

Independent

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A Cargo ship carrying crude oil from Russia arrived at Karachi Port

PM Shahbaz hopeful to reach agreement with IMF in June

LAHORE (APP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif Sunday expressed hope that Pakistan will reach agreement with International Monetary Fund (IMF) in June to get the remaining loan as his government had met all the conditions with sincerity.

Speaking at a ceremony at Sabzazar Sports Complex here, he said he had a long conversation with chief of IMF recently and he assured that the government would meet conditions for the loan and provide the required information about budget.

He said Pakistani nation

was vibrant and was capable of meeting all the coming economic challenges in case of any further delay in the IMF programme.

He said despite all the economic difficulties, the federal government raised the salaries of employees by 30 to 35 percent, increased pension by 17 percent and increased minimum wage from Rs 25000 to Rs 32000. The government was aware of the economic difficulties of the poor people, he added.

He said major funds were allocated for the sectors of agriculture and information technology in the federal budget pre-

ented by Finance Minister Ishaq Dar, adding the budget would provide relief to the common man and create jobs.

The prime minister said he assumed government in April 2022 amid very tough economic conditions. Last year, the government of Imran Niazi broke the agreement with International Monetary Fund and the coalition government had to face the challenge of rising commodity and oil prices in the international market and then it spent huge funds for the relief and rehabilitation of people affected by the devastating funds, he men-

tioned.

The government had to seek help from friendly countries to overcome economic challenges, he continued.

He said the government of Imran Niazi showed negligence and did not buy gas when its prices were very low in the international market during the COVID pandemic.

Imran Niazi did nothing for the people but wasted all his time in waging vendetta against opposition leaders, he added.

He said Nawaz Sharif, Maryam Nawaz, Hamza

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First Russian oil ship arrives at Karachi port

PM terms development 'beginning of a new relationship between Pakistan and Russian Federation'

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Sunday said that the first cargo of discounted crude from Russia has arrived in the country, adding that the discharge of oil will commence today (June 12).

"I have fulfilled another of my promises to the nation. Glad to announce that the first Russian discounted crude oil cargo has arrived in Karachi and will begin oil discharge tomorrow," the premier tweeted.

"Today is a transformative day. We are moving one step at a time toward prosperity, economic growth, energy security, and affordability," PM Shehbaz said.

He stated that the arrival of the first-ever Russian oil cargo in Pakistan was the beginning of a "new relationship between Pakistan and the Russian Federation".

"I commend all those who remained part of this national endeavor and contributed to translating the promise of Russian oil import into reality," the prime minister added.

Last year, Finance Minister Ishaq Dar had announced that the country was considering buying discounted Russian oil, pointing out that neighbour India had been purchasing oil from Moscow and Islamabad also had a right to explore the possibility.

Subsequently, State Minister for Petroleum Musadik Malik had flown to Moscow for talks on issues including oil and gas

supplies after which the government announced that it would purchase discounted crude oil, petrol, and diesel from Russia.

In January 2023, a Russian delegation arrived in Islamabad for talks to finalise the deal. During the three-day meeting, the countries decided to address all technical issues — insurance, transportation and payment mechanism — to sign an agreement by late March this year.

"After consensus on the technical specifications achi-ved, the oil and gas trade transaction will be structured in a way it has a mutual economic benefit for both countries," a joint statement issued by the two sides had then stated.

Process of recruitments be expedited: CM directs to issue appointment orders of posts whose tests & interviews done till April

Independent Report

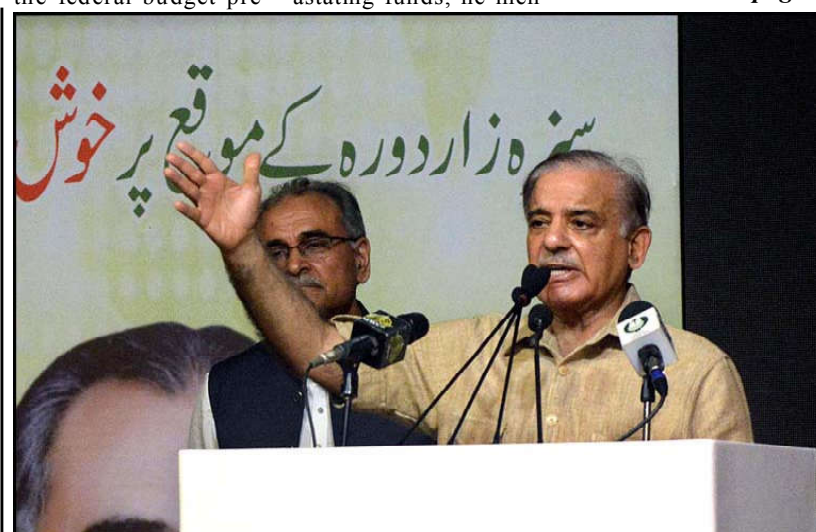
QUETTA: In order to fulfill his commitment to provide jobs to youth of the province, the Chief Minister, Mir Abdul Qudus Bizenjo has directed the provincial ministers and secretaries of all the departments to release all the appointment letters of the posts within a week time whose tests and interviews have been completed till April 2023.

The Chief Minister also issued directives to the ministers and secretaries to strictly monitor the process of recruitments in their respective departments and ministries.

They must ensure that all the recruitments be made purely on merit and that in clean and transparent manner so as to give the right to the deserving persons, the Chief Minister added.

He said that if he got any information about the sale of jobs, then stern action would be taken against the secretary and members of the selection committee, adding he asserted.

It may be mentioned here that several thousand recruitments are pending for years in different departments including Health, Education, Public Health, Agriculture, Levies, Finance, Colleges, etc. It is stated to be top priority of the present government to provide respectable jobs to the unemployed youth of the province.



LAHORE: Prime Minister Mian Muhammad Shehbaz Shareef is addressing during his visit at Sabzazar Sports Complex.

Next FY budget of Balochistan likely to be presented on 16th

Independent Report

QUETTA: The next financial year's budget of Balochistan for 2023-24 is expected to be presented on June 16, 2023, it was learnt through official sources the other day.

The Provincial Minister for Finance, Engineer Zamarak Khan Achakzai would present the budget for the next financial year for necessary preparations are being made.

According to the sources, the total volume of the province's budget is likely to be Rs. 700 billion.

With total outlay of around Rs. 700 billion:

In the budget, the estimate of the income in next financial year budget has been made as Rs. 529.32 billion. With this, the total deficit of the budget may increase to around Rs. 150 billion, the sources informed.

It was also learnt through the sources that development expenditures in the budget are expected to be around Rs. 200 billion.

The estimate of income from the province's own resources is expected as over Rs. 60 billion while the province is likely to get Rs. 413 billion through the di-

visible pool under NFC Award and other sources.

It is proposed to create over 5,000 new vacancies in the provincial government departments. Moreover, 30 percent raise is also expected in the salaries of provincial government employees in the next financial year budget, the sources informed.

In the budget, Rs. 90 billion has been proposed for education sector with Rs. 60 billion for law and order and Rs. 50 billion for the health sector, the sources revealed.



MULTAN: Chief Organizer PML-N Maryam Nawaz addressing the Youth Convention at Shujaabad.

Era of temptation, mischief now over: Maryam Nawaz

MULTAN (APP): Senior Vice President and Chief Organizer Pakistan Muslim League (N) Maryam Nawaz Sharif on Sunday said that the era of temptation and mischief was over with burial and now a new era of development and prosperity kick-started.

Addressing the youth Convention of PML (N) in

Tehsil Shujaabad here, she said that her heart was broken with great shock on the desecration of martyrs.

She said that the nation would follow the elements involved in the desecration of martyrs and burning of army installations till the end.

Bizenjo imposes ban on use of mineral water in CM secretariat

Independent Report

QUETTA: In a major move of austerity, the Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Abdul Qudus Bizenjo has imposed ban on use of mineral water in the CM's secretariat with immediate effect.

According to an official hand out issued here on Sunday, the Chief Minister said that he is also using normal water, and as such the guests would also be presented the normal water instead of the mineral water.

The Chief Minister also issued directives to all the departments that no minister or secretary would make inauguration of any public projects, rather the masses would inaugurate them now.

Mir Abdul Qudus Bizenjo mentioned that he had already imposed ban on use of the bomb and bullet proof vehicles. After that, he didn't use the bomb or bullet proof vehicles of the CM's secretariat.

The Chief Minister said that he firmly believes on the Allah Almighty, who has created us, and we also have to return to him. He said that our creator and lord is Allah, who is also our protector. Therefore, we don't have any need to be bothered at all, he added.

250 bogus hospitals reveal in Balochistan

QUETTA (Online): It has been revealed that 250 hospital of Balochistan province are only established in papers and files but not a single brick was place anywhere in the land.

661 hospital, basic health centers and rural health centers are present in the official documents of health department of Balochistan.

Surprisingly 250 health center were even not build and they are only limited to documents whereas 656 health centers have only namely facilities and patients are facing problems.

Pak-Turkiye bilateral cooperation in diverse fields to open vistas of economic prosperity: PM

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Sunday said that the enhanced bilateral cooperation between Pakistan and Turkiye through joint investment and ventures would prove 'a win win' situation for the both countries.

In an interview with Haber Global, a Turkish TV channel, the prime minister highlighted that a target of bilateral trade to the tune of \$5 billion, in the next three years, between the two countries was very much achievable.

The prime minister said that the areas of solar and hydro power energy in Pakistan possessed huge potential and the Turkish investors could avail of this opportunity.

"I want to assure as Prime Minister of Pakistan to do everything to facilitate Turkish investors. There is great scope between the two countries to make this wonderful journey more successful," he added.

The prime minister opined that respective sec-

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FAISALABAD: Interior Minister Rana Sana Ullah Khan addressing to public gathering after inaugurating railway gate on Chack No. 79 JB Abbas Pur Road.

Rana Sanaullah says PTI chief to face legal action in two to three weeks

ISLAMABAD (INP): Interior Minister Rana Sanaullah, who cited the May 9 events, said legal action could be initiated against the PTI chairman in two to three weeks.

The violence on May 9 was preplanned and the planning had been made at Zaman Park [the PTI chief's residence in Lahore], the senior PML-N leader told a private TV channel during an interview.

Rana Sanaullah said the PTI chief was the architect of hate in politics and the prevailing instability, as he criticised the former ruling party and its policies while explaining the actions being taken against the culprits who tried to trigger anarchy in Pakistan on May 9.

Several persons arrested in connection with the attacks on the Lahore

corps commander's house and the GHQ in Rawalpindi as well as other acts of arson have already revealed that the entire planning was finalised at the PTI chief's residence. The statement comes just days after the military's top brass at the 81st Formation Commanders Conference vowed to tighten noose around masterminds and planners of May 9 incidents.

"While the legal trials of perpetrators and instigators have commenced, it is time that noose of law is also tightened around the planners and masterminds who mounted the hate ripened and politically driven rebellion against the state and state institutions to achieve their nefarious design of creating chaos in the country," the ISPR said in a statement.

Three soldiers martyred, 3 terrorists killed in NW clash

PESHAWAR (APP): Three soldiers were martyred and three terrorists were killed during exchange of firing at general area Miranshah in North Waziristan district on the night between Friday and Saturday, ISPR told here Sunday.

According to the details, the troops effectively engaged the terrorists at their location and during the exchange of firing, three terrorists were sent to hell, while four terrorists were injured. Weapons and ammunition were also recovered from the killed terrorists.

During intense exchange of fire, Subedar Asghar Ali, 40, resident of Lakki Marwat district, Sepoy Naseem Khan, 26, resident of Lakki Marwat district and Sepoy Muhammad Zaman, 22, resident of Abbottabad embraced Shahadat.

The sanitization of the area is being carried out to eliminate any other terrorists found in the area.

Imran has mind of Hitler, but body of chameleon changing colour: Marriyum

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Information and Broadcasting Marriyum Aurangzeb while criticising Imran Khan on Sunday said that the mind of the "political sphinx" was that of Hitler while his body was that of a chameleon, which not only changed its colour, but also

expression within no time.

In a tweet, mocking Imran she said that on May 9, military installations and memorials of martyrs were also attacked because "they" did not agree with Imran Khan's mindset.

Taking a jibe at Imran Khan, she said there was no room for the constitution in his mind, nor for the law, humanity or morality. She said he had only arrogance, ego, stubbornness and hypocrisy, who offered life exten-



GHOTKI: View of site after Green Line Express derailed near Ghotki.

Fishermen boats shifted to harbor from sea & coast: Section 144 imposed in Gwadar coastal areas ahead of Biparjioy

Emergency declared in hospitals of Gwadar and Hub; fishermen refrained from going in deep sea

Independent Report

QUETTA: The Director General Provincial Disaster Management Authority (PDMA), Jahanzaib Khan has stated that the necessary steps are being taken to tackle the situation to be emerged following the Biparjioy cyclone in the coastal areas, as the Met office has predicted possible heavy rains and storm

in the wake of cyclone.

The section 144 has been imposed in the coastal areas of Gwadar district. Under the section, the movement of fishermen in the sea and observing picnic and all other activities have been banned at the coast in view of the possible Biparjioy.

In addition to this, an emergency has also been

declared in the hospitals of Gwadar district.

This was informed in the meeting attended by the Deputy Commissioner Gwadar, Izzat Nazir Baloch and other concerned officials on Sunday.

It was informed that the waves could be above 8-10 feet due to the Biparjioy

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QUETTA: Visitors take keen interest at stall during International Property Expo held in Quetta.

Australia crowned ICC World Test Champions with win over India

India collapsed to 234 all out, losing seven wickets for 70 runs before lunch on fifth day

Sports Desk

LONDON: Scott Boland sparked a dramatic collapse as Australia hammered India by 209 runs to win the World Test Championship final at The Oval on Sunday.

India, set a record 444 to win, resumed on 164-3. But they collapsed to 234 all out, losing seven wickets for 70 runs inside 24 overs before lunch on the fifth day.

Boland did the initial damage with two wickets in an over, including the prize scalp of Virat Kohli, on his way to figures of 3-46 in 16 overs.

and star batsman Steve Smith (121) making hundreds in a first-innings total of 469 after India captain Rohit Sharma won the toss. "It was a tough one," said India skipper Rohit Sharma at the presentation ceremony.

"We bowled pretty well in the first session. Then we let ourselves down a little bit with how he bowled."

Rohit, who lauded Smith and Head for their centuries, added: "In the second innings, we didn't apply ourselves with the bat." India were also attempting to top a ground record stretching back more

Kohli had added just five runs to his overnight score when, on 49, his edged drive off a wide ball from paceman Boland was brilliantly caught by Steve Smith, diving to his right at second slip.

Two balls later, new batsman Ravindra Jadeja fell for a duck, caught behind after nicking a superb Boland delivery that seamed away against the angle.

India were now 179-5 and a sensational seventh over of the day almost ended with another wicket for Boland, when a sharply rising ball took the shoulder of Bharat's bat



Off-spinner Nathan Lyon (4-41) then polished off the tail.

Victory meant Australia had now captured the one major men's cricket title that had previously eluded them.

India's target of 444 was way in excess of the highest score made by any side to win in the fourth innings in 146 years of Test history, the West Indies' 418-7 against Australia at St John's in 2003.

Australia were in charge of this final from early on with both player-of-the-match Travis Head (163)

than a century, with the highest successful fourth-innings chase in a Test at the Oval the 263 posted by England in a one-wicket win over Australia back in 1902.

