Overseas Minister Gerald Darmanin leave the Haute Savoie prefecture in Annecy, French Alps.

UN commission accuses Israel of taking aim at Palestinian human rights groups

Monitoring Desk
JERUSALEM: Investigators commissioned by the U.N.'s top human rights body on Thursday accused Israel of "delegitimizing and silencing civil society" by outlawing Palestinian human rights groups and labeling their members as "terrorists." The findings came in the annual report by the Human Rights Council's "Commission of Inquiry." The commission, led by a three-member team of human rights experts, was established in 2021 following an 11-day war between Israel and the Hamas militant group in Gaza. Israel accuses the rights council, and the commission, of being unfairly biased. The report also accused both Hamas and the rival Palestinian Authority in the Israeli-occupied West Bank of committing rights violations. But it said most of the violations it had uncovered were committed by Israel as part of a campaign it says is aimed at "ensuring and enshrining its permanent occupation at the expense of the rights of the Palestinian people." Former U.N. human rights chief Navi Pillay, who leads the commission, accused Israeli and Palestinian authorities of "limiting the rights to freedom of expression and peaceful association." "We were particularly alarmed by the situation of Palestinian human rights defenders, who are routinely subject to a range of punitive measures as part of the occupation regime," she said. In 2020 and 2021, Israel designated seven Palestinian rights groups as terrorist groups, effectively outlawing them. It later raided and shut some of their offices. Israel says the groups are connected to the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine — a secular, left-wing movement with a political party as well as an armed wing that has carried out deadly attacks against Israelis.

4 children injured in knife attack in French town, 2 in critical condition

Monitoring Desk
PARIS: A Syrian national wounded four children and an adult in a knife attack in a French park on Thursday, police said, leaving some of the victims critically ill in hospital. The attack, which happened in the French alpine town of Annecy, was carried out by a Syrian national with legal refugee status in France, a police official told Reuters. "Children and one adult are between life and death. The nation is in shock," French President Emmanuel Macron said in a statement on Twitter, calling the attack "an act of absolute cowardice". French Interior Minister Gerald Darmanin said on Twitter that the attacker had been arrested. Two children and one adult are in life-threatening condition, while two children were slightly hurt, police said. Witnesses said at least one child involved was in a stroller. BFM TV showed footage of several policemen overpowering an individual in a park.

Iran's president to visit three Latin American countries next week

Monitoring Desk
MEXICO CITY: Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi will visit Cuba, Nicaragua and Venezuela next week, Iran's state news agency IRNA announced on Wednesday, adding that the upcoming tour stemmed from invites from the presidents of each of the Latin American nations. IRNA said documents to expand bilateral cooperation will be signed between Iran and the three countries during Raisi's visit, mentioning economic, political and scientific issues.



French police personnel maintain a secure cordon in Annecy, south-eastern France, following a mass stabbing in the French Alpine town.

US Supreme Court rules for Jack Daniel's in fight over parody dog toy

Monitoring Desk
WASHINGTON: The US Supreme Court on Thursday gave a boost to Jack Daniel's in its trademark dispute with a dog accessory company that sold a parody chew toy resembling the distiller's widely recognized black-label whiskey bottle. The 9-0 decision authored by liberal Justice Elena Kagan threw out a lower court's ruling that the pun-laden "Bad Spaniels" vinyl chew toy sold by VIP Products LLC is an "expressive work" protected by the U.S. Constitution's First Amendment. Jack Daniel's Properties Inc is owned by Louisville, Kentucky-based Brown-Forman Corp (BFB.N). The dispute pitted the whiskey brand's trademark rights against legal protections for creative expression - in this case, a send-up by Phoenix-based VIP Products of Jack Daniel's Old No. 7 Tennessee whiskey bottle featuring comical dog poop-themed changes like a label reading "the Old No. 2, on your Tennessee Carpet." "This case is about dog toys and whiskey, two items seldom appearing in the same sentence."

