

Independent

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Quetta

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Lt. Gen. among others sacked from service after May 9 probe: ISPR DG

Army spokesperson says strict disciplinary action has been taken against 15 officers, including three major generals and seven brigadiers; Relatives of retired generals are also facing accountability; False propaganda was conducted for nefarious political purposes and lust for power; The extremist elements of May 9 did what an enemy could not do. There would be no reprieve or leniency for the facilitators and perpetrators of the May 9 mayhem on account of fake human rights narrative

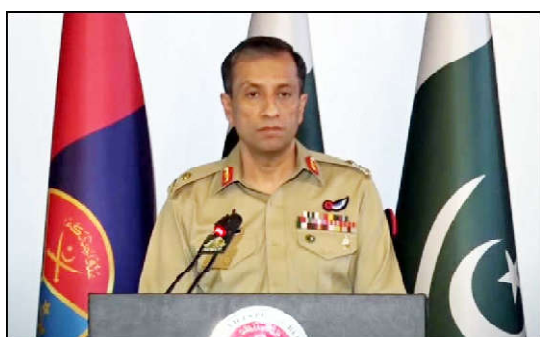
RAWALPINDI (APP): Director General of Inter Services Public Relations (DG ISPR) Major General Ahmed Sharif Chaudhry on Monday said there would be no reprieve or leniency for the facilitators and perpetrators of the May 9 mayhem on account of fake human rights narrative.

A thorough probe had clearly indicated that May 9 riots and arson were a pre-planned and orchestrated conspiracy against the armed forces, he said, adding there was no substance in the concocted narrative of any human rights abuses.

briefing at the ISPR Directorate, Major General Ahmed Sharif informed the media about the actions and investigations with regard to the violent incidents against military installations on the Dark Day of May 9.

He said the May 9 was the darkest chapter in the 76-year history of Pakistan, and in its aftermath, the process of self-accountability within the Army was carried out without any discrimination.

"Two comprehensive institutional inquiries were conducted into the incidents of violence at various



garrisons on May 9. The inquiries were presided over by officers of the rank of Major General," he added.

He said a disciplinary action had been initiated

the accountability process of the Army. The bigger the post, the bigger the responsibility."

The DG ISPR said the investigations clearly established the point that the May 9 tragedy was being planned for several months and accordingly the brainwashing of the people was done to mislead them against the armed forces.

"It is clear from the evidence regarding the May 9 tragedy that the planning was done a month earlier, and first an atmosphere of uncertainty was created and then the public unrest

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QUETTA: Provincial Finance Minister Zamrak Khan Achakzai presenting budget proposal for FY 2023-24 in Balochistan Assembly

Balochistan Assembly approves budget of Rs. 724 billion for next financial year

Independent Report

QUETTA: The Balochistan Assembly approved the budget for next financial year having total outlay of over Rs. 724 billion in its session here on Monday.

Speaking in the house, the leader of Opposition Malik Sikandar Khan Advocate said that the economic condition of the country is not better. He said that the country is being blackmailed through

pay the arrears within three days, however, the same are yet to be received.

Earlier, no motion was presented by the opposition in the session about deduction in the budget.

However, he regretfully pointed out that our recommendations have not been included in the budget. We have already been giving advises about bringing good governance in the province, he maintained.

IMF. He also said that the federal government is not extending financial assistance to the province, and in these circumstances, an appropriate budget was presented.

He also said that we can also leave good budget for the next government even. Mr. Achakzai mentioned that we have urged the federation to help us in the budget. Referring the dues against PPL, the Finance Minister recalled that it (PPL) had assured us to

Winding the debate on budget, the Minister Finance said that it is an honour for him to present a balanced budget for the upcoming fiscal year.

He said that we can implement the budget within one and half month, if the due amount is received from the federation.

He also said that we can also leave good budget for the next government even. Mr. Achakzai mentioned that we have urged the federation to help us in the budget. Referring the dues against PPL, the Finance Minister recalled that it (PPL) had assured us to

Governor desires Ansar Burney Trust may expand activities in remote areas of Balochistan

Independent Report

QUETTA: The Governor Balochistan, Malik Abdul Wali Khan Kakar has expressed his desire that the welfare institutions like Ansar Burney Trust may expand all their activities in remote areas of the province.