And yet thousands of their fans, as they had done during the first four days, still streamed into the ground hoping their side might pull off an extraordinary win, with chants of "Kohli, Kohli, Kohli" rang out round the ground as the former India captain and Ajinkya Rahane walked out to bat.

before looping over David Warner at first slip. Rahane, who had marked his first Test in over a year by top-scoring with patient 89 in India's first was still there but an otherwise composed 46 ended when he went for a booming drive off fast bowler Mitchell Starc only to edge straight to wicketkeeper Alex Carey.

India's 212-6 was soon transformed into 213-7 when Shardul Thakur was lbw to Lyon and the end came when Mohammed Siraj was caught reverse-sweeping the spinner.

Launch of community-led LG Policy for rural development of Balochistan with EU technical support welcoming

QUETTA (PR): The launch of Community Led Local Governance policy for the rural development of Balochistan with the technical assistance of the European Union is very welcome. The Department of Local Government Rural Development, DAI is grateful to all the institutions that contributed to the formulation of the policy.

Manager Rural Development European Union Pakistan Mr. Ivan while sharing the details of CLLG policy said that it is a remarkable achievement of BRACE Technical Assistance. Establishing and implementing this policy is very important for the development of rural areas of Balochistan.

He said that the House appreciated the cooperation and role of the local government of Balochistan and its representatives and also concluded that the European Union will support the local government of Balochistan and the CLLG policy in the future development.

DAI Team Leader Mr. Peter Portier said that this policy which was created since 2017 with the hard work of BRACE Technical Assistance, Department of Local Government and all other stakeholders is now being handed over to the local government of Balochistan. It is hoped that it will be fully implemented.

Balochistan will develop. The BRACE Technical Assistance Team appreciates their efforts in working with the various departments and wishes them all the best for their future endeavours. Senior Monitoring Evaluation Project Management Advisor Muhammad Asim said on this occasion that the policy is a historic initiative in the history of reforms in Balochistan.

This policy is going to establish a structure and mechanism within the government in Balochistan. The program has a strategic objective of empowering the local community and aligning priorities with investment for the development and prosperity of the region.



THATTA: A large number of people enjoy bathing at Keenjhar Lake during hot day in the city.

Section 144 imposed in Gwadar..

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cyclone, therefore, the fishermen have been directed to go in the open sea.

Meanwhile, the meeting reviewed the arrangements in view of the cyclone. A control room was also established immediately to monitor the heavy rains and storm all over the district.

The officers of concerned departments have also been put on high alert to take precautionary measures ahead of the cyclone in the port city.

Meanwhile, the process of shifting of the fishermen boats was also started under the arrangements of Gwadar Port Authority (GPA).

Started on directives of Chairman GPA Pasand Khan Buledi, the boats are

being shifted from sea and coast area to the fish harbor free of coast.

The Chairman GPA said that the heavy machinery and operation staff is taking part in the rescue operation.

Meanwhile, a similar meeting was also held in Hub under chair of the concerned Deputy Commissioner. Important decisions were made regarding disaster plan in view of the possible cyclonic threat.

An emergency was also declared in the Hub district in view of the possible cyclone. The leaves of officers of the concerned departments were also cancelled directing them to remain present on their duty to deal with any emergent situation.

Era of temptation..

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She said that the mastermind of May 9 tragedy was hiding in Zaman Park and whenever the mastermind was questioned, he put the responsibility on the workers.

She said that the leaders never let their workers down adding that the leader is the one who holds his daughter's hand and goes to jail as Mian Muhammad Nawaz Sharif did.

Mastermind of May 9 claimed that this country was unsafe for his children, she said.

"Imran made the country unsafe by setting it on fire," she said.

"Do the people who desecrate martyrs deserve mercy or forgiveness", she questioned?

She said that the country's safeguards will break the hands of the people who are involved in country's burners.

Novak Djokovic claims record 23rd Grand Slam triumph

Sports Desk

PARIS: Novak Djokovic created history on Sunday when he captured a record-breaking 23rd Grand Slam title with a third French Open triumph, reinforcing his case to be crowned the greatest player of all time.

The 36-year-old Serb brushed off an early wobble to defeat Casper Ruud of Norway 7-6 (7/1), 6-3, 7-5 and snap the tie of 22 Slams he shared with career-long rival Rafael Nadal.

"It's an incredible feeling to win 23. I'm beyond grateful and blessed to be standing here with so many incredible achievements," said Djokovic as Nadal immediately described his rival's victory as "an incredible achievement".

Govt making efforts to re-negotiate with IMF on more favorable terms: Dar

ISLAMABAD (Online): Finance Minister Muhammad Ishaq Dar said the government is taking necessary measures to re-negotiate with International Monetary Fund on more favorable terms and conditions.

Talking to a private news channel, he expressed hope that the IMF would be satisfied with Pakistan's progress, as the country has fulfilled the necessary requirements.

Ishaq Dar expressed optimism that Pakistan would achieve the growth rate set by the government, indicating a positive outlook for the nation's economic development in the coming year.

The Finance Minister said the federal government has given a massive relief to the salaried class in the new budget by announcing 35 per cent ad-hoc relief allowance for its employees in grade one to 16 and 30 per cent for employees in grades 17 to 22.

Reply to a question, he criticized the previous government of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf for formulating weak policies. He said these policies caused significant difficulties for masses in their daily lives, leading to financial constraints for the country.

Pakistani students find China's development model inspirational

ISLAMABAD (APP): Aamir Bizenjo, a 22-year-old student of Gwadar University in Pakistan's southwest Balochistan province, found China's development quite interesting and inspirational, Xinhua reported on Sunday.

He has been witnessing the development in the port city of Gwadar under the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), and has now got a vision for the development of his province during his trip to Islamabad, in which he met Chinese officials and visited different platforms and consortiums under the collaboration of the two countries.

PM Shabbaz hopeful to reach...

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Shehbaz and other leaders of Pakistan Muslim League(N) were put in the jails and opposition was pushed against the wall.

Shehbaz said economic stability was not possible without political stability and vowed to put Pakistan on the path of greater progress and prosperity under the dynamic leadership of Nawaz Sharif.

He said the incidents of May 9 were acts of hostility against the nation, adding the military installations were attacked and Jinnah House was burned down on the instigation of Imran Niazi.

He asserted that law will take its course and all those responsible for the incident of May 9 would be punished so that these crimes could not be repeated again. However, he assured that innocent would be treated fairly and with justice.

The PM said in 2017, as servant of Punjab province he started work on a plan for establishing 14 states of the art sports complexes but the fascist government of Imran Niazi stopped the project after the stolen elections of 2018.

He said today he was inaugurating the first of the 14 sports complexes from which talented youth will benefit free of charge. The sports complex would have separate facilities for boys and girls and 50 per cent of the membership would be free while the other half of members would be charged to meet the operational costs of the complex.

Felicitating President



KARACHI: Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah holding a post-budget press conference at the Sindh Assembly's auditorium.

Various measures already in place, experts stress elimination of child labour in Pakistan

LAHORE (APP): The World Day Against Child Labour would be marked on June 12 (Monday) across the globe including Pakistan to raise awareness about the plight of child labourers worldwide.

To call attention to the problem on this day, every year, various discussion events, seminars, and walks are held globally on June 12 to mark the day. Experts told APP on Sunday that hundreds of millions of girls and boys around the world are affected due to the child labour menace. It is a social stigma on the forehead of humanity and a gigantic problem in both developing and industrialised countries and low-income communities, they said.

About 3.3 million of Pakistani children are trapped in child labour, who are deprived of their childhood, their health and education. They are forced to spend a life of poverty and want, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) says in its report.

To prevent child labour, global organisations like the International Labor Organisation (ILO) and

SPARC must work jointly to save children from the curse of child labour. The government should also help reduce poverty so that parents are not forced to send their children to work, people concerned demand.

Children in all provinces of Pakistan are being exploited physically, morally, socially and mentally. Ms Munawar Sultana, National Project Coordinator, Asia Regional Child Labour (ARC) project, said that around 160 million children aged 5 to 17 years engaged in child labour in 2020, with 79 million children involved in hazardous work.

A total of 160 million children – 63 million girls and 97 million boys – are in child labour globally, accounting for almost one in 10 of all children worldwide.

Mr. Peter Buwembo, officer-in-charge, ILO Country Office, in a statement on child labour, emphasised the significance of reliable data on child labour.

He mentioned that an ongoing child labour survey in Pakistan would generate updated and accurate evidence for programme and policies.

He acknowledged the Government of Pakistan for ratifying all eight fundamental conventions of the ILO including C182 in 2001 and C138 in 2006 and enacting national and sub-national legislation, prohibiting the employment of children in general and hazardous work in particular.

Mr. Buwembo underscored the need for harmonizing the age of children in all relevant laws by federal and provincial governments, urging all stakeholders to work together for a long-lasting solution and accelerating progress towards achieving the SDG targets by 2025.

According to a recent study report of the Pakistan Institute of Development Economics (PIDE), the growth of girl workers is higher as compared to boys. The industrial structure shows that at the national level and in the rural area, agriculture engaged the maximum number of children, followed by services, whereas, in the urban area, the services sector dominated.



QUETTA: Activists of Jamaat-e-Islami holding a rally in favour of their demands

Pak-Turkiye bilateral cooperation...

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torts of Turkiye had potential in these areas of Pakistan and it could play its role.

Our labour was more skilled and if they have Turkish investment, it would be a well combination, thus opening vistas of opportunities for joint ventures, he added.

The prime minister, to another query, replied that the railroad network between Pakistan, Iran and Turkiye could play a very important role which required improvisation.

It would definitely result in reduction of the cost of transportation and making their production of goods very compatible in the global markets, he said, adding that his aim was to make this network more efficient.

Felicitating President

Recep Tayyip Erdogan on his reelection, the prime minister said that the president had proved himself as an established statesman and politician.

The prime minister said that he was looking forward to working closely with president Erdogan to further cement their bilateral relations and trade and investment ties.

Comparing Pakistan and Turkiye as 'one soul two hearts' he said the relations between the two countries dated back to centuries.

Turkiye had always supported Pakistan in difficult times, ie; during floods and quakes, it had gone an extra mile to support them, he added.

Similarly, different governments of Pakistan irrespective of the political party in power, they always supported their Turkish brothers and sisters. When it came to Turkiye, all the political parties were one.

"This is the journey we have adopted and hope to achieve our mission through hard work and sincerity of purpose," he stressed.

The prime minister said that these personal bonds of brothers and friends always helped them to come through every thick and thin.

The prime minister said that Pakistan and Turkiye enjoyed strong strategic partnership as they had also entered into joint ventures over ship making industry, adding while there were other areas in which both brotherly

countries had shared interests.

He reaffirmed support to Turkiye's territorial solidarity and integrity and said that Turkiye had always supported Pakistan on the issue of Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir.

The prime minister, responding to a question, said that they had been passing through difficult challenges, prices were sky rocketed due to imported inflation, the floods had displaced 33 million people while crops were completely washed away and infrastructure stood damaged which had cost them around \$30 billion losses.

Still, he reiterated that the people of Pakistan were strong and facing these challenges, and expressed his optimism that they would negotiate through these challenges with joint efforts.

The prime minister, to another question, maintained that the coalition government had successfully galvanized the international community after floods last year and arranged a Geneva donors' conference where the international community made pledges, thus it saved the country from serious dangers of default.

The previous government reneged its agreement with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) that led to very serious economic situation. They coalition government was able to negotiate with the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) and Pakistan was out of the grey area.



GILGIT: Players from NLI (B) and GBPWD teams in action during the Jashn-e-Baharan freestyle Polo Tournament at Aga Khan Shahi Pologround.

Regional conference on socioeconomic from June 13

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan Society of Development Economists (PSDE), in collaboration with the Pakistan Institute of Development Economics (PIDE) would organize a two-day regional conference from June 13 at University of Malakand.

The conference titled "Unleashing the Economic Potential of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa", aimed at providing a platform for vibrant discussions and insightful debates on key economic and social issues, contributing to the development and progress of the region, a press release said.

This remarkable two-day event will bring together over 400 participants from across Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, including renowned national experts, policymakers, development practitioners, entrepreneurs, students, and scholars.

Under the overarching theme, the Conference will feature ten sub-themes, covering critical dimensions that shape the economic landscape of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

Topics such as sustainable development, entrepreneurship, innovation, infrastructure, human capital, and regional connectivity will be explored in-depth by esteemed speakers and panelists.

One of the highlights of this year's conference is the inclusive and diverse participation from universities across Pakistan.

Vice-Chancellors, faculty members, and students from 20 provincial and federal universities will join hands with PSDE, PIDE, and UoM in a collective effort to foster a culture of

national-building and inclusive economic growth.

"We are excited to host this remarkable event that brings together the best minds in the field of development economics," said spokesperson PIDE.

"The conference is not only an opportunity for robust discussions and knowledge-sharing, but it also serves as a catalyst for creating actionable solutions to the economic challenges Khyber Pakhtunkhwa faces, he added.

"We are confident that the outcomes of this Conference will have a lasting impact on the region's economic development," he added.

With the physical presence of 400 participants each day, the conference promises to create a vibrant atmosphere for networking and collaboration.



ISLAMABAD: A volunteer distributing free food among deserving people at MauveArea G-7.

CDA pursues upgradation of urban amenities, infrastructure

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Capital Development Authority (CDA) is taking concrete steps for ensuring the provision of urban facilities to the city dwellers and maintenance of infrastructure including the installation of street lights, road carpeting and resolving water-related issues, neglected in the past.

"Special attention is being given to the completion of the remaining development works in the sectors I, G, H and D series, provision of civic facilities, and facilitating the home builders in these sectors in pursuance of the directives of Chairman CDA Noor ul Amin Mengal," an official told APP.

"The work of installation of streetlights in the main roads and within the sectors to ensure proper lighting management in Sector I-11, I-10, I-14 and Sector I-16, D-12 and other sectors is in full swing," he added.

To a question, the official said, "After a few months of delay due to legal complications, the authority has started work to install street lights in Sector D-12."

He said that the work on this project was initially halted when a contractor, who failed to secure the contract, filed a case in court.

"As a result, the project was put on hold indefinitely. However, the legal issues have now been resolved, including concerns regarding price escalation."

Now, the official said, "The contractor of the project has assured the CDA that the project will be completed within the next three months."

He said, "The lack of street lights in Sector D-12 has contributed to a recent increase in street crimes, prompting residents to raise the issue with the relevant authorities."

World Blood Donor Day to be marked on June 14

ISLAMABAD (APP): World Blood Donor Day will be marked on June 14 (Wednesday) across the globe including Pakistan safe blood supplies are a scarce commodity — especially in developing countries world Blood Donor Day is an occasion to raise awareness of the problem and thank donors worldwide.

Giving blood is easy and saves lives many events are held around the world on June 14 to mark World Blood Donor Day. These include football matches, concerts and mobile blood donation clinics. In 2011, the World Health Organization (WHO) called upon communities worldwide to symbolically "paint the world red" by coloring, covering or lighting monuments and landmarks.

Despite about 92 million yearly blood donations worldwide, safe blood is constantly on high demand, especially in developing countries.

Victim student Tufail's family awaits justice for last 13 years

ISLAMABAD (APP): In Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK), justice continues to elude the family of a 12th-class student, Tufail Mattoo, for the last thirteen years.

According to Kashmir media service, Tufail Mattoo was martyred on this day in 2010 after being hit by a teargas shell fired from very close range by Indian police near Ghani Memorial Stadium in Srinagar when he was returning home from tuition. His killing had triggered massive anti-India demonstrations in the territory and over 125 peaceful protesters were martyred by Indian troops, paramilitary and police personnel in just a few months in 2010. Tufail Mattoo's name is a

synonym for the bloody summer of 2010 in IIOJK.