UAE and Cambodia sign bilateral trade deal

Monitoring Desk
DUBAI: The United Arab Emirates and Cambodia signed a bilateral trade agreement on Thursday, the Gulf state's fifth such deal under a trade strategy launched in 2021. Known as Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreements (CEPA), the trade strategy is a key pillar of the UAE's economic growth plans as it seeks to reduce its dependence on fossil fuels. The agreement with Cambodia will reduce or remove tariffs, "eliminating barriers to trade, and creating new avenues for strategic investment," Thani Al Zeyoudi, UAE's minister for foreign trade tweeted. Non-oil trade between the UAE and Cambodia reached \$407 million in 2022, with the aim of pushing this beyond \$1 billion in the next five years.

Food not reaching needy, US suspends food aid to Ethiopia

Monitoring Desk
NAIROBI: The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) said on Thursday it was suspending food aid to Ethiopia because its donations were being diverted from people in need. A spokesperson said in a statement that USAID had determined, in coordination with the Ethiopian government, that a "widespread and coordinated campaign is diverting food assistance from the people of Ethiopia." The statement did not say who was behind the campaign or who the aid was being diverted to. The United States is by far the largest humanitarian donor to Ethiopia, where more than 20 million people need food aid, most of them due to drought and a recently-concluded war in the northern Tigray region. According to an internal briefing by a group of foreign donors to Ethiopia that was seen by Reuters, USAID believes the food has been diverted to Ethiopian military units. "The scheme appears to be orchestrated by federal and regional government entities, with military units across the country benefiting from humanitarian assistance," said the document from the Humanitarian and Resilience Donor Group (HRDG).

CNN chief Chris Licht ends turbulent run at network

Monitoring Desk
NEW YORK: Chris Licht, the embattled head of CNN, has stepped down "effective immediately," the network's parent company Warner Brothers Discovery announced on Wednesday, as the global news outlet struggles to reverse a ratings decline. After joining CNN last year, Licht came under fire for editorial decisions including a recent town hall meeting with former president Donald Trump that was dominated by cheering from supporters and jeering at moderator Kaitlan Collins.

Tensions in US-Saudi ties cloud Blinken visit to Riyadh

Monitoring Desk
RIYADH: A visit by the U.S. Secretary of State to Saudi Arabia drew little Saudi media coverage on Thursday at a time of soured relations despite a U.S. push to defuse rows that have touched on oil prices, human rights and Riyadh's opening to Iran. Antony Blinken was the second top U.S. official to visit Washington's closest strategic ally in the Middle East in less than a month, following a May 7 trip by White House national security adviser Jake Sullivan. However, Blinken's meetings with Crown Prince Mohammed Bin Salman, the kingdom's de facto ruler, and Gulf Cooperation Council foreign ministers were relegated to the inside pages of Al-Watan and Okaz, the two major newspapers in Saudi Arabia. Their front pages were devoted to unrelated topics including the arrival of star French football striker Karim Benzema in Jeddah to join the Al Ittihad club. Blinken and the crown prince, widely known as MbS, had "open, candid" talks for an hour and 40 minutes, a U.S. official said, covering topics including the conflict in neighbouring Yemen, the war in Sudan, Israel, and human rights. The semi-official English-language daily Arab News covered Blinken's comments in his talks at GCC headquarters, including those touching on Yemen.

UK's Sunak, Biden to focus on deepening economic ties at White House meeting

Monitoring Desk
WASHINGTON: U.S. President Joe Biden and UK Prime Minister Rishi Sunak will focus on deepening close economic ties between the United States and Britain when they meet at the White House on Thursday, with Russia's war in Ukraine another big topic for the NATO allies. U.S. and British officials said the two leaders will review a range of global issues, including joint economic and security interests, artificial intelligence, support for Ukraine, and further action to accelerate the clean energy transition. The meeting, their fourth in as many months, comes as Western officials race to ascertain whether Russia was responsible for the destruction of the Nova Kakhovka dam, which has displaced thousands of people and caused major economic and environmental damage. Ukraine and Russia have traded blame for the dam's destruction. The two leaders will field questions at a joint news conference after their meeting, an opportunity not afforded to every world leader who visits the White House, and will also issue a joint statement, officials said. Biden and Sunak last met in Hiroshima, Japan, at the Group of Seven summit last month. They also met in Belfast in April and in San Diego in March at a trilateral event marking the defense partnership of the U.S., Australia and Britain. The two will discuss joint U.S.-UK leadership on critical and emerging technologies, as well as coordinated efforts to strengthen both countries' economic security. White House press secretary Karine Jean-Pierre said on Wednesday. The discussion will touch on artificial intelligence safety, Britain announced late Wednesday, saying it would host the first summit on the issue this autumn to discuss how the risks of AI can be mitigated through internationally coordinated action.