The Governor was speaking to the Chairman Ansar Burney Trust (ABT), Ansar Burney and its vice Chairman, Shaheen Burney who called on him here at the Governor's House on Monday.

He appreciated the important role being played by ABT for coping with the emergent situation, preventing kids smuggling, providing legal aid to the prisoners and providing relief to the affected people during the natural calamities.

The Governor stressed that we have to provide true guidance to the new genera-

tion for boosting volunteer spirit, restoration of the human dignity and formation of healthy society.

He said that the spirit of public service plays significant role in coping with the emergent situation and natural disasters.

The Governor on the occasion pointed out towards the lack of modern medical equipment and other necessary machinery in the health centers located in different districts of the province.

It is our bad luck that the ratio of maternal mortality is highest in Balochistan even in the present developed era.

He stressed that immediate financial assistance and provision of modern machinery by the international organizations can be helpful in health and education sectors besides learning modern skills to the people.



QUETTA: Provincial Minister Syed Ehsan Shah, Senator Manzoor Ahmed Kakar and MPA Noor Muhammad Dummar meeting with Principal Secretary to Chief Minister Imran Gichki

BHC issues stay order against PCB chairman's elections

Independent Report

QUETTA: The Balochistan High Court has restrained the concerned quarters from conducting the election of Chairman Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) on June 27, 2023 till further orders.

The court also ordered to issue notice to the respondents as well as to the Additional Attorney General admitting the constitutional petition filed by one Gul Muhammad Kakar for regular hearing.

The instant petition was also fixed for hearing

on July 17, 2023, in view of the forthcoming Eidul Adha holidays as well as two weeks summer vacations of the court.

The order was passed by the division bench of High Court headed by Mr. Justice Naeem Akhtar Afghan.

Earlier, the counsel for the petitioner had contended that constitution of PCB has been restored by Ministry of IPC vide notification dated 22.12.2022 in exercise of powers under section 3 read with section

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KARACHI: The Federal Minister for Planning, Development & Reform, Ahsan Iqbal visiting Karachi Shipyard.

Ahsan Iqbal says Govt placed promotion of blue economy in its growth agenda

Call for concerted efforts to achieve sustainable economic growth

KARACHI (APP): Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives, Ahsan Iqbal, on Monday said that the blue economy possesses enormous potential for sustainable financial stability and development of Pakistan and the incumbent government has placed it in its futuristic agenda of national growth.

The minister talking to media persons during the

visit of the Pakistan Maritime Security Agency (PMSA) here said that more than one thousand kilometres long coastal line and over 2 million kilometres of vast exclusive economic zone offer unfathomable opportunities to the country.

Pakistan being an agricultural country had relied on the green economy at the time while the volume of its

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QUETTA: Rally taken out to mark International Narcotics Day under Balochistan Govt and ANF.

No compromise can be made on state's matters: Langove

Independent Report

QUETTA: The Provincial Minister for Home and Tribal Affairs, Mir Ziaullah Langove has stated that the issue of Haq Do Tehreek leader, Maulana Hidayatur Rehman Baloch is related to the state, and no compromise can be made on the state's matters.

He reiterated the government's resolve not to spare those challenging the writ of government at all. In an official statement issued here on Monday, the Minister Home said that CPEC is the game changer project and Gwadar is future of Pakistan. He charged that Maulana Hidayatur Rehman is playing with sentiments of people of Gwadar.

He claimed that Maulana Hidayatur Rehman has nothing to do with Gwadar and its people. He said that what he thought that Maulana Hidayat's target is to become MPA.

However, he can't allow anyone to exploit the situation for just becoming Maulana MPA, adding he asserted. He said that it was the tactics of Maulana Hidayat that affected CPEC in the past.

Referring the tribal issue in Wadh, the Minister Home said that the tribal issues are resolved through mutual understanding and it happens to be necessary to follow the tribal norms for ending the tribal clashes.

PM directs immediate rainwater draining measures

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Monday directed the provincial and district authorities to immediately take rainwater drainage measures in Lahore.

Taking notice of the problems faced by the dwellers of Lahore, the prime minister also directed the relevant authorities to remain alert in the situation arising out of the current rainy spell, the PM Office Media Wing said in a press release.