Despite the passage of more than a decade, the family of the martyred student continues to await justice and his killers are still roaming scot-free while the bloodbath is going on unabated in the occupied territory. Srinagar-based political experts and analysts say that whether it is the killing of student Tufail Mattoo or other human rights violations by the Indian troops, India has never been serious to probe any crime in IIOJK and instead of punishing its troops, it is rewarding them for killing innocent people in the territory. They say that the killer Indian troops are enjoying impunity under the draconian laws in IIOJK but the Kashmiris will never forget the hot blood.



ISLAMABAD: Youngsters are swim in water Spill ways, to cool off during high temperature at Shabdara Picnic Point, in Federal Capital.



ISLAMABAD: People filling drinking water from filtration plant at Ghori town during hot day in the Federal Capital.

Pakistani pilgrims urged to obtain authorised sacrificial coupons from Saudi Post

ISLAMABAD (APP): Director General Hajj Abdul Wahab Soomro on Sunday emphasized the importance of obtaining authorized sacrificial coupons from approved sources such as the Islamic Development Bank (IDB) and Saudi Post, while urging Pakistani pilgrims to avoid obtaining them from unauthorized channels.

In an interview with APP, he highlighted that acquiring these authorized coupons ensures their legitimacy and compliance

with Saudi regulations for the sacrificial ritual.

To facilitate the process, the Pakistani government, in collaboration with the Saudi bank, has made arrangements for the sacrificial ritual during Hajj. Pilgrims can obtain a token for the sacrificial offering by contributing 720 Saudi riyals. Mobile vans are available to conveniently distribute these coupons to pilgrims residing in different areas.

The tokens will be provided near the accom-

modations of the pilgrims, either through booths or mobile vans. Upon receiving the token, pilgrims will be informed about their designated time for the sacrificial ritual. Following the sacrifice, the pilgrims will proceed with the "Halq" ritual, which involves hair shaving or trimming. DG Hajj assures that all necessary facilities, including accommodation, food, and transportation, have been meticulously arranged in Makkah to ensure the convenience of the pilgrims.

ED PIMS decides to expand hospital's new emergency block project

ISLAMABAD (APP): Executive Director Pakistan Institute of Medical Sciences (PIMS) Dr Imran Sikandar has decided to expand the new emergency block project of the hospital with the addition of one more floor to ensure the provision of the best emergency services to citizens.

According to ED PIMS spokesperson Dr Mubashir Mushtaq Dahi, the decision was made on the direction of the Planning Commission of Pakistan as with this new plan

further 75 beds will be added to the project.

He said that after approval from the Ministry of National Health Services, Regulations, and Coordination, the documents of the projects have been sent to the Planning Commission for allocation of funds.

He said that with the addition of 75 beds, the total number of beds will be 239 in the new emergency block of the hospital with state-of-the-art facilities including a laboratory, operation theatre, and x-ray.

CDA takes steps for fulfilling religious needs of minorities

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Capital Development Authority (CDA) has taken significant steps in fulfilling the religious needs of minority communities here.

The CDA has allocated two cremation grounds, measuring 0.49 acres and 0.50 acres, for the Hindu and Buddhist communities respectively in Sector H-9.

Moreover, graveyards have been provided for Christians (9.01 acres), Bhaiss (1.70 acres), and Qadianis (3.424 acres) in Sector H-9 and Sector H-8.



ISLAMABAD: Fire Fighters busy in erupting the fire at Margalla Hills near Shabdara Valley Picnic point, in Federal Capital.

11.8mln children enrolled under Benazir Taleemi Wazaif Program

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP) has so far enrolled 11.8 million children under schools through Benazir Taleemi Wazaif initiative.

According to an official source, a total of 3.0 million children had been enrolled under this scheme during July- March FY2023.

So far, Rs 63.3 billion have been disbursed since inception of the Benazir Taleemi Wazaif initiative out of which Rs 23.4 billion have been disbursed

during July to March, FY2023.

In pursuance of the commitment to provide Universal Primary Education as a part of SDGs, the government launched a Co-Responsibility Cash Transfer initiative for providing an additional cash per quarter to BISP beneficiary families in October, 2012 for Primary Education.

Since July 01, 2021, scope of the programme has been expanded from Primary to Secondary and Higher Secondary level and is currently operational all

over the country.

The overall objective of this initiative is to encourage education through regular cash transfers to invest in human capital development. B-form/ CRC verification through NADRA database is mandatory for the enrollment of child in the programme.

A beneficiary child must attend school or college for at least 70 percent of the school or college effective days within a quarter to receive cash transfers from second quarter and onwards.

PMD alerts authorities to remain vigilant of BIPARJOY impacts

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Extremely Severe Cyclone Storm (ESCS) "BIPARJOY" may probably approach the southeast Sindh coast and cause widespread wind-dust/thunderstorm rain with some very heavy/extremely heavy falls at few districts of Sindh between June 13-17.

About the possible impacts of the cyclone, the Pakistan Meteorological Department (PMD) has revealed on Sunday that "With its probable approach to the southeast Sindh coast, widespread wind-dust/thunderstorm rain with some very heavy/extremely heavy falls accompanied with squally winds of 80-100Km/hour likely in Thatta, Sujawal, Badin, Tharparker and Umerkot districts during June 13-17."

"Dust/thunderstorm-rain with few heavy falls and accompanied with squally winds of 60-80 Km/hour is likely in Karachi, Hyderabad, Tando Muhammad Khan, Tando Allayar, Mirpurkhas districts from June 13/14 and June 16", the PMD said.

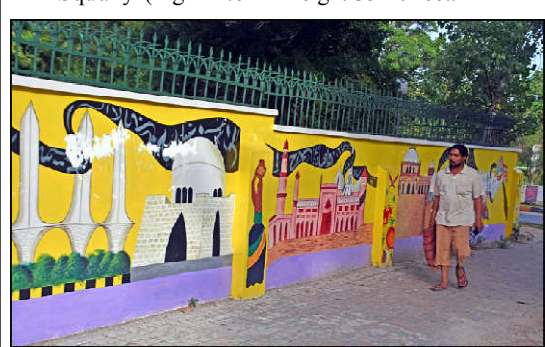
Squally (high inten-

sity) winds may damage loose and vulnerable structures. Storm surge of 3-3.5 meters (8-12 feet) is expected at the land falling point (Keti Bandar and around).

The PMD has advised the fishermen not to venture in open sea till the system is over by June 17, as the Arabian Sea conditions may get very rough/high accompanied with high tides along coast.

The Very Severe Cyclonic Storm (VSCS) "BIPARJOY" over east central Arabian Sea has been intensified into an Extremely Severe Cyclonic Storm (ESCS), moved northward during last 12 hours and now lies near Latitude 18.1°N and Longitude 67.5°E at a distance of about 760km south of Karachi, 740km south of Thatta and 840km south-east of Ormara. Maximum sustained surface winds are 150-160 Km/hour gusts 180 Km/hour around the system center with and sea conditions being phenomenal around the system center with maximum wave height 35-40 feet.

ISLAMABAD (APP): A man is taking interest historical painting at Ataturk Avenue, in Federal Capital.



ISLAMABAD: A man is taking interest historical painting at Ataturk Avenue, in Federal Capital.

PIPS recognized as Global Centre of Excellence in Parliamentary Research

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Pakistan Institute for Parliamentary Services (PIPS) has been recognized as a center of excellence in Parliamentary Research amongst global mapping of research services around the world by the United Kingdom (UK) Parliament.

According to the latest issue of the Parliamentary, the journal of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association, the UK Parliamentary Office of Science of Technology undertook a year analysis to identify 181 potential parliamentary research mechanisms and compare them for the last five years' standards, services and performance of these institutes across 125 countries.

The Pakistan Institute for Parliamentary Services (PIPS) has been recognized as the Top Tier of this global mapping of reputed worldwide institutions providing evidence-based policy synthesis, analysis and scrutiny as per the international standards to the parliamentarians.

Dr Vicky Wardat from the University of St Andrews in Scotland and Dr Mark Monaghan from the University of Loughborough University in England, undertook a detailed comparative analysis

of purpose, structure and performance in the last five years (2018-2023) for 181 institutes to shortlist top 141 parliamentary institutes worldwide placed in three tiers. "The Pakistan Institute for Parliamentary Services (PIPS), alongside network-oriented models such as the Commonwealth Parliamentary Research Services (CPRS) and UK-POST are placed among well-known models for linking individual parliamentarians with academic research.

Research evidence has an important role to play in the work of parliaments as they scrutinize, debate and pass legislation. Some parliaments have well-known mechanisms for accessing and harnessing research from the academic community, but there are many others whose work is less well-known," the study noted.

The UK POST professors recognized that "PIPS has provided over 1,500 research-based articles and technical assistance to the individual Members of Parliament, committees and cross-party caucuses" within a short span of time with a smart team of only six in-house research experts whereas similar mechanisms in US, India, South Africa and Ghana have respectively 700, 450,



ISLAMABAD: Laborers sitting on the roadside in F-7 area waiting for clients to be hired for a daily wages.

From devastation to reconstruction: Pak's path to climate resilience

ISLAMABAD (APP): Climate change knows no borders, and Pakistan bears witness to its indiscriminate wrath. The country finds itself at the mercy of a tumultuous climate, where rising temperatures disrupt rainfall patterns and plunge communities into a perpetual cycle of water scarcity and water-related disasters. Striving for resilience, Pakistan unites with international partners, undertaking bold measures to protect its people, rebuild shattered lives, and forge a sustainable future.

The United Nations and the Government of Pakistan co-hosted the 'Climate Resilient Pakistan' conference in Geneva on January 9, 2023. The conference aimed to highlight the serious threat posed by climate change, especially in the aftermath of the devastating floods in 2022. Sev-

eral countries and development agencies made pledges during the conference, collectively covering over half of the required \$16 billion for reconstruction as requested by the Pakistani government.

In mid-June 2022, Pakistan experienced unprecedented monsoon rains, resulting in the worst flooding the country had seen in a decade. According to Pakistan's National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA), over 33 million people were affected, and more than 1 million houses were destroyed or damaged. The floods claimed the lives of at least 1,100 individuals and submerged vast areas spanning several provinces, including Punjab, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Balochistan, and Sindh.

The NDMA report also highlighted the significant economic crisis caused

by the destruction of livestock and agriculture during the 2022 floods. This crisis resulted in severe food shortages, leaving the flood victims vulnerable to malnutrition.

Moreover, the healthcare system was severely affected, with outbreaks of waterborne diseases such as diarrhoea, dengue fever, and malaria. Pregnant women faced additional challenges due to limited access to maternity services and essential menstrual hygiene products in flood-stricken areas.

Despite the immense challenges posed by the floods, the Government of Pakistan, with the assistance of the United Nations, provided \$245 million in cash support to 2.2 million households. However, the daunting task of reconstruction and rehabili-

tion still lies ahead. Collaborating with the UN, the World Bank Group, the Asian Development Bank, and the European Union, Pakistan has prepared a comprehensive post-disaster needs assessment (PDNA). The assessment estimates that flood damages exceed \$14.9 billion, economic losses surpass \$15.2 billion, and reconstruction needs amount to over \$16.3 billion.

The revival of livelihoods will involve the reconstruction of private housing and public infrastructure, including roads, bridges, schools, and hospitals. Dr Imran Khalid, Director Governance and Policy at WWF-Pakistan, emphasized the need for Pakistan to shift its energy reliance from coal to renewable sources. While Pakistan's contribution to global CO2 emissions is

less than 1%, Dr Imran stressed the importance of proactively reducing dependence on coal and transitioning to alternative energy sources, considering that many other countries are already making the shift.

Dr Sardar Sarfraz, chief meteorologist of the Meteorological Department, explained that westerly winds typically bring thunderstorms and snowfall during the winter season. However, in recent years, the pressure of these winds has extended beyond the usual timeframe. In May, several parts of the country experienced above-average rainfall, resulting from the prolonged presence of westerly winds. Dr Sarfraz stated that average temperatures are expected for the first few days of June, with no significant deviations.

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Economic woes of Balochistan: role of federal govt.

In the wake of strong stance adopted by the Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Abdul Quddus Bizenjo against what it has been termed the "non-cooperative" and "callous" mindset of the federal government, the Prime Minister Muhammad Shahbaz Sharif took righteous decision and action to resolve the otherwise burning financial issues of the province.

A 13-member high-powered parliamentary committee has been formed on special directives of the Prime Minister to look into the financial and other related matters Balochistan province and obviously the incumbent government led by the Chief Minister Bizenjo has been facing for quite sometimes.

The committee led by Chairman Senate, Muhammad Sadiq Sanjrani consists of the Federal Finance Minister, Muhammad Ishaq Dar, Federal Minister Planning and Development, Ahsan Iqbal, Law and Parliamentary Minister, Azam Tarar, as well as the Ministers of Petroleum, Science and Technology, Agha Hasan Baloch (also from Balochistan) and few others besides the central leader of the JUI, Senator Maulana Abdul Ghafoor Haideri, Senator Manzoor Ahmed Khan Kakar and MNA Nawabzada Khalid Khan Magsi.

As per the official reports, the committee would take up the financial issues of the province besides the arrears against the federal government and Pakistan Petroleum Limited (PPL) and gas mining lease agreement, and so other related matters. The committee would also prepare recommendations to resolve the issues being faced by the province almost within two weeks.

The Premier has also directed the Ministry of Petroleum for release of the dues of Balochistan payable against the PPL. Till ours going to the press, a summary has already been prepared by the concerned Ministry for the clearance of PPL dues to the province, which have exceeded from Rs. 45 billion, as per the official reports in the province.

The Balochistan's official circles claims that all this has been done on the firm stance taken by the Chief Minister over the province's issues i.e., first by boycotting the crucial meeting of National Economic Council (NEC) and then his announcement of the federal budget session of the National Assembly. However, in the meantime, a delegation from Balochistan led by Chairman Senate had an important interaction with the Premier ahead of the budget session, who was absolutely agreed to resolve all the issues facing the province.

And now when all these very positive developments have taken places, it is high time for the federal government to act favourably and instantly as committed by the Prime Minister and come to the rescue of Bizenjo-led government resolving the financial problems of the province with the award of its due constitutional share in the NFC Award; release of funds for the federal funded development projects included in its PSFP; payment of the arrears against PPL, inclusion of more public welfare and interest projects from Balochistan in the new federal PSDP, renewal of the lease agreements of mining with the concerned companies as per the policy (after 18th amendment) and release of special grant of Rs. 10 billion as announced by the PM for flood affected people and areas, on top of the list. Needless to mention here is that all these issues and demands of the province are based on reality and justified. One can hope that PM would keep strict vigil on compliance of his directives so as to remove the grievances of the Balochistan government and obviously of people of the province. Undoubtedly, it would also help the government to prepare a real public-friendly and development-oriented provincial budget for the next financial year.

In addition to his, the federal government should also include additional development schemes of the province in new federal PSDP besides ensuring execution of the previous and current projects of the road sector, most importantly the dual carriage Chaman-Quetta-Karachi highway.



Muhammad Amir Rana

Educated Baloch youth face an image problem in urban Pakistan, mainly in Punjab which controls the country's sociopolitical narratives. Security institutions, the intelligentsia, the media, even educationists and civil society construct the image of the Baloch youth in a negative way. It goes beyond the image of the angry Baloch. They build an image of a tribal man unfamiliar with urban 'manners', unschooled in religion and politically charged, one who does not believe in (state-crafted) nationalism. Such a projection harms the Baloch, including the educated ones, perhaps more than all the repression they have been facing.