India rebukes Canada over parade float showing assassination of Indira Gandhi

Monitoring Desk
NEW DELHI: India's foreign minister on Thursday hit out at Canada for allowing a float in a parade depicting the 1984 assassination of Indian Prime Minister Indira Gandhi by her bodyguards, perceived to be glorification of violence by Sikh separatists. "I think there is a larger underlying issue about the space which is given to separatists, to extremists, to people who advocate violence," S. Jaishankar told reporters in New Delhi while commenting about the tableau in a parade. "I think it is not good for relationships, not good for Canada," he said. Canada's High Commissioner for India also condemned the incident at a parade by Sikh activists in the Canadian city of Brampton. Video circulated in recent days on the internet showed a tableau from the parade featuring Gandhi wearing a blood-stained white saree with her hands up as turban-clad men pointed guns at her. A poster behind the scene read: "Revenge." "I am appalled by reports of an event in Canada that celebrated the assassination of late Indian Prime Minister Indira Gandhi," Cameron MacKay said on Twitter. "There is no place in Canada for hate or for the glorification of violence. I categorically condemn these activities." Reuters was not immediately able to reach the organisers of the parade for comment. Indira Gandhi was assassinated in 1984 by two Sikh bodyguards after she allowed the storming of the holiest Sikh temple, aimed at flushing out Sikh separatists who demanded an independent homeland to be known as Khalistan.

Spain hatches plan to win Macron over to EU-Mercosur trade pact

Monitoring Desk
MADRID: Spain will appeal to President Emmanuel Macron's ambition to make the European Union a "third pole" in world affairs in its bid to secure vital French backing for a stalled EU trade deal with South America, according to three senior government and diplomatic sources. Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez believes he has a window of opportunity to revive the Mercosur free trade agreement (FTA) - which has been frozen for four years - during Spain's forthcoming presidency of the EU because of his close relationships with Brazil's President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva and Argentine President Alberto Fernandez, government and diplomatic sources said. Sanchez, who will be campaigning for reelection at home, plans to announce the next steps at a regional summit on July 17-18 as his presidency of the EU begins, according to two diplomatic EU sources and two Spanish government sources. The EU agreed to the trade deal in principle in 2019 after two decades of on-off talks with Mercosur - which groups Brazil, Argentina, Paraguay and Uruguay. But before it takes effect, blocs are negotiating a so-called "side letter" that pushes for more commitments on climate change and biodiversity. In economic terms, Europe stands to gain greater access to manufactured goods, notably cars, which face tariffs of 35%.



ISLAMABAD: President Dr. Arif Alvi addressing the National Vice Chancellors Peace Conference.

PM approves 'revolutionary program' for uplift of youth, farmers, women in budget

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Thursday approved the inclusion of a 'revolutionary programme' in the upcoming budget 2023-24 for the uplift of youth, women and farmers.

As per the prime minister's directives, the funds have been allocated in the upcoming budget for projects on the welfare of youth and women as well as for agriculture tube-wells.

According to a PM Office statement, in the next fiscal year, the youth would be provided interest-

free loans and endowment fund would be established for education and sports.

The prime minister approved the establishment of 'Pakistan Endowment Fund for Education on the pattern of Punjab Endowment Fund.

Under the Fund, the funds have been allocated intelligently but poor students from across the country, would be given educational scholarships.

The funds have been allocated Prime Minister Youth Programme to extend small loans to the youth.

The government has also specified funds to im-

part skill training to the youth, including in information technology.

The upcoming budget would also have funds for the distribution of 100,000 laptops among youth, besides extending financial support to the IT startups.

The government has made budgetary allocations for the promotion of sports activities among youth and to encourage their participation.

The upcoming budget will also feature the funds allocations for a programme to achieve the economic empowerment of women.

The prime minister also approved a programme for the solarisation of agriculture tube-wells which would be implemented in the second phase of PM's Kissan Package.