The myths surrounding the Baloch must be dispelled. The Baloch youth's interaction with the rest of

the country has expanded enormously in recent years. A major contributory factor has been their admission in universities in Punjab either on the basis of their own merit or the quota the government has reserved for them. Sardars still love to send their children to British-age imperial schools and colleges. However, middle-class parents are also sending their offspring to Punjab to public and private educational institutions for better opportunities and to save them from both, the insurgents and surveillance by the security agencies.

Karachi is a second home for the Baloch, especially for those from the coastal areas. They have learned the art of living in a metropolis. Karachi may not have nurtured the stereotype, but it is not breaking the myths surrounding the Baloch either.

There is a perception that the Baloch have highly secular tendencies and are thus less religious, which makes them prone to absorbing Indian and Western propaganda. Perhaps this rings true for some sardars and power elites of the province, but the common Baloch is as practising a Muslim as an

inhabitant of Punjab. When state institutions use religion for ethnic profiling, it ultimately triggers a process of 'otherisation'. The Baloch are vulnerable to religious sensitivities and associated violent and non-violent extremist tendencies. The JUI-F and its factions have political influence not only in the Pakhtun-dominated areas but also in the western part of Balochistan.

While travelling from Karachi to Quetta, one can witness extensive graffiti by religious groups, including the TLP, and banned sectarian outfits. In a negative sense, Al Qaeda and other international militant organisations have many Baloch in their fold, along with other nationalities, but even this fact has failed to break the myth of Baloch 'secularity'. When the media highlights a suspected nexus between the Baloch insurgents and the TTP, it is also read as an unholy alliance between the pawns of external forces.

Undoubtedly, Baloch insurgent groups are inclined towards leftist ideology like many other separatist movements in South Asia and regions beyond. These movements have blended leftist ideology with nationalism, but

it doesn't mean they are anti-religion. Nationalist politics influences the separatist movement, but Baloch nationalist politics has remained under the influence of Muslim nationalist tendencies since its inception after World War I. In this regard, Shah Muhammad Mari, a leading Baloch historian, compiled an interesting account of that part of history. However, this is not about history, but the deeply entrenched myths in urban Pakistan about the Baloch. Countering these myths though, are sections of the progressive intelligentsia that often refer to the educated Baloch as the most well-read youth in Pakistan, and as proof, point to the record sale of books at literature festivals in Balochistan. The libraries in Balochistan are more crowded compared to those in other provinces. On a recent visit to different parts of Balochistan, including the small town of Nushki, one witnessed a large number of youth in libraries. However, most of the youth go to libraries to utilise the resources to study for professional and civil services examinations.

Reference books are expensive and not easily available in small towns. Internet connectivity is also very poor,

and the youth have no other option but to spend more time in libraries, where they do not face long spells of loadshedding as many libraries are located within the premises of the district administration. Educated Baloch youth are often attracted to the bureaucracy, security institutions, and other public services, which can empower them economically and socially — no different from youth in other parts of the country, who have similar dreams. However, the pursuit of knowledge and a better life becomes a crime when the Baloch raise critical questions.

Balochistan's educated youth interact with progressive intelligentsia more than the youth in the rest of urban Pakistan, and read the works of popular historians and intellectuals from Punjab. But even reading these writers in Urdu does not save them from the high surveillance of the security agencies. Progressive thinking helps them to think politically, but it also increases the risk of detachment from mainstream thinking.

The news of the disappearance of an educated youth causes more anger as this is perceived as an action carried out by the state insti-

tutions, which are viewed as opposed to mainstreaming Baloch youth. The security apparatus has no appetite for progressive ideas, social change, and freedom of expression, and they see the Baloch youth through a narrow ideological prism, designed around the two-nation theory and binary thinking. Stigmatising and labelling pushes Balochistan's marginalised youth deeper into an identity crisis. This is more dangerous than ignoring their legitimate demand for resource distribution and political empowerment. The identity crisis catalyses grievances. This is not hard to understand. When Maulana Hidayat-ur-Rehman of Haq Do Tehreek fails, with all his religious credentials and struggle within the constitutional domain, and when the establishment-supported chief minister boycotts the federal budget and the National Economic Council meeting, then what kind of signals are being sent to the ordinary people of Balochistan?

Economic, social and political disparities cannot nurture uniform thinking — this is equally true for both Gwadar and Lahore. — Courtesy Dawn

Stereotyping Baloch youth

Suspend your disbelief



Ghazi Salahuddin

It does seem to be so unreal, all that has happened in Pakistan — and the events are continuing to unfold. For many of us, it is a rollercoaster ride. Just look at the mix of images floating across the media this week and consider the messages they bear. And the point of reference, of course, is what happened on May 9. This, then, has been a very long month and what has transpired during this month is historical in its dimensions. Call it a tsunami, with some allusion to a promise made in a different context. We are watching a stronghold of a certain kind being washed away. Or would you define it as a 'tabdeeli'?

What I am trying to state is that the turn of events is so overwhelming

and so bewildering that its reality is hard to accept. With my views about the Frankensteinian rise of the cult of Imran Khan, there was always this concern about how this jinx would finally be exorcised and at what cost to a fragile society. But the present scenario could not have been imagined.

That is why I suggest that you suspend your disbelief — and try to remain calm. Many more shocks and twists in the plot may be in store for us. Some developments may be scary and grim, some may be ridiculous that would serve as a comic relief. This week has provided both examples, to which I will revert in a while. The budget announced on Friday by Finance Minister Ishaq Dar on Friday falls in between, to add to the national discomfiture.

About suspending one's disbelief, the thought struck me when I tried to make sense of the justification of steps that have been initiated by the powers that be to enforce a new scheme of things and to sort out the disorder that had exploded on May 9. Naturally, there are more questions than answers.

Actually, suspension of disbelief is avoidance of critical thinking and logic in understanding something that is unreal and does not seem possible in reality. This expression is relevant to works of fiction. Readers of novels, say, or the audience in a cinema hall or theatre would willingly ignore the unreality of various actions that constitute the experience of the characters of the story.

Now, the grim stuff that hit us this week was the detailed proclamation of the Pakistan Army, released by the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) on the occasion of the Formation Commanders' Conference. Since the conference, held at the GHQ, was attended by corps commanders, principal staff officers and all formation commanders and was presided over by COAS Gen Asim Munir, one message that I delivered is that the Pakistan Army is not a house divided.

But the crux of the

ISPR statement was something else. It asserted that the time has come to tighten the noose around the planners and masterminds of the violent attacks. It added that the desecrators and attackers of military installation would be brought to justice speedily under the Pakistan Army Act and the Official Secrets Act.

Political analysts and observers, including some who had supported Imran Khan and his party, were quick to suggest that the ISPR statement has sounded the death knell for the PTL. 'Alvida, alvida Imran Khan' is how a Tweet posted by a prominent commentator began. And the action on the ground has started in a comprehensive operation.

Against the backdrop of this determined operation, we have the rather whimsical spectacle of senior PTI leaders who had hurriedly defected from their party and their leader rushing into a new outfit that has been tailored by Jahangir Khan Tareen, an old associate of the PTI leader who left him at some

point. The name of this project, bereft of any imagination, is the Istehkam-e-Pakistan Party (IPP).

It may be possible to portray these antics of PTI defectors as a comic relief but the entire episode is also pitifully sad. Indeed, some very familiar faces pictured at the launch of the new party in Lahore on Thursday, essentially an occasion to celebrate, portrayed grief and tension. As if they were caught in a moment of bereavement. Here was another excuse to suspend your disbelief because what is happening to these characters is so unreal.

Evidently, the opportunity to laugh at it belongs to those who had opposed the politics of the PTL. A juxtaposition of video clips of just a few weeks or even days ago of some of these leaders with what they are saying and doing now would make you laugh — and cry. Nothing like this has ever happened in Pakistan's political history.

I am tempted to highlight the tragically comic portrayals of Fawad Chaudhry or Ali Zaidi or

Imran Ismail or Firdaus Ashiq Awan but they are, after all, only bit players in our national tragedy. I am also reminded of that famous Shakespearean quotation of all the world being a stage and "one man in his time plays many parts".

But what part has destiny scripted for the leader of the now almost shredded PTI? If you desire some distraction even in this tragic episode, you may follow the story of Donald Trump, the former president of the United States.

It was in August 2018 when comedian Trevor Noah had said that Imran Khan and Donald Trump are basically twins. He had listed uncanny similarities, down to three marriages. Long after that, there was the January 6, 2021 attack on Capitol Building in Washington DC by Trump's supporters — something that was duplicated by PTI supporters on May 9, 2023. And the big headline in The New York Times on this Friday was: "Trump faces multiple felonies in new indictment". -- Courtesy TheNews

Winners and losers



Muna Khan

Do not read this piece if you plan to watch the TV series Succession which aired its final episode last month and has been the subject of much talk among arts critics and social media users. A lot of that talk on Twitter centres on what will TV be like without Succession because everything about it was so good — the writing and performances were truly outstanding.

The premise of the show seems simple: three children compete to inherit their father, Logan Roy's media company Waystar Co.; meanwhile the father toys with each child, letting them think they will inherit the earth even though he thinks they're all incompetent. Pretty much everyone on the show is varying degrees of self-absorbed, entitled and/or ruthless.

Given my interest in the media, I felt the show proved a prescient warning to media companies trying to become the next big thing. Companies like Vice and BuzzFeed which launched big but weren't able to bring in the revenue and ultimately shut shop — as happened to a fictional company in Succession early on in the series. Even in fiction, digital outlets have it tough and come off as ill-thought-out be it business models, or content like the Roy children's idea for The Hundred which one Roy son described as "Substack meets Masterclass meets the Economist meets the New Yorker". Even the rich struggle to come up with original ideas but it doesn't stop them from trying to

be the next big thing. As I write this, two women in New York, who launched a physical newspaper for Gen Z in 2020 and shut it down in November last year, have launched a website called Byline. It's a strange hamster wheel on the media circuit.

World-over, the old guard struggles to keep up with the dizzying speed of advancements taking place in the communication industry. Coming out on top is all that matters. Succession gives us a small peek into what kind of lines media owners are willing to cross to stay relevant or to build and maintain relationships with business interests, politicians; to ensure they're setting agendas across the news industry. It also tells us how rich these media owners are. Audiences may know the partisanship of channels in Pakistan but there's little documented about their other business interests or the nature of their relations with political parties or non-state actors. What, for example, are some non-legacy media companies thinking as elections approach. Who will deliver fair and balanced reporting at a time of severe restrictions? What is the cost of all this to democratic process?

I bring up elections because of that episode in Succession in which the Roy sons make a call during presidential elections which has dangerous consequences. That the brothers know that their call favouring a demagogue candidate will have devastating impact on civil liberties is a reminder of what people are willing to do for power. That it happens in the echelons of media business not interested in basic principles of journalism is depressing. And frightening.

I can only hope news companies in the US, at least, have learned from the Fox vs Dominion case

— wherein Fox aired claims about a 'stolen' election — and how Murdoch paid \$787m to settle. There are consequences to airing lies. Let that be a reminder to friends posing as journalists in Pakistan choosing profit over the public's right to information.

Succession is also about what the Roy children are willing to do to be chosen by their father to steer the company. They are not the usual dysfunctional siblings one comes across on TV; they are competitors vying for their father's affection. While there's no violence, the show is brutal. The father's treatment of his children, and subordinates, is simply ruthless. Succession as a concept seems to have little to do with competence or business foresight but how subservient a person is willing to be.

Many critics have called Succession a satire on the media. I think it's shown how broken the media is, how no one really wins. Ultimately the announcement of the successor is not a triumphant moment because the win is not earned, maybe not even deserved — if we value deserving from an ethical viewpoint. Did the victor prove competence or was their hard work about playing to the gallery? Did the children play fair in their dealings with each other? According to Jon Allsop in the Columbia Journalism Review, "fundamentally the characters are trying to use money and power to fill voids within themselves — consequences for the masses be damned".

Succession shows us how the powerful do not fear the impact of their decisions in the newsroom, and care only for their interests, their profit. This should worry us all, in the real world. -- Courtesy Dawn

Menace of tuitions



Neda Mulji

Fourteen-year-old Faiz leaves school at a quarter to two. There is just enough time for him to have lunch at home and be out again. His real day has just begun. Many children like him attend school, followed by a round of tuitions that sometimes takes them up to their bedtime. Students have accepted it. Parents are caught in the vicious cycle of fear that their child will not manage the desired grades unless they invest in tutoring. Teachers know that the responsibility for the students' results rests on someone else's shoulders. The teacher-student-parent team that should work together to support students has come apart at the seams, given the growing power of tutors who now function as a parallel school market.

The demand for the more popular tutors rises with the success of their students, be it in high-stakes exams or entry into a competitive private school. One wonders what it is about teaching at schools that makes external tutoring necessary. Are we not giving students enough individual attention in class? Are the teachers no longer skilled enough to support children of varying ability? Are teachers no longer held responsible for delivering results?

Regardless of the reasons, there is much that schools can do to combat the menace of the 'tuition culture'. Schools can successfully create time to give extra help to students who need it. Often, this may

mean overtime pay for teachers who stay back after school and run a booster programme or use library hours to teach students. Most students can bounce back with a little help and don't need ongoing tutoring. Those that do, may have slipped through the cracks and developed learning gaps in concepts along the way. Learning gaps usually occur when a struggling student doesn't get timely help and attention. One reason for this may be the lack of teaching assistants; often a single teacher is expected to manage a large number of students. Classrooms are not designed to facilitate pair or group work, which is essential for collaborative learning. Digital learning is not incorporated in our teaching methods, which continue to rely on the expertise of a single teacher.

Historically, in our classrooms, students get very little opportunity to do any hands-on activities that allow learning through discovery. Most of their learning comprises listening to the teacher, note-taking, and answers copied from the board. In doing so, we skip the essential steps of involving students in a proactive learning experience, which is a gap that private tutors manage to fill. Not only do students get to sit in small groups and have their tutors' individual attention, but they also talk, question, practise and correct their work together with their peers, test their understanding and then complete the written work. They also tap into internet links with quick quizzes and interactive learning opportunities.

The entire experience reinforces their learning and improves their confidence in their ability to tackle the subject demands. The same students who are left frustrated in class spring into action with tutors. There is lots going on at tuitions that is working

well enough to pay its dividends. School managers may benefit from replicating some of those factors from the tuition model. Most students find themselves comfortable asking their tutors repetitive questions — no question is too silly to be answered. If schools could manage to provide a comfortable, non-judgemental environment where every student is consistently supported with follow-up, perhaps we would see different results.

In most classes, teachers follow a strict schedule that is quite like a moving tide that waits for no one. Those that learn to ride the tide are the lucky few. If we were to focus more on quality of content taught rather than the quantity, and if the students were involved in learning as an experience and not a chore, perhaps external tutoring would not be required at all.

In most jobs there are targets and key performance indicators; at universities students get to evaluate their teachers. Career progression, pay raises and bonuses are tied to these evaluations and research publications. Unfortunately, for most schoolteachers little training and few research targets exist. Not much is done to follow up on the quality of teaching and associated skills. Many schools are hesitant to invest in teacher training due to the high turnover. Not surprisingly, schools that have done well are those that manage to train, retain and reward teachers for their hard work.

Revisiting frameworks of reward and recognition, improving appraisal methods and raising performance expectations may be part of the solution. If teachers rise to the challenge, it may well reduce the unnecessary workload on students. -- Courtesy Dawn

CM Punjab reviews progress on Darbar Bibi Pak Daman project

Independent Report
LAHORE: Caretaker Chief Minister Punjab Mohsin Naqvi presided over a meeting at his office in which progress on the construction and extension of Darbar Bibi Pak Daman, along with its renovation project, was reviewed.