Ahsan Iqbal says: No comparison of figures & targets due to 2022-23 as 'a year of force majeure'

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Professor Ahsan Iqbal on Thursday said during the current fiscal year Pakistan faced unprecedented financial and natural calamities, so it was not a 'normal year.'

Addressing a news conference while launching the Pakistan Economic Survey 2022-23 along with Minister for Finance and Revenue Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar, he termed the FY 2022-23 "the year of force majeure due to the extraordinary situation confronted by the country after the previous government allowed \$84 billion unnecessary imports, \$50 billion trade deficit, the Finance Division's inability to pay any penny for the last quarter of 2021-22 and devastating floods

of the last year.

Elaborating what he called "unprecedented tragedies", the minister said the country faced \$50 billion trade deficit mainly because of the \$84 billion imports, which the previous government of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) allowed in its last year for luxury items and to oblige friends.

"The \$84 billion imports pushed the country into the severe economic crisis that has eaten away all the foreign exchange reserves."

The second tragedy, the minister said, was the Finance Division's inability to issue any development budget [zero] for the last quarter of 2021-22 due to the non-availability of funds because of failed economic policies of the PTI government.

President Dr. Alvi says Universities must keep students away of extremism, violence

ISLAMABAD (APP): President Dr Arif Alvi on Thursday called upon the universities to play an active role in preventing intolerance, extremism and violence among students and guide them towards a positive mindset.

The universities, he said, should arrange regular capacity-building training sessions for their management and faculty members to inculcate in students the ability to resolve conflicts and extremism.

Addressing the National Vice Chancellors' Peace Conference, the president said banning the students' unions in universities was not a solution and stressed that there was a need to change their mindset through proper teaching methodologies.

He said the step would ensure the reformation of students to help them contribute towards the country's better future, sustainable peace and prosperity.

President Alvi stressed the need for promoting ethics, morality, empathy, forgiveness and tolerance among the students. He said the students must not be indulged in activities which created stress among them.

To overcome the ongoing crisis, he said, priorities should be defined in streamlining the country's economy, reducing inflation, poverty and the rule of law.

The president hoped that the challenging times would pass soon and the country would witness exponential growth within

five to seven years. The country will stand on strong footings again, he said. The two-day conference was jointly organised by Higher Education Commission (HEC), Pakistan National Counter-Terrorism Authority (NACTA) and Shaor Foundation for Education and Awareness (SFEA). The conference themed "Academic Discourse on Countering Extremism - The Way Forward" is a significant milestone in the implementation of the Peace, Advocacy and Community Engagement through Transformation (PACT) for 'Tolerance project, which is built on a foundation of collaboration and cooperation between SFEA, HEC Pakistan, NACTA, and other policy-level stakeholders.



ISLAMABAD: A delegation of Turkmenistan headed by Mr. Maksat Babayev, State Minister and Head of Turkmenistan calls on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif.



KARACHI: Governor Sindh Kamran Tessori exchanging views with Governor Balochistan Malik Abdul Wali Khan Kakar at Governor House.

Community Led Local Governance Policy officially launched

QUETTA. A step towards development and prosperity of Balochistan, Under the Banner of Balochistan Local Government and Rural Development Department the "Community Led Local Governance Policy" has been officially launched.

On this occasion a grand ceremony was organized in Provincial capital Quetta.

This Policy shows the commitment of the Balochistan Government to foster a more inclusive and participatory approach to local governance, one that fully recognizes the needs and builds on the strengths of communities and citizens. Secretary Local Government Rural Development Mr Dostain Jamaldini launched the CLLG policy through digital launching.

Honorable guest Member provincial Assembly and chairman standing Committee local government Qadir Nail expressed his views and said that it

gives me great pleasure to be here today to address such an esteemed gathering at the launch of the Community Led Local Governance Policy Launch Event. As we all know, governance is a critical issue facing the entire country, particularly the Balochistan province where the problem of governance is contributing to many socio-economic and political problems and directly impacts the daily life of its ordinary citizens. In order to ensure that the government is able to provide its citizens with the necessary services and amenities, it is essential that the problems of governance are addressed.

The Local Government Act 2010 of Balochistan was an important step towards improving local governance in the province. However, with the passage of time further reforms were needed to improve the functioning of the system.