He directed the authorities concerned that the colour of religious sanctity and esteem should be kept prominent in the new design of the building. He ordered for completing the construction, extension and renovation project before the month of Muharram-ul-Haram.

It was informed during the briefing that the steel structure of the central dome of the Darbar Bibi Pak Daman had been completed. A central dome and three small domes in the Darbar would bestow a religious and historical sanctity to the building. Wood and marble work was going on speedily.

Renowned architect Nayyar Ali Dada presented a model of the project to the caretaker chief minister.

Communication and Works secretary apprised the CM about progress on the project.

Meanwhile, Caretaker Chief Minister Punjab Mohsin Naqvi visited the Punjab Agriculture, Food and Drug Authority project to review ongoing construction works.

He inspected construction work of auditorium, sample centres, labs, meeting room, other sections and expressed satisfaction over the pace of work. While directing the authorities concerned to continue construction work at the same speed, he said that the project of public importance should be made functional at the earliest.



PESHAWAR: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Governor Haji Ghulam Ali, Advisor to CM for Education Salam Khattak and Chief Secretary KP Nadeem Aslam Chaudhary distributing cash prizes and certificates amongst the students and teachers.

Kundi expresses grief over loss of lives during rains in KP

DERA ISMAIL KHAN (APP): State Minister for Poverty Alleviation and Social Safety Faisal Karim Kundi on Sunday expressed his grief and sorrow over the loss of lives and property during the rain-related incidents in different areas of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

In a statement, the state minister said his heart was saddened by the loss of precious human lives due to rains in many areas of the province. He also consoled with the bereaved families and sympathized with the affected people.

He prayed to the Almighty for the elevation of ranks of the deceased in paradise and for the early recovery of those who got injured in the rainstorms.

He said that the federal government and

related institutions were in contact with the provincial government and the local administrations to help the victims.

He said that steps would be taken to compensate the farmers for the damages caused to their crops and orchards.

Faisal Kundi, who is also the Central Information Secretary of Pakistan People's Party (PPP), directed the local leadership of his party to play their role in helping the victims.

He said that PPP equally grieved over the loss of lives due to the rainstorms.

Kundi said all possible help would be provided to the injured. He appealed to the party workers to donate blood for the injured people.



HYDERABAD: Activists of Jamat-e-Islami (JI) are holding protest demonstration against stolen of party mandate in mayoral elections in Karachi, in Hyderabad.

IGP KP inaugurates newly constructed modern CTD Regional HQ Dera

PESHAWAR (APP): Inspector General of Police (IGP) Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Akhtar Hayat Khan Gandapur Sunday inaugurated the newly constructed modern Regional Headquarters CTD Dera Ismail Khan building.

During the inauguration ceremony Additional IGC TD Shaikat Abbas, Regional Police Officer Dera Abdul Ghafoor Afridi, District Police Officer Dera Abdul Rauf Babar Qaisrani, SPCTD Region-I Fazal Wahid, SPCTD-II Izzar Shah

and CTD officers and district police officials were also present.

Regional Police Officer Dera Abdul Ghafoor Afridi gave a detailed briefing to Inspector General of Police KP Akhtar Hayat Khan Gandapur about the CTD building.

During this, IGP Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Akhtar Hayat Khan Gandapur reviewed the internal and external security of the police station CTD and while visiting different parts of the Police Station building, the CCTV cameras there.



GILGIT: Players from NLI (B) and GBPWD teams in action during the Jashn-e-Baharan freestyle Polo Tournament at Aga Khan Shahi Pologround.

Caretaker CM seeks report on student molestation

LAHORE (APP): Caretaker Chief Minister Punjab Mohsin Naqvi has taken notice of an alleged kidnapping and molestation incident involving a girl student in Hafizabad and sought a report from the Inspector General of Police (IGP).

According to the CM house sources, the caretaker CM directed that the affected girl should be provided justice and the absconding accused should be brought to book at the earliest. He said the culprit deserved strict punishment under the law. Meanwhile, the police arrested three accused including the man accused and raids were being conducted to arrest other accused.

Italian CG, Ombudsman call on Sindh CM

KARACHI (APP): Italian Consul General Danilo Giurdanella and Ombudsman of Lazio, Italy Marino Fardelli called on Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah at the CM House here on Sunday.

Marino Fardelli, who is also President of the National Coordination of Italian Civic Ombudsmen is visiting Karachi on the special invitation of the Provincial Ombudsman Sindh Ajaz Ali Khan.

The chief minister welcomed the distinguished guests and appreciated the role of the Office of Ombudsman in grievance redressal for the public. The Italian Ombudsman suggested signing MoU with the Sindh Ombudsman for cooperation between the two Ombudsmen offices, which the chief minister approved. The CM directed the provincial ombudsman to complete the required formalities for signing the MOU.

Rs 11.4m given for treatment of 22 cops

LAHORE (APP): The police welfare branch has released more than Rs 11.4 million for treatment of 22 police employees suffering from dangerous diseases.

A spokesperson said on Sunday a meeting of the Punjab Police Medical Financial Assistance was held on June 9, in which Constable Amir Shehzad was given Rs 1 million for liver treatment, driver Constable Mukhtar Ahmed was given Rs 1 million for kidney transplant of his son, traffic Warden Syed Munir Afzal was given Rs 1 million for his wife's cancer treatment.

Likewise, Inspector Muhammad Afzal's widow was given Rs 1 million for cancer treatment.



LAHORE: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif being briefed about Sabzazzar Sports Complex.

'Biparjoy' hits coast CM urges people not to come out of their homes unnecessarily

KARACHI (APP): Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah on Sunday said that cyclonic storm, 'Biparjoy' is likely to hit the cities and towns of the coastal belt between June 13 to 17, which may cause heavy rains in Badin, Sujawal, Umkot, Tharparkar, and Karachi.

He urged the people not to come out of their homes unnecessarily if the storm hits the coastal belts.

While quoting Pakistan Met Office warning, he said that the very severe cyclonic storm (VSCS) 'BIPARJOY' over east-central Arabian Sea has further intensified into an extremely severe cyclonic storm (ESCS), moved Northward during the past 12 hours, and now

lies near at about 760 km south of Karachi, 740km south of Thatta and 840km southeast of Ormara.

He said that under the existing upper-level steering winds, the 'BIPARJOY' was most likely to track further Northward until June 14 morning, then recurve Northeastward and cross between Keti Bander and Indian Gujarat coast on June 15 afternoon. He said that thunderstorm rain with few heavy falls likely in Karachi, Hyderabad, Tando Muhammad Khan, Tando Allahyar, Mirpurkhas districts from June 13, 14 and 16.

Murad Shah said that high-intensity winds may cause damage to loose and vulnerable structures

(Kutch Houses).

The Storm surge is expected at Keti Bander. The Arabian Sea conditions may get very rough high accompanied by high tides along the coast, therefore fishermen have been advised not to venture into the open sea. The chief minister said that Thatta, Sujawal, and Badin had more danger. He had sent Commissioner Hyderabad to evacuate people, if necessary. He further said that the Karachi Commissioner had also been directed to secure billboards. He said that he was in touch with Corps Commander Karachi, DG Rangers, and GOC Hyderabad to develop close coordination to avoid any untoward incident.

14 dead, 1,284 injured in Punjab road accidents

LAHORE (APP): At least 14 people were killed and 1,284 others were injured in 1,220 road traffic crashes (RTCs) in Punjab during the last 24 hours.

As many as 673 people with serious injuries were shifted to different hospitals, while 611 others with minor injuries were treated at the incident site by the rescue medical teams. The data analysis showed that 655

drivers, 39 underage drivers, 134 pedestrians, and 509 passengers were among the victims of road traffic crashes. The statistics show that 285 RTCs were reported in Lahore, which affected 296 persons, placing the provincial capital at top of the list, followed by 83 in Faisalabad with 81 victims, and at third Multan with 71 accidents and 82 victims.



HYDERABAD: Administrator of HMC Mohammad Farooq Khan showering water on the plant after planting during plantation campaign organized by Caritas Pakistan at nursery park.

Intensity of 'Biparjoy' 'cyclone increases, alert issue on Karachi port

KARACHI (Online): Alerts has been issued on Karachi port in view of heading 'Biparjoy' cyclone in Arabian Sea. Article-144 imposed on Karachi coast.

A c c o r d i n g Meteorology department 8 to 10ft high waves can occur on Karachi coast due to cyclone. fishermen were stopped to go into the sea.

Chief Meteorologist Sarfraz told the cyclone is 770km away from south coast of Karachi and 750km away from south of Thatta. Cyclone 'Biparjoy' is at the distance of 860km

from east of Ormara.

He further said biparjoy has become 'very severe storm' and becoming more intense.

This cyclone system is heading toward north, speed of air in the centre of this system is 140 to 160km/hr. Waves of 30 to 40 meters are rising in centre and sides of this system.

On the other side people are present on the coast despite ban and imposition of article-144. fishermen are also present in sea on their boats.

ADC chairs meeting to review arrangement for facing Cyclone

BADIN (APP): Additional Deputy Commissioner-I Najeeb-ur-Rehman Jamali on Sunday presided over a meeting to review precautionary measures to cope with Cyclone and torrential rain as predicted by the meteorological department. Lt.Col (ret) Nouman Khalil, Major Ahsan, ADC-II Waqar Ahmed Kalwar, DHO Dr. Sher Muhammad Noohriyo, DEO Secondary Allah Dino Malah, Agricultural Director Agriculture Intiaz Ali Bhutto, District Information officer Sarfraz

Samon and officers of other relevant departments were also present in the meeting.

ADC said that saving the lives of people was our top priority, however, steps should be taken for livestock and other valuables and no laxity would be tolerated in this regard. He said that the Meteorological department has predicted Cyclone as well as torrential rain which could cause urban flooding.

He urged Municipal and civic agencies to carry out cleanliness drives to resist urban flooding by using heavy machinery.

Nawaz to return home before polls: Muqam

PESHAWAR (APP): Advisor to the Prime Minister on Political & Public Affairs, National Heritage and Provincial President PML-N Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Engineer Amir Muqam on Sunday said that general elections would be held in October and the party supremo Nawaz Sharif will return home before it.

He was talking to journalists here at the headquarters of Peshawar Electric Supply Company (PESCO) on Sunday wherein he presided over a high-level meeting regarding the restoration of the power supply system on an emergency basis after the destruction of the power transmission system due to heavy rains in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

He was given a detailed briefing by the management of both PESCO and Tribal Electric Supply Company (TESCO) regarding losses inflicted on the power transmission system in the province.

The PM's aide said

that the people have now acknowledged that the panacea for all problems and Imran Khan lying with only Nawaz Sharif and PML-N. Amir Muqam said that rehabilitation work on the restoration of rain affected power supply system was in full swing and all staff from Chief Executive Officers (CEOs) to Lineman level of both power distribution companies is in the field.

He said that out of the total 364 damaged feeders, 300 have been rehabilitated, while rehabilitation work on two damaged grid stations of the TESCO was continued.

He told the media that Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif himself is monitoring the rehabilitation operation. He said that federal government has announced a compensation package of Rs.1 million for heirs of dead persons in rainstorm while critically and minor injured will get Rs. 3,00,000/- and Rs.50,000/- respectively.



LAHORE: Federal Minister Mian Javed Latif addressing a Press conference.

Info Minister says: Govt to reach every citizen affected by recent rain-storm

PESHAWAR (APP): The provincial government will reach every citizen affected by the recent storm and rains.

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Caretaker Minister for Information, Auqaf, Hajj, Religious and Minority Affairs Barrister Feroze Jamal Shah Kakakhel said, in a statement, issued here on Sunday.

Financial assistance is being given to the families of the deceased and the survey of damages caused by wind and rains has started, Caretaker Minister for Information and Auqaf added.

Barrister Feroze Jamal said that the caretaker provincial government has taken immediate and pragmatic steps to help the citizens in the affected districts. On the direction of caretaker Chief Minister Muhammad Azam Khan, rescue and relief activities have been started immediately and funds

have already been released. The provincial government will reach out to every citizen affected by the recent wind and rain.

The caretaker provincial minister said that the provincial government has immediately released Rs. 40 million for the affected districts so that the rescue and relief activities would continue there as quickly as possible.

Similarly, Chief Secretary Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Nadeem Aslam Chaudhry and Caretaker Provincial Ministers along with Deputy Speaker National Assembly Zahid Durrani also visited the affected areas and reviewed the relief activities and also visited the injured in the hospitals.

Barrister Feroze Jamal said that the rescue operation has been completed in the affected districts.



LAHORE: Caretaker Chief Minister Punjab Mohsin Naqvi inspecting the under construction work during his visit to Punjab Agriculture, Food and Drug Authority Project.

Rescue 1122 recovers two bodies from river

DERA ISMAIL KHAN (APP): The district emergency service Rescue 1122 on Sunday recovered the bodies of two men who drowned in the Indus River the other day.

According to Rescue 1122 media coordination Aizaz Mahmood, both namely Nasir Shehzad and Habib belonged to the Swabi district were drowned in the Indus River while swimming in it near Mufti-Mahmood Eye Hospital on Saturday.

After receiving information about the incident, Rescue 1122 immediately started operations to search for the drowned persons despite bad weather conditions in the area.

CS KP inquires after health of injured in rain related incidents

PESHAWAR (APP): Chief Secretary Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Nadeem Aslam Chaudhry along with Deputy Speaker National Assembly Zahid Durrani Sunday visited District Headquarter Hospital Bannu and inquired after health of injured due to overnight heavy rain, wind and storm that killed 15 persons and more than 100 injured in the district.

In district Lakki Marwat, five persons were killed including children and women while 42 others reported as injured, in district Karak four persons were killed while a child was killed in Dera

Ismail Khan and two women were injured as result of strong wind, heavy rain and storm.

Chief Secretary KP Nadeem Aslam Chaudhry directed District Headquarters Hospital officials to take good care of the injured and ensured them all facilities. Both CS KP and Deputy Speaker Zahid Durrani met with the injured persons admitted in the hospital.

Commissioner Bannu, Deputy Commissioner, DIG and other concerned officials were also present.

In his media talks, Chief Secretary Nadeem Aslam Chaudhry said that they stand by the families.

Pak-American businessman to head US Small Business Admin.

Monitoring Desk
NEW YORK: President Joe Biden's administration has installed Dilwar Syed, a notable Pakistani-American businessman, in the office of deputy administrator for the US Small Business Administration (SBA), despite strong opposition from Republicans.

Syed was named for this position by President Biden in January and was confirmed by a 54-42 Senate vote on Thursday. Five Republicans also voted to confirm him. Currently, he is the highest-ranking Muslim official in the US government.

The development was announced by the chair of the Senate Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship, Ben Cardin, according to the Senate's website.

Commenting on Syed's prowess for the position, Cardin issued the following statement:

"Small businesses across the country will benefit from Mr. Syed's confirmation. The vacancy caused harm to small business owners throughout our nation who depend on SBA to be fully staffed in order to access capital, contracting opportunities, and entrepreneurial development training."

He added that throughout the confirmation process, Syed displayed remarkable patience and perseverance despite unwarranted delays, baseless accusations, and unrelated controversies.

"I am confident that America's small businesses and the communities they support will benefit from him in this role. We look forward to working with Deputy Administrator Syed to build on the small business boom seen under the Biden-Harris Administration," he added.