Hunting of rare birds & animals banned: GoB cancels all allotments of birds' hunting areas in Balochistan

CM declares there would be no permission of hunting of rare birds to any local or foreigner in province; directs concerned authorities to ensure implementation on UN Charter and Balochistan Wildlife Protection Act

Independent Report QUETTA. In a major development, the Government of Balochistan has cancelled all allotments of the birds' hunting areas all over the province.

This was announced in an official hand out issued here on Thursday.

According to the official communique, the provincial government has the

authority to allot of the hunting areas or cancel it under the 18th constitutional amendment. Moreover, on this, the Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Abdul Qudus Bizenjo asserted that we would wholeheartedly defend our right and power in this regard. He said that the government has the constitutional and legal protection

of using its very that authority, and the government's decision can not be challenged at any legal forum. In addition to this, the Chief Minister declared that there would also be ban on trophy hunting in the province.

Mir Abdul Qudus Bizenjo maintained that there is no need of earning money and establishing re-

lations at the cost of life of innocent birds and animals. The Chief Minister said that if anyone has any doubt about the decision of government, then one may contact with the Forests and Wildlife Department. Earlier, taking action for protection of the rare birds and animals, the Chief Minister declared the land of Balochistan prohibited for the hunting.

Balochistan govt keen to implement Balochistan Disability Act 2017

QUETTA (APP): Balochistan government is keen to implement the Balochistan Disability Act 2017 and initiated the development of Rules of Business for its successful implementation.

The initiative will help transform the Disability Act into practical guidelines to ensure effective implementation of the Disability Act 2017, said a news release issued here Thursday.

Balochistan is the pioneer in the approval of the Disability Act in 2017 but the Act has not been fully implemented due to the absence of Rules of Business.

In their efforts towards ensuring the inclusion of the rights of persons

with disabilities in Balochistan, the provincial Social Welfare Department along with Sightsavers held a two-day consultative workshop on the development of Rules of Business for Disability Act 2017.

Muhammad Saleem Khosa, Director General Social Welfare Department appreciated Sightsavers and other stakeholders including HANDS, CBID Network, TSO and Quetta Online on this much-needed support especially consultations with people with disabilities. He said that it would help in ensuring the rights of persons with disabilities creating an equal access to opportunities and services for them.

gives me great pleasure to be here today to address such an esteemed gathering at the launch of the Community Led Local Governance Policy Launch Event. As we all know, governance is a critical issue facing the entire country, particularly the Balochistan province where the problem of governance is contributing to many socio-economic and political problems and directly impacts the daily life of its ordinary citizens. In order to ensure that the government is able to provide its citizens with the necessary services and amenities, it is essential that the problems of governance are addressed.

The Local Government Act 2010 of Balochistan was an important step towards improving local governance in the province. However, with the passage of time further reforms were needed to improve the functioning of the system.



QUETTA: Relatives of missing persons are holding pictures of victims during a seminar.

NAB found more evidence in Al-Qadir Trust case: Irfan Qadir

ISLAMABAD (APP): Special Assistant to the Prime Minister on Accountability Irfan Qadir on Thursday said the National Accountability Bureau (NAB) had found more evidence in connection with the Al-Qadir Trust corruption case. Addressing a press conference, the SAPM said the accountability watchdog had traced transactions worth Rs 4.50 billion from the accounts of Farhat Shehzadi, the friend of former prime minister's wife, and efforts were underway to bring her and her husband back from abroad for further investigation.

The NAB Ordinance

stressed for across the board accountability and there was no sacred cow "when it comes to accountability", he added.

SAPM Irfan Qadir said the matters of superior court judges could be referred to NAB if they had "criminal overtones or an element of corruption".

He viewed that the judicial system was being manipulated by certain people on the outside and that there were indications of an element of corruption. The government while considering such matters exercised extreme caution regarding the formation of the commission to investigate the matter.

Sanjrani terms his visit to Russia a historic one

ISLAMABAD (Online): During his four-day visit to Russia, Chairman Senate Muhammad Sadiq Sanjrani held meetings with Russian Parliamentarians and Government officials to strengthen ties between the two nations. Notably, Chairman Sanjrani met with Deputy Prime Minister Alexander Novak, Chairman of the state, VV Volodin, and paid respects at the monument of the unknown soldiers near the Kremlin wall by laying flowers.