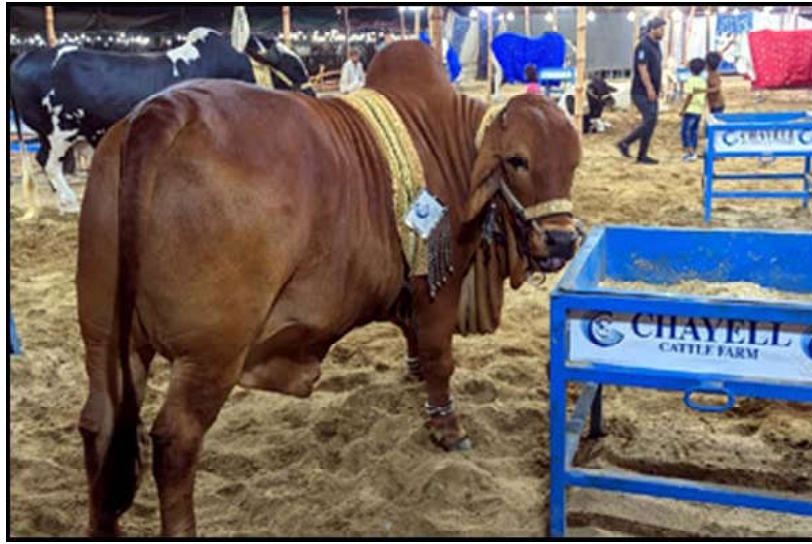
American Senator Chuck Schumer, taking to

Twitter, also lauded Syed's appointment for the position.

"There's no better person to serve the interests of small business than someone who was a successful business owner himself," he tweeted, highlighting that Syed is the "highest-ranking Muslim-American official in the executive branch."

Syed, himself also thanked Biden for showing confidence in him.

"Deeply honored by the call to serve America's small businesses," he wrote in his tweet. Syed's nomination garnered widespread support from the small business community, as evidenced by endorsements from prominent organisations including the US Chamber of Commerce, US Black Chambers, National Asian/Pacific



KARACHI: Sacrificial animals wait for their buyers at a makeshift sacrificial animals market established for the upcoming festival Eid-ul-Azha, at Northern Bypass road in Karachi.

Chances of huge economic development in Punjab: Dy chief US embassy

FAISALABAD (Online): Deputy Chief of US embassy Andrew Schofer said huge chances of economic development are present in Punjab province.

He said program started with economic and technical support of US will ease Pakistani youth relation with international community. Expertise in English language will not only improves their entrepreneurial skills but also helpful to get international level job.

Deputy chief of US mission in Pakistan expressed these views during his address to over 400 students' career expo who completed their English course in University of Education Faisalabad campus.

He along with US counselor general William K. Makeneole, Faisalabad chamber of commerce and industry president Dr. Khurram and vice chancellor of University of Education Faisalabad cut the inauguration ribbon of the expo.

Deputy chief appreciated those who completed their 'English works' program in cooperation of University of Education Faisalabad

and said 400 professionals are participating in this career expo who will play their role in comprehensive development of this country.

Over 30,000 Pakistani student has benefited under this program in 7 big cities, said American Counselor General William K. Makeneole.

He said this have positive impact on Pakistan economy.

President Chamber of commerce Khurram Tariq thanked US for including these youngsters into development stream and said this youth is our asset, to increase their employability public affair department of US consulate initiated 'English works' program which is an excellent example of cooperation between both countries.

He said getting expertise in IT along with English language, these young people can immediately become part of international community and Faisalabad Chamber of Commerce will play its full part in this.

Vice Chancellor Dr. Taltat Naseer Pasha along with other guests also observed the stalls established by in this expo.

Mukesh says: Over Rs12514.1m tax collected

KARACHI (APP): Sindh Minister for Excise, Taxation and Narcotics Control Mukesh Kumar Chawla while releasing the details of tax collection in the current fiscal year, has said that in the current fiscal year from July 2022 to May 2023 a total of Rs12514.159 million in tax has been collected.

According to the details, Rs 9,476.699 million in terms of motor vehicle tax, Rs 66,690.691 million in the form of infrastructure cess, Rs674.931 million in the form of professional tax and Rs3.417 million in the form of cotton fee while the remaining amount was received in the form of other taxes.

The Provincial Minister expressing his satisfaction over the overall situation of tax collection said that the Excise department had achieved more than 90 per cent tax targets and hopefully they would get over 100 per cent tax targets by June 30.

He advised tax defaulters to take advantage of the online tax filing facility.

Ishaq Dar says govt announces massive relief for salaried class

ISLAMABAD (INP): Finance Minister Ishaq Dar Sunday said 35 per cent increase in the ad-hoc relief allowance for federal government employees in grades 1-16 was a massive relief given for the salaried class during budget 2023-24.

Similarly, employees in grades 17-22 will receive a 30 per cent raise in their ad-hoc relief allowance, said Dar while talking to a private news channel, adding the government has made extensive efforts to provide maximum relief to the masses.

To a question he criticized the previous government of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) for formulating weak policies. He stated that these policies had caused significant difficulties for

the masses in their daily lives, leading to financial constraints for the country.

Minister Dar emphasized that the coalition government of Pakistan Muslim League-N (PML-N) was taking all necessary measures to renegotiate with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) on more favorable terms and conditions. He expressed hope that the IMF would be satisfied with Pakistan's progress, as the country has fulfilled the necessary requirements.

Furthermore, He expressed optimism that Pakistan would achieve the growth rate set by the government, indicating a positive outlook for the nation's economic development in the coming year.



MULTAN: Women are busy sorting good quality onions at the vegetable Market.

Secy Agri says: Steps being taken to improve performance of govt agri farms

MULTAN (INP): Secretary Agriculture South Punjab Saqib Ali Ateel on Sunday said several practical measures were being taken to improve the performance of government agricultural farms and also sought suggestions from the officers concerned for the implementation of these practical measures for improvement.

While addressing a gathering of local farmers at Government Experimental Farm, Bumaywala, Mian Channu of Khanewal here.

He said that the latest technology would be used in field trials of gardens and

crops to meet international standards. He said that required funds and resources would also be provided for obtaining the latest technology and using it.

On this occasion, he instructed the concerned officers to make regular visits to the field trials on the farms to provide guidance on scientifically based care at different stages of the orchards and crops. He said that avocado is very a valuable and fruitful plant whose trials should be planted in this area and in case of success, a nursery should be prepared to provide it to the farmers.

Not economy, political gains, fame focus of budget: Shahid Rasheed

ISLAMABAD (INP): Former President of Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) Dr. Shahid Rasheed Butt said on Sunday that instead of focusing on ailing economy, political gains and fame remained the key focus of the government in the federal budget.

In a statement issued here, he stated that the populist budget will worsen the economy instead of improving it, and the masses will pay the price for it.

Shahid Rasheed Butt

said that not taxing landlords and shopkeepers is unfortunate, and speaks about the priorities of the rulers.

Out of 2.2 million shopkeepers, only thirty thousand pay taxes, but they are not included in the tax net to get votes in the upcoming elections, he added. The business leader further stated that the budget will hit production, exports, and the government's revenue while leading to further degradation of the shattered economy.



RAWALPINDI: Workers busy producing khas from wood pieces with the help of machine to be used in making of room cooler at his workplace.

NEPRA holds meeting to discuss, advance power development initiative in AJK

ISLAMABAD (APP): The National Electric Power Regulatory Authority (NEPRA) convened a meeting to discuss and advance the power development initiatives in Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK).

The meeting which chaired by Mathar Niaz Rana (nsc), Member (Tariff & Finance) NEPRA, was attended by Secretary Power AJK and CEO of K-Electric and his team, said a press release issued.

The primary focus of the meeting was to address key challenges and explore opportunities for facilitating power development initiatives in AJK.

In his opening remarks, Mathar Niaz Rana shed light on the crucial aspects of the Competitive Trading Bilateral Contract Market (CTBCM) and its

implications for the power sector. A comprehensive discussion ensued during the meeting, highlighting the immense hydro power potential in AJK, estimated at a known potential of staggering 23,000 MW and an estimation of about 46,000 MW.

The participants examined strategies to streamline the ongoing and upcoming projects that face obstacles from power purchasers, ensuring their smooth resolution.

K-Electric expressed gratitude to Mr. Mathar Niaz Rana for his support in this matter, affirming KE's commitment to procure cheap hydro power from AJK to bring down the tariff of K-Electric for its consumers, this will also reduce the subsidies being provided by the Government of Pakistan to K-Electric.

CPEC hydropower project achieves hoisting of last rotor in Pakistan

BEIJING (APP): The Suki Kinari Hydropower project in northwest Pakistan achieved the hoisting of a core component on Saturday, as a 413-ton rotor, crucial to turning water into electricity, was smoothly installed on the last of four generating units.

The successful hoisting of the last rotor will help advance the construction progress of the power station under the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), located in the Mansehra district of the South Asian country's Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province. Noting the hoisting of the last rotor as a key milestone of the 884-megawatt hydropower

project, Yu Zhiliang, assistant general manager of the Suki Kinari Hydropower project of the Overseas Investment Company of China Gezhouba Group, which invests in and implements the project, said that it marks the installation of the unit body of the hydropower station is coming to an end, China's state run Xinhua reported.

It is also a solid step for the waterless commissioning of four generating units in the coming six months, said Yu. The hydropower project started construction in January 2017. Once getting functional, the CPEC project will annually generate some 3.21 billion.

Uniform fare chart issued for non-AC transport services

FAISALABAD (APP): Secretary Regional Transport Authority (RTA) Abdul Jabbar has issued uniform fare chart for non-airconditioned transport services in Faisalabad. Speaking in a meeting of transporters on Sunday, Assistant Administrator General Bus Stand (GBS) Rana Habibullah said the RTA secretary released uniform fare chart for non-AC Wage and Bus Services and the fare chart would be implemented in letter and spirit. He said that overloading and overcharging was an offence and it would not be tolerated at any cost. He said that a special team would start checking of fares in buses and wagons from Monday and whosoever was found involved in overcharging would be handed down heavy fine in addition to impounding of his vehicle.

Sale of sacrificial animals starts in Rawalpindi

RAWALPINDI (APP): The sacrificial animals have started arriving in Rawalpindi division from far-flung areas of the country for sale ahead of Eidul Azha.

These animals can be seen in Raja Bazaar, Bara Market, Fawara Chowk, Dengi Khoi, Waris Khan, Naz Cinema, College Road, Benazir Bhutto Road, Bakra Mandi, Lal Kurti, Dheri Hassanabad and Saddar Bazaar.

A visit to different sale points revealed that the animal prices are quite high and beyond the reach of the common man.

Majority of the sellers of sacrificial animals are demanding very high prices as there is no price regulatory mechanism introduced by the city.

PBF lauds agriculture, IT initiatives in federal Budget 2023-24

LAHORE (APP): The Pakistan Business Forum (PBF) has appreciated the initiatives announced in the federal budget for promotion of agriculture and IT sectors.

Sharing the Forum's viewpoint on federal budget with media here Sunday, PBF Secretary Information and Spokesperson Zainab Jatoi said the economy was already under pressure due to last year's floods and the war between Ukraine and Russia. However, the

government had taken a lot of measures in the budget which would help the IT, SME, and agriculture sectors grow. In this financial plan, she mentioned that farming sector had been allotted Rs 5 billion for arrangement of sponsored advances to the agri business, while Rs 6 billion earmarked for the concession on imported urea, adding that charges and obligations on import of value seeds had been annulled. The PBF was appreciative of these efforts.

People from various segments of society welcomes budget

SARGODHA (APP): People from all segments of society including economists, professor, students, journalists and citizen have welcomed the federal government budget for fiscal year 2023-24, and termed it balanced and pro-people. They expressed their hope that it would make a positive impact on living standards of masses.

Assistant Professor at University of Sargodha Shahid Malik appreciated the government for allocating huge amount in developmental projects and energy sector.

BRI becomes an important engine of development in African continent

ISLAMABAD (INP): The Built and Road Initiative (BRI) has entered into its tenth year and has become an important engine of development and regional connectivity around the world especially in African continent.

More than 150 countries have joined the BRI which is good omen for immense socio-economic integration, infrastructure development and regional connectivity, according to a report carried by Gwadar Pro on Sunday.

It seems that two different forces are competing in today's African continent. China represents spirits of cooperation, coordination and collaboration whereas, the West stands for

conflict, contradiction and conspiracy.

According to Chinese official figures, China has been Africa's largest trading partner for 13 consecutive years since 2009, and the trade volume between China and Africa exceeded \$260 billion in 2022.

It seems that the BRI has positive economic implications for developing countries of the African Continent. Moreover, a total of 52 African countries and the African Union Commission have signed BRI cooperation documents with China.

Despite false, fake and fictional western propaganda, BRI is now carrying out numerous mega projects of infrastructure development, railways,

energy, industrialization and ICT in various countries of Africa.

Unfortunately, even today, colonialism is still deeply rooted in Western mentality regarding Africa, with their eyes fixated on the Continent's natural resources and raw material. The growth of African countries and the livelihood of African people have never been on the priority list of the hypocritical western powers.

Now there is an all-around competition between the Chinese concept of community with shared future, global development initiative, global security initiative and last but not least global civilizational initiative and the US and EU's perpetual colonialization. Chinese

constant and continued economic generosity and the western chronic genocides and discrimination towards African Blacks.

China and African countries have been witnessing close trust cooperation, political consultation and economic coordination during last ten years. The end of last month, Special Envoy of Chinese President Xi Jinping and Vice Chairman of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress Peng Qinghua attended Nigerian President Bola Tinubu's inauguration ceremony which vividly reflected true spirits of trust, harmony and respect between two sides.

Even respective political leaders and foreign ministers from a number of

African countries, including the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Eritrea, Ethiopia and Sierra Leone visited Beijing which has successfully translated political cooperation into sustainable cooperation in the diverse economic sectors. Keeping in view, emerging socio-economic, geopolitical and geostrategic rapidly changing trends, China and Africa should jointly work for solidarity and cooperation. Chinese construction giant, China Railway Construction Corp (CRCC) has built highways stretching across Algeria.

They have also built residential zones in various regional countries enabling the local resident's affordable and qualitative housing facilities.



RAWALPINDI: People are selecting and purchasing useful things during Sunday Bazaar at Committee Chowk.

European leaders offer more aid to Tunisia amid efforts to curb migration

Monitoring Desk
TUNIS: European leaders visiting Tunisia held out the promise of more than 1 billion euros in financial aid as well as investments in undersea data cables and renewable energy Sunday in an effort to restore stability to the North African country — and to stem migration from its shores to Europe.

Tunisia's increasingly autocratic president hosted the leaders of Italy, the Netherlands and the European Commission for talks aimed at smoothing the way for an international financial bailout of the increasingly troubled country. Support from Tunisian President Kais Saied is crucial to any European Union deal to curb migration.

On the eve of the talks, Saied made an unannounced visit to a migrant camp in the coastal city of Sfax, a central jumping-off point for boat journeys crossing the Mediterranean to Italy.

Saied spoke with families living in the camp, and pleaded for international aid for Africans who converge on Tunisia as a transit point to reach Europe.

His caring words, and sympathetic images posted on the president's Facebook page, contrasted sharply with Saied's stance earlier this year, when he stoked racist abuse of Black African migrants in Tunisia with a speech railing against a perceived plot to erase his country's Arab identity. The president and Tunisian Prime Minister Najla Bouden met Sunday with Italian Premier Giorgia Meloni, Dutch Prime Minister Mark Rutte and European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen.

After the talks, von der Leyen announced a five-point program to support Tunisia, including up to 1.05 billion euros (\$1.1 billion) in aid for Tunisia's indebted budget. The plan

will be discussed with all 27 EU countries at their next summit in late June, she said.

In addition to the budgetary aid, the EU is discussing investment in high-speed broadband and other digital infrastructure for Tunisia, and 300 million euros in hydrogen and other renewable energy projects, von der Leyen said.

The plan also includes 100 million euros for Tunisian authorities to carry out search-and-rescue operations for migrants and anti-smuggling operations, she said. Amid criticism from migrant advocacy groups about forced repatriations, von der Leyen and Rutte insisted the program would respect human rights.

The aim is to "kill that cynical business model of the boat smuggler. Migration is at this moment one of the most important issues facing all of us," Rutte said.



Dutch Prime Minister Mark Rutte, European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen, Tunisian President Kais Saied, and Italian Premier Giorgia Meloni meet in Tunis.

Iran's Khamenei urges cooperation with UN nuclear watchdog

Monitoring Desk
TEHRAN: Iran's supreme leader on Sunday urged continued cooperation with the UN nuclear watchdog, while warning against succumbing to "bullying" based on "unfounded claims".

"Cooperation with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) within the framework of safeguards regulations should be maintained," Ayatollah Ali Khamenei said during a meeting with Iranian nuclear scientists, experts and officials.

In his Sunday speech, the supreme leader said agreements could be

reached in certain fields, but stressed that "the existing infrastructure of the nuclear industry should not be touched". Iran's Atomic Energy Organisation "need not succumb to the pressure of unfounded claims and demands based on bullying", Khamenei said, without specifying the demands or claims. Iran's nuclear programme has long been the subject of scrutiny from Western powers, resulting in sanctions that have crippled the country's economy.

A 2015 nuclear accord between Iran and world powers gave the Islamic republic relief from interna-

tional sanctions in return for curbs on its atomic programme.

But in 2018 the United States unilaterally withdrew from the deal and reimposed sanctions, prompting Tehran to walk back its own commitments to restrict nuclear activity including uranium enrichment. Efforts to revive the deal have so far failed to yield results.

In late May, after months of wrangling over the question of traces of nuclear material found in previously undeclared sites, the UN agency announced progress and declared the file closed.

China operating spy base in Cuba for years, says US official

Monitoring Desk
WASHINGTON: China has been operating a spy base in Cuba since 2019 to enhance its intelligence-gathering capabilities worldwide, according to a US official from the Biden administration.

The official revealed that the US intelligence community has long been aware of China's spying activities in Cuba and its broader efforts to establish similar operations globally. The Biden administration has been actively working to counter

China's expansion of espionage operations, making progress through diplomatic channels and unspecified actions.

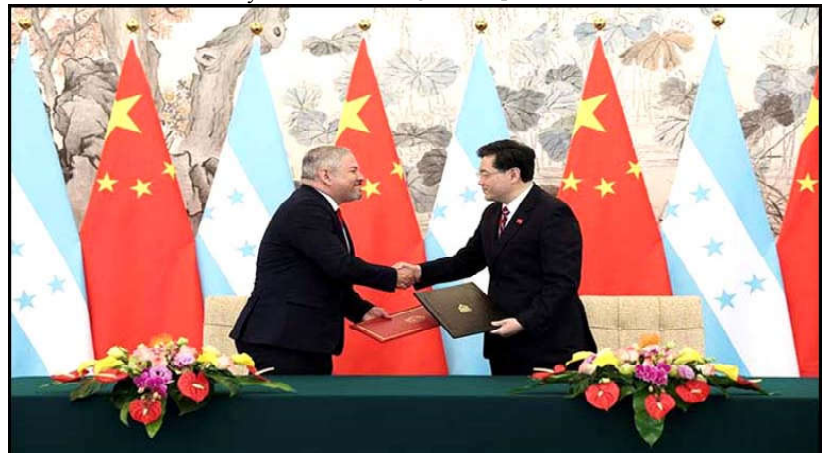
The existence of the Chinese spy base was confirmed after a report by The Wall Street Journal stated that China and Cuba had reached a preliminary agreement to build an electronic eavesdropping station on the island.

However, both the White House and Cuban officials disputed the accuracy of the report.

IS militants kill 2 Iraqi soldiers, wound 3 others in northern Iraq, officials say

Monitoring Desk
BAGHDAD: Islamic State group militants attacked an Iraqi army position in the northern governorate of Kirkuk, killing two military officers and wounding three soldiers, officials say.

The Iraqi Security Media Cell said militants belonging to the extremist group late Saturday targeted the military position in the district of Dibis with light and medium weapons but did not provide further details.



The embassy in Beijing was opened by foreign ministers from the two countries.

Ex-US president Donald Trump risked national secrets, prosecutors allege in indictment

Monitoring Desk
WASHINGTON: US prosecutors unsealed a 37-count indictment against Donald Trump on Friday, accusing the former president of risking some of the country's most sensitive security secrets after leaving the White House in 2021.

Trump mishandled classified documents that included information about the secretive US nuclear programme and potential domestic vulnerabilities in the event of an attack, the federal indictment said.

Trump also discussed with his lawyers the possibility of lying to government officials seeking to recover the documents; stored some documents in boxes around a toilet, and moved others around his

Mar-a-Lago resort home in Florida to prevent them from being found, the charges said.

"Wouldn't it be better if we just told them we don't have anything here?" Trump said to one of his attorneys, according to the 49-page indictment.

Unauthorized disclosure of classified documents posed a risk to US national security, foreign relations, and intelligence gathering, prosecutors said. The Justice Department made the criminal charges public on a tumultuous day in which two of Trump's lawyers, John Rowley and Jim Trusty, quit the case for reasons that were not immediately clear. A former aide, Walt Nauta, faces charges of being Trump's co-conspirator.

In Yemen, 3 killed in clashes between suspected al-Qaida militants and pro-government forces

Monitoring Desk
SANAA: Clashes between suspected al-Qaida militants and Yemen's pro-government forces in the country's south killed three men Saturday, a military official and tribal leaders said. The fighting broke out Saturday evening when militants thought to be al-Qaida members attacked the United Arab Emirates-backed Shabwa Defense Forces near the town of al-Musaiya in southern Shabwa province with machine guns, two tribal leaders and a military official said.

The three spoke on condition of anonymity. They said the gunbattle in the oil-rich province lasted for several hours, killing two Shabwa Defense Forces fighters and one militant before the militants finally withdrew.

Former Scottish leader Nicola Sturgeon arrested over SNP funding probe

Monitoring Desk
LONDON: Former Scottish First Minister Nicola Sturgeon was arrested on Sunday in connection with a Police Scotland investigation into the funding and finances of the SNP. The woman is in custody and is being questioned by Police Scotland detectives, "Police Scotland said. "As the investigation is ongoing we are unable to comment further."

The arrest of Sturgeon, who stepped down earlier this year, is deeply embarrassing for the SNP, which campaigns to end Scotland's three-century political union with England. "These issues are subject to a live police investigation. The SNP have been cooperating fully with this investigation and will continue to do so however it is not appropriate to publicly address any issues while that investigation is ongoing."

"Nicola has consistently said she would cooperate with the investigation if asked and continues

to do so." Earlier, Police Scotland said on Twitter a 52-year-old woman had been arrested as a suspect in connection with the ongoing investigation into the funding and finances of the SNP. "The woman is in custody and is being questioned by Police Scotland detectives," Police Scotland said. "As the investigation is ongoing we are unable to comment further."

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Romania recalls envoy from Kenya for 'calling Africans monkeys'

Monitoring Desk
BUCHAREST: Romania on Saturday said it had recalled its ambassador to Kenya for allegedly comparing a monkey to Africans while attending a meeting in Nairobi.

Dragos Viorel Tigau was at a UN building in Kenya's capital on April 26 when a monkey appeared at the window of the conference room.

"The African group has joined us," Tigau said according to a note from the South Sudanese embassy in Kenya. The Romanian foreign ministry said it had only been informed of the incident this week and "began a procedure to recall its ambassador". "We deeply regret this situation and offer our apologies to all those who have been affected," it added, saying racist behaviour or comments were "absolutely unacceptable".

Honduras opens embassy in China after cutting ties to Taiwan

Monitoring Desk
BEIJING: Honduras opened an embassy in China on Sunday, Chinese state media reported, after the Central American nation cut diplomatic relations with Taiwan earlier this year.

The embassy in Beijing was opened by foreign ministers from the two countries, state broadcaster CCTV reported.

Honduran President Xiomara Castro is in China for a state visit, during which she is to meet with her Chinese counterpart, Xi Jinping, state media have reported.

Tegucigalpa in March ended its decades-long relationship with Taipei and established diplomatic ties with Beijing.

China claims democratically ruled Taiwan as its own territory with no right to state-to-state relations, a position Taipei strongly rejects. China demands that countries with which it has ties recognise its position.

Taiwan now has formal diplomatic relations with only 13 countries, mostly poor and developing countries in Central America, the Caribbean and the Pacific.

Four Colombian children found alive after 40 days

Monitoring Desk
BOGOTA: Four Indigenous children who had been missing for more than a month in the Colombian Amazon rainforest were found alive and flown to the capital Bogota early on Saturday.

The children, who survived a small plane crash in the jungle, were transported by army medical plane to a military airport. They were taken off the plane on stretchers and wrapped in thermal blankets, with ambulances waiting to bring them to hospital, journalists said. General Pedro Sanchez, who led the search operation, credited Indigenous people involved in the rescue effort with finding the children. "We found the children: miracle, miracle, miracle!" was the message he had for the reporters he received on Friday.

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Air fares may stay sky-high, say industry experts

Monitoring Desk
PARIS: Despite the recent fall in oil prices, high air fares may stay in place for some time to come, say airline industry professionals and experts.

The gradual return of demand for travel last year following the lifting of Covid-19-related travel restrictions, had already given the signal for higher fares. But this year, just as the airlines are expected to see passenger numbers almost back to pre-crisis levels, prices have really taken off.

In France in April, the average cost of an air ticket was 32.6 per cent higher than four years earlier, according to the French Civil Aviation Authority. That increase was

as much as 51pc for flights to the Asia-Pacific region.

In the United States, the air ticket price index published by the St Louis Federal Reserve showed an 11pc increase in air ticket prices between April 2019 and April 2023.

This is despite the fact that oil prices have eased since peaking in the wake of Russia's invasion of Ukraine in early 2022.

The International Air Transport Association (IATA) estimates that they will fall to an average of \$98.5 a barrel this year, compared with \$135.6 last year. Representing between 25pc and 30pc of airline costs, fuel normally has a significant effect on ticket prices.

Three British tourists missing after a boat caught fire off Egypt's Red Sea coast, authorities say

Monitoring Desk
CAIRO: Egyptian authorities said three British nationals were missing after a scuba diving boat they were cruising in caught fire off Egypt's Red Sea coastline on Sunday.

In a short statement, Egypt's Red Sea Governorate said 12 crew members and 12 British tourists were rescued when a medium-sized scuba diving boat, christened "Hurricane,"

Saudi Arabia seeks cooperation with China, 'ignores' Western worries

Monitoring Desk

RIYADH: Saudi Arabia wants to collaborate, not compete, with China, the kingdom's energy minister declared on Sunday, saying he "ignored" Western suspicions over their growing ties.

As the world's top oil exporter, Saudi Arabia's bilateral relationship with the world's biggest energy consumer is anchored by hydrocarbon ties. But cooperation between Riyadh and Beijing has also deepened in security and sensitive tech amid a warming of political ties — to the concern of the US.

Asked about criticism of the bilateral relationship during an Arab-China business conference, Prince Abdulaziz bin Salman said: "I actually ignore it because

... as a business person now you will go where opportunity comes your way."

"We don't have to be facing any choice which has to do with (saying) either with us or with the others."

Chinese entrepreneurs and investors have flocked to Riyadh for the conference, which came days after a visit by US Secretary of State Antony Blinken. In March, state oil giant Saudi Aramco (2222.SE) announced two major deals to raise its multi-billion dollar investment in China and bolster its rank as China's top provider of crude.

They were the biggest announced since Chinese President Xi Jinping's visit to Saudi Arabia in December where he called for oil trade in yuan.

Fighting resumes in Sudan's capital after 24-hour truce expires

Monitoring Desk

KHARTOUM: Clashes and artillery fire were reported in parts of Sudan's capital early on Sunday after the end of a 24-hour ceasefire that had brought a brief lull in eight weeks of fighting between rival military factions.

Witnesses said fighting had resumed soon after the ceasefire expired at 6 a.m. (0400 GMT) in the north of Omdurman, one of three adjoining cities, along with Khartoum and Bahri, which make up the capital around the confluence of the River Nile.

Residents said there had been artillery fire in the Sharq el-Nil area on the eastern outskirts of the capital, while blasts and clashes were reported in Khartoum.

War between Sudan's army and the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces (RSF) broke out on April 15 over tensions linked to an internationally backed plan for a transition towards civilian rule.

The conflict has displaced more than 1.9 mil-

lion people, triggering a major humanitarian crisis that threatens to spill across a volatile region.

Fighting has been concentrated in the capital, much of which has become a war zone plagued by looting and clashes.

Unrest has also flared elsewhere including the western region of Darfur, already suffering from a conflict that peaked in the early 2000s.

Residents and activists have reported a further deterioration in recent days in El Geneina, near the border with Chad, and new waves of attacks by Arab nomadic tribes with ties to the RSF. The city has been largely cut off from telephone networks for several weeks.

Another affected city is El Obeid, capital of North Kordofan State southwest of Khartoum and on a major route to Darfur. Residents say it is effectively under a state of siege due to the conflict, with supplies of food and medicine cut off.

Several killed, wounded in Vietnam police station attacks

Monitoring Desk

HANOI: Several people were killed and wounded in shootings at two police headquarters in Vietnam's Central Highlands on Sunday (June 11), authorities said.

Six people were arrested in connection with the shootings in Cu Kuin district of Dak Lak province, according to the ministry of public security's website.

Investigators were searching for more suspects, it said.

The attacks on the police headquarters of both Ea Tieu and Ea Ktur communes occurred in the early hours of Sunday, according to the site.

It said a number of people, including police, local officials and civilians were killed and wounded but did not provide exact figures.

Police could not be

reached immediately but reached for comment.

The Central Highlands, home to a number of ethnic minorities, is considered a sensitive area for Vietnam's authoritarian government and has long been a hotbed of discontent over issues that include land rights.

Some tribes in the area — collectively known as Montagnards — sided with the US-backed south during Vietnam's decades-long war. Some are calling for more autonomy, while others abroad advocate independence for the region.

Several state media outlets withdrew their reports about the incident earlier on Sunday before republishing them hours later. Gun violence is extremely uncommon in Vietnam, where it is illegal for citizens to own firearms and the black market for weapons is limited.

Federal regulators promise safety review at all the major freight railroads

Monitoring Desk

OMAHA: The Federal Railroad Administration recently completed a review of Norfolk Southern's safety culture in the wake of the February's fiery derailment in Ohio, and officials plan to follow up with similar investigations of all the major freight railroads over the next year.

A report will be released soon on what investigators found at Norfolk Southern after the Feb. 3 derailment — which prompted the evacuation of half of East Palestine, Ohio — and several other recent derailments. That crash near the Ohio-Pennsylvania border sparked intense interest in railroad safety nationwide and prompted proposed reforms in Congress. The head of the FRA, Administrator Amit Bose, said in a letter to Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer recently that in addition to individual reports on Union Pacific, BNSF, CSX, Canadian National and Canadian Pacific Kansas City, the agency will also produce an industrywide report on

common issues and trends. Railroad unions have been raising concerns that operating changes the railroads have made over the past six years have made the trains that haul hazardous materials and goods of all kinds across the country more dangerous.

The unions say the deep staff cuts railroads have made, combined with their increasing reliance on longer trains, have increased the chance of safety problems. They say inspections are being rushed, preventative maintenance may be neglected and overworked employees are more likely to be fatigued.