In addition to these engagements, Chairman Sanjrani delivered a significant address at the plenary session of the Federation Council of the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation, marking a new chapter in the development of bilateral relations.

During the meetings, Chairman Senate Muhammad Sadiq Sanjrani emphasized the importance of Pakistan's historical and political relationship with Russia. He highlighted the role of regional relations in promoting social and economic development and expressed Pakistan's commitment to the vision of regional progress. The purpose of the visit was to elevate bilateral relations to new heights.

Pakistan will continue to support Kashmiris' struggle: FO

ISLAMABAD (INP): The Foreign Office Spokesperson, Mumtaz Zahra Baloch, has said that Pakistan will continue to extend its moral, political and diplomatic support to the Kashmiris in their just and peaceful struggle for settlement of the Kashmir dispute.

Addressing the weekly press briefing in Islamabad on Thursday, she expressed concern over the prevailing situation in

Indian illegally occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK).

Mumtaz Zahra Baloch said, "We are reminded of the plight of the Kashmiri children, who continue to suffer because of continued siege and brutal oppression by the Indian forces."

She said an entire generation of Kashmiri children has grown up in a climate of fear, violence and repression.

Kickboxer Rind calls on Jan Jamali

QUETTA (APP): Kickboxer Shazaib Rind called on Speaker Balochistan Assembly Mir Jan Muhammad Jamali here on Thursday. Jamali congratulated Rind for his excellent performance in the light-weight 68 kg kickboxing competition in the United States of America. He said that the youth of Balochistan were now shining the name of Pakistan's green crescent flag all over the world.

50 dead in 'suicide blast' at ex-governor's funeral in Afghanistan

Monitoring Desk KABUL: A devastating blast rocked a mosque in Afghanistan's Badakhshan province where funeral prayers of the province's former deputy governor were being offered on Thursday.

According to local sources, some 50 people died while 25 others sustained injuries during the blast at Nabawi mosque in the Hesa-e-Awal area of Faizabad.

Eyewitnesses revealed that the explosion was triggered by a suicide

bomber who targeted the congregation directly. Among the victims was Mulvi Saifullah Samim, the former police chief of Baghlan province.

"The locals estimate that the blast claimed the lives of around 50 people, including senior officials and Samim, the ex-police chief.

The wounded were promptly transported to Faizabad hospital for urgent medical treatment," stated a local resident, claiming that the blast was carried out by a suicide bomber.



QUETTA: A group photo of participants of a seminar held in connection with launching of Community Led Local Governance Policy

Khattak mulls forming 'new political party'

ISLAMABAD (INP): Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) senior leader Pervez Khattak, who recently resigned from the president of the party's Khyber Pakhtunkhwa chapter over the May 9 violent protest, has decided to form a new political party, sources said on Thursday. Sources privy to the development said PTI deserters are expected to join the new political party led by senior politician Pervez Khattak. Khattak has claimed that more than 50 former members of parliamentarians (MPs) are in contact with him and would join his new political set-up, say sources.

Economic Survey Remarkable progress achieved on CPEC

ISLAMABAD (APP): The transport infrastructure sector in China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) has achieved remarkable success, said Pakistan Economic Survey 2022-23 released on Thursday. It added that realizing the importance of modern transportation infrastructure, the CPEC offers Pakistan a unique opportunity to integrate with the regional markets.

On the Eastern Alignment (roadway projects located in Sindh and Punjab), the groundbreaking of the Sukkar-Hyderabad (M-6)

section of the motorway was done in December 2022. On the Western Alignment (projects located in Northwestern Punjab, KP, and Baluchistan), the groundbreaking of the D.I.Khan - Sagu section of N50 was also done during the same period, said the budgetary document. Moreover, the construction work on the 298 km Zhoib to Kuchlak road project was in progress. Also, other projects such as Khuzdar-Basima (110 km), Nokundi-Mashkhel (103 km), and Hoshab-Awaran M-8 (146 km) were under implementation.



Tribal elders of Zhoib meeting with Provincial Advisor Information Mitha Khan Kakar