The railroads have defended their practices and said they haven't sacrificed safety to become more efficient. The industry also emphasizes that it remains the safest way to transport hazardous materials over land. Norfolk Southern and all the major railroads have announced a number of steps they are taking to improve safety through regulators, and lawmakers have called for them to do more.



Israelis protest against plans by Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's government to overhaul the judicial system, in Tel Aviv, Israel.

Call for accountability: Ulema moot urges expose of perpetrators behind May 9 attacks

LAHORE (APP): In a joint declaration, Pakistan Stability Ulema-Mashaikh Conference, held here at Al-Hamra Hall on Sunday urged for the exposure of all those involved in the May 9 attacks on the Pakistan Army and security agencies. Led by Chairman of Pakistan Ulema Council (PUC) Hafiz Muhammad Tahir Mahmood Ashrafi, the conference brought together religious, political, and minority leaders from across the country expressing their strong opposition to campaigns against Pakistan and its security forces in the name of human rights.

They urged the government to take legal action against those spreading propaganda targeting state institutions.

Highlighting the gravity of the May 9 events, the declaration announced the PUC's decision to convene an all-party conference

immediately after the Hajj pilgrimage to address the current situation in the country. Besides Ashrafi who is also the president of International Interfaith Harmony Council, the prominent religious scholars, including Allama Abdul Haq Mujahid, Maulana Muhammad Rafiq Jami, and Maulana Nouman Hashir addressed the conference, which saw the participation of over 1,000 representatives from different religious schools of thought, religions and various segments of society.

The joint declaration strongly condemned the May 9 events and expressed solidarity with the families of the martyrs. The conference demanded the arrest and punishment of all individuals involved in the attacks, emphasizing that no one should be spared, and innocent people should not be wrongfully detained.

The Ulema-Mashaikh conference called for adherence to the rule of law and transparency in legal proceedings. It rejected unjustified opposition to cases conducted under the Army Act, emphasizing the importance of upholding the Constitution and ensuring individual rights are respected.

Addressing concerns about the misuse of blasphemy laws, the conference clarified that these laws should not be exploited for personal or political gains. It emphasized that the law is not being misused against any political party and called for international organizations and countries to understand the true context.

To address the prevailing challenges, the PUC announced the formation of a 15-member committee tasked with gathering comprehensive details regarding the May 9 events.



LAHORE: Prime Minister's Special Representative Hafiz Muhammad Tahir Mahmood Ashrafi addressing during Istehkam Pakistan Ulema Mashaikh conference.

CM Bizenjo says: People would make inauguration of public projects now

Independent Report
QUETTA: The Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Abdul Qudus Bizenjo has categorically stated that the people would make inauguration of the public projects now.

In a tweet on his social media account, Twitter on Sunday, the Chief Minister maintained that whether it is school or college, hospital or sports ground, health card or Green bus project, all these are public money. He said that we would not waste our resources on the inaugural ceremonies for taking or giving credit of these public projects.

The Chief Minister reaffirmed that the inauguration of the schools would be got inaugurated by the students studying in these public institutions.

Similarly, the inauguration of public hospitals would be inaugurated by the poor patients being treated in them, he made it clear adding that the inauguration of green bus service would be inaugurated by the sisters and daughters travelling in the public transport.

The Chief Minister also said that this is public exchequer and as such the public should be given credit. Ours' job is just to ensure accurate use of the public exchequer, he added.

It may be mentioned here that the Chief Minister has announced ban on making inauguration of the development projects by provincial ministers, members of provincial assembly and other government functionaries in the province.

PML-N laying 'landmines' for next govt: Sh. Rasheed

RAWALPINDI (INP): Awami Muslim League chief and former interior minister Sheikh Rasheed Ahmed on Sunday said that new budget was an agenda of creating problems for the next government.

In his statement on the social networking site Twitter, Sheikh Rasheed Ahmed said that Shehbaz Sharif admitted his failure but laid landmines for the next government. Shehbaz spoke to the head of IMF for an hour but the result was zero.

He said the aid of Saudi Arabia and the UAE was still in limbo. There are many parties who wanted to get into power corridors, he added. "PDM is falling apart. PML-N and PPP are going to face off soon, Dawn Leaks, Memogate, Panama Papers are their real assets," said the AML head.

The former minister said that those who changed faces and parties made their decision in haste.

Bilawal asks PPP activists to participate in relief activities in rain hit areas

KARACHI (INP): Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari has expressed deep grief and sorrow over the loss of precious lives and property damages due to rain followed by strong wind, thunderstorm in various districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa has directed the authorities concerned for facilitating the affectedes.

A statement issued by media cell of Bilawal House on Sunday, the Chairman Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) said that his sympathies were with the families of the victims of the miserable incidents.

Bilawal asked the office bearers and activists of party to coordinate with administration and actively participate in the rescue and

relief activities in rain hit areas of the two provinces especially in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

He said that due to climate change, monsoon in Pakistan was proving to be tragic as the country had to face worst situation.

The foreign minister said that though hundreds of thousands people were rescued during tragic incidents relating monsoon but the affectedes were still waiting for the pledged financial assistance.

Putting the burden of the climate change on developing country like Pakistan would be injustice, Bilawal Bhutto said urging the global community to support in tackling the devastation caused by the climate change.



LAHORE: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif playing carrom board during his visit to various sports facilities at Sabzazar Sports Complex.

Ch. Anwarul Haq says AJK govt endeavors to promote tourism

MIRPUR (AJK) (APP): Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) Prime Minister Chaudhry Anwar ul Haq has said that his government was keen to promote tourism in Azad Kashmir.

He said that necessary steps were being taken on a priority basis for the promotion of domestic and national-level tourism in Azad Jammu Kashmir.

"Millions of tourists visit the beautiful region annually", he said, adding that details of routes leading to the tourist destinations of Azad Kashmir would be put on Google so that tourists coming from outside could be able to find locations easily and get accurate information about the routes.

In an interview in the federal metropolis on Sunday, Prime Minister

Chaudhry Anwar Haq said that the government provided full support for holding Tourism Festival in Haveli. He said that Government Minister Raja Faisal Mumtaz Rathore has been active in this regard.

He said that tourism festivals should be organized all across Azad Kashmir so that people can get access and see the beauty of Kashmir.

He said that the ongoing tourism related projects initiated in different areas of Azad Kashmir would be accomplished on a priority basis.

About the beautification of tourist places, the PM said, "Lights will be installed at various tourism spots of Azad Kashmir and essential facilities will be provided to increase the interest of tourists".

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QUETTA: Spokesman of Chief Minister Balochistan Babar Yousafzai and Malik Rasheed Kakar inaugurating Saad Property at International Property Expo

Khurram lays foundation stone of new 132-KV grid station

GUJRANWALA (APP): Federal Minister for Energy (Power Division) Engineer Khurram Dastgir Khan laid a foundation stone of the new 132-KV Grid Station namely Ghulam Dastgir Khan Grid Station here on Sunday.

The grid station costing Rs 1.06 billion would be completed in a record period of three and a half months. Gujranwala Electric Power Company (GEPCO) Board of Directors' Chairman Muhammad Shuaib Butt, Chief Executive Officer Engineer Ghulam Dastgir Khan grid station had been started.

Yusuf were also present. General Managers Mazhar Naveed, Rana Ishtiaq Ahmed, Chief Engineers Naveed Anjum Cheema, Muhammad Ashiq Jatt, Imtiaz Ahmed Cheema, Managers Sheikh Amanullah, Muhammad Buta Gurayah, Shahbaz Ahmed Sekhu, Ghulam Ghos and Regional Chairman Wapda Hydro Union Waliur Rehman Khan, and others were present on the occasion. Addressing the ceremony, the energy minister said that the construction work of 132-KV Ghulam Dastgir Khan grid station had been started.

Awais Leghari calls for thwarting evil designs against armed forces

RAJANAPUR (APP): General Secretary Pakistan Muslim League Nawaz (PML-N) Punjab, Sardar Awais Ahmed Khan Leghari said that the baseless allegations of violent attacks on law enforcement agencies and security forces, human rights violations and suppression of political activities were being made to defame armed forces for gaining nefarious designs.

Talking to APP here on Sunday, Leghari said that the whole nation has rejected the rioting elements forever after shameful incidents of May 9.

He said that the state of Pakistan and armed forces respect the martyrs

of the country and their families.

He said that the eternal sacrifices of the armed forces were being acknowledged in the world and also appreciated by the nation.

He said that the people and the armed forces have a close relationship which was the actual power of the country and centre of national security.

He said that anti-national elements and their supporters were trying hard to create social division and chaos through fake and baseless news and propaganda.

"With full support and love of the nation, all evil intentions would be thwarted" Leghari added.



KARACHI: People are seen at Seaview beach despite alerts to remain away ahead of the Extremely Severe Cyclonic Storm Biparjoy.

Govt fixed realistic targets for economic stability: Ahsan

ISLAMABAD (Online): Federal Minister for Planning and Development Ahsan Iqbal said the government has fixed realistic targets besides formulating long term policies to bring economic stability in the country.

Talking to a private TV channel, he said the government has initiated measures to widen the tax net and stem leakages in tax collection instead of imposing new taxation in the budget.

He said the government has enhanced

Balochistan's share in Public Sector Development Programme.

The Minister said the PSDP was mainly been aligned with the development framework of five Es ie exports, equity, empowerment, environment, and energy as well as reconstruction and rehabilitation of flood-affected areas.

He said 60 percent share of the total PSDP in the new budget has been earmarked for ongoing schemes while 40 percent for the financing of new schemes.

PM condoles loss of lives in Kazakhstan forest fire

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Sunday expressed deep grief over the death of 14 people in a forest fire in Kazakhstan.

In a tweet on social media platform Twitter, he said, "Deeply grieved to learn of the death of 14 people in a forest fire in Kazakhstan. On behalf of the government and people of Pakistan, I extend my heartfelt condolences to H.E. President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev and the bereaved families on the loss of precious lives. Prayers for the speedy recovery of the injured."



KARACHI: Jamate-Islami (JI) Chief, Siraj-ul-Haq addresses to his supporters during protest demonstration against stolen of party mandate in mayoral elections, at Shahrah-e-Quaideen in Karachi.

PML-N decides to start election campaign across country

LAHORE (Online): Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PMLN) has decided to kick off his election campaign across the country.

Nawaz Shareef issued instructions to form manifesto committee to design election manifesto.

According to sources Prime Minister Shabaz Shareef met vice president Maryam Nawaz on Sunday.

Maryam Nawaz gave Nawaz Shareef's message to Prime Minister: source.

Former chief minister Hamza Shahbaz and Suleman Shahbaz were also present in this meeting.

Sources told, in message Nawaz Shareef said party narrative must be decided in keeping in view the youth. Easy loan and plan to create jobs also be made part of narrative.

Nawaz Shareef said policies of political party who damaged country must be brought to the people.

On the other said report also summoned from provincial presidents of Punjab and KP for allotment party ticket.

Pmln have chances to make election alliance in Sindh and Balochistan.

Earlier prime minister also chaired a important meeting of Pmln.

Electricity short fall reaches to 5588MW

ISLAMABAD (Online): Electricity short fall reached to 5588Mega Watt (MW) as total production is 18412MW and demand is 24000MW. 8hours load shedding is continue in various parts of country.

According to sources of power division 4500MW is producing through hydra electric plants. Government thermal power plant is producing 1650MW and private power stations production is 11900MW. Solar panel is producing 80MW electricity and Wind power plant is producing 250MW.



PESHAWAR: Pakistan Markazi Muslim League President, Khalid Masood along with others as they are holding their hands with each other to expressing solidarity during the Ittehad Conference held.

May-9 perpetrators should be brought to book: Javed Latif

LAHORE (APP): Federal Minister Mian Javed Latif stressed on Sunday that perpetrators of the May-9 sorrowful incidents should be brought to book so that people could differentiate between a political party and a terrorist group.

Addressing a press conference at Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) secretariat at Model Town, he said the unfortunate incidents taking place in the guise of protests on May 9 by the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf were an attempt to weaken the state. He said there was ample evidence of foreign conspiracy behind the attacks on that fateful day.

He demanded that perpetrators of the May-9 incident should be exposed before the nation to avoid such an incident in future. State properties including military installations were damaged by the protestors under a planning, he added.

The federal minister said that facts about the conspiracy under which elected Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif was ousted in 2017 should also be made public so that people could be made aware of facts. The fact had already been related by many retired people of state institutions, he said and demanded that people of the country should also be told the facts about the conspiracy.

Hospital discharges Ch Pervaz, shifted to Jail

LAHORE (Online): Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) president Chaudhry Pervaz Elahi has been discharged from hospital and shifted back to jail on Sunday.

Last night he was shifted to Punjab institute of cardiology (PIC) due to sudden feeling of unwell where he was carried out under various medical tests.

After satisfactory medical reports he was discharged from hospital and shifted to jail.

Federal govt notices demand of NW disabled persons by explosions

ISLAMABAD (Online): Federal government took notice of protest camp of North Waziristan (NW) people who disabled by explosions established outside of Islamabad National Press Club (NPC).

Special assistant to prime minister Faisal Karim Kundi arrived in the camp and held talks with demonstrating people.

Faisal Kareem Kundi took action immediately and wrote letter to bait-ul-mall for aid to victims.

Advisor also gave victims assurance the help of Benazir Income Support Program (BISP).

On this occasion protestors from North Waziristan thanked government notice.



QUETTA: Medical staff giving medical aid to teachers in hunger strike camp by Government Teachers Association in front of Balochistan Assembly

Sherry Rehman says Pakistan not responsible for climate change still becomes 'Ground Zero'

ISLAMABAD (INP): Federal Minister for Climate Change, Sherry Rehman has said that Pakistan is not responsible for the climate change but it has still become the 'Ground Zero' of the climate change.

Taking to her twitter handle on Sunday, she tweeted: "Deeply grieved over the loss of 29 precious lives in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Punjab rain related incidents.

Equally shares the grief of the victim family. Pray for earlier recovery of the injured."

Sherry Rehman lauded the Pakistan Army, PDMA and other related local organizations for their instant action, launched rescue and relief activities after the disaster. After Sindh, pre-monsoon showers, gusts and disaster caused by them in Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa was matter

of grave concern, she added.

The minister climate change said that windstorm, heavy rain and hailstorm adversely affected human being, cattle, standing crops, dilapidated buildings and wood-stone made houses.

The PPP leader said that all provincial government and concerned organizations have been directed to remain vigilant for tackling the climate change related incidents.

'Not seeing elections in October', says Raja Riaz

LAHORE (INP): Opposition Leader in National Assembly Raja Riaz on Sunday hinted at the delay in the general elections.

"Not seeing general elections in October," Raja Riaz told a private TV news channel. First, we have to make Pakistan economically strong and then go for elections, the opposition leader said and added that constitutionally the tenure of government can be extended up to 6 months.

I will support the extension of the assembly and the government if the matter is moved to NA, he announced. Commenting on the release of PTI Vice

Chairman Shah Mahmood Qureshi, Riaz said "You can say he is not leaving PTI." The one who goes home from jail shows the commitment he made, he added. The NA opposition leader said Jahangir Tareen is his friend but he is not going to join his Istikham-e-Pakistan party. "I have decided where will I go."

Raja Riaz claimed those who gave 'wrong' suggestions to PTI chief, left the party. Earlier in the month of May, Defense Minister Khawaja Asif said under the ongoing law and order situation to normalise in a few days and the polls are on time.



QUETTA: Secretary Provincial Ombudsman Balochistan Muhammad Hashim Nadeem presiding over a meeting to review monthly performance of Ombudsman department