No leniency should be shown in addressing the public issues and grievances, it was further added.

The authorities were tasked to continuously monitor the situation with prompt measures in place.

The prime minister further stressed that considering the situation, alternate routes should be timely identified for smooth vehicular traffic.

13 killed in rain related incidents

LAHORE (APP): Provincial Disaster Management Authority (PDMA) Director General Imran Qureshi has said that at least 13 people died with 17 severely and 6 minor injuries in 15 lightning strikes and roof collapse incidents due to heavy rains across the province during the last 24 hours.

He said the PDMA has received reports of damages and casualties from all districts of the province, said a handout issued here.

The injured have been provided with the best medical treatment while monitoring of the situation is continuing from the provincial control room, he said and added that machinery and staff have been put on high alert for handling emergencies as the PDMA is in constant contact with the province-wide administration.

We have no stick for implementation of court's orders: CJP

Several people have stick. But what moral justification they have

ISLAMABAD (Online): The 7-member bench of Supreme Court (SC) hearing petitions against trial of civilians in military court once again stands dissolved due to objection raised by federal government against Justice Mansoor Ali Shah, member of bench.

The 7-member bench headed by Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) Umar Ata Bandial took up the case for hearing Monday.

At the inception of hearing Attorney General (AG) on behalf of federal government requested Justice Mansoor Ali Shah to recuse himself from bench.

AG came on rostrum and informed about federal government directives regarding bench.

AG said one petitioner is relative of Justice Mansoor Ali Shah, therefore, his conduct can be affected.

The CJP remarked the benches can not be constituted on your desire or choice. You are raising objection on the learned judge of this court on what basis.

Justice Mansoor Ali Shah remarked "I had said from the very first day tell us if some one has any objection.

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QUETTA: In light of ruling of Speaker Balochistan Assembly, QESCO Chief briefed MPAs regarding load shedding

Government launches search Columnist goes underground, disappears amidst controversy

Monitoring Desk

ISLAMABAD: In a shocking turn of events, acclaimed columnist Syed Fawad Ali Shah has once again disappeared, leaving behind a trail of mystery and intrigue. The Federal Ministry of Interior in Islamabad has taken swift action, issuing a confiden-

tial letter to the Inspector Generals of Police across all provinces, urging them to locate the missing journalist and report back immediately.

Government sources reveal that Fawad Ali Shah may have gone into hiding

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Preparedness for upcoming Monsoon rains: Govt. taking steps on war footing grounds, says CS

Independent Report

QUETTA: The Chief Secretary Balochistan, Abdul Aziz Uqaili has stated that the provincial government is taking steps on war footing grounds in connection with the Monsoon rains in the province so as to prevent the damages in case of heavy rains.

The Chief Secretary was speaking at the review meeting regarding preparations of the Monsoon rains plans and preventive measures here on Monday.

The senior Member Board of Revenue, Roshan Ali Sheikh, Secretary Public Health Engineering, Saleh Muhammad Baloch, Secretary Agriculture, Umeed Ali Khokhar, Secretary Livestock, Arshad Hussain Bugti, Secretary Finance, Zahid Saleem, Director

General Provincial Disaster Management Authority, Jahanzaib and other concerned high ups.

The divisional commissioners and deputy commissioners participated in the meeting through video link.

The Chief Secretary on the occasion directed all the concerned government departments to maintain coordination and ensure cleaning of the drainage nullahs, sewerage system and cleanliness. He also directed to ensure implementation of the decision made by the provincial cabinet about action against the encroachments established on the water courses. In addition to this, all the departments should complete their preparations as per the forecast done by Met office, he directed further.

Acting President approves Finance Bill 2023-24

Acting President Sadiq Sanjrani has approved Finance Bill 2023 and 2024.

ISLAMABAD (Online): After the assent of the Acting President, the Finance Bill has become a formal law.

It is pertinent to mention that Finance Bill was approved by National Assembly (NA) yesterday.

Mariyum says: Title of 'CPEC Hero' for Ahsan, a slap on face of malicious characters

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Information and Broadcasting Mariyum Aurangzeb on Monday felicitated Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Ahsan Iqbal who was given a title of the Hero of China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) by the Chinese government the other day.

The minister, in a tweet, said ironically, a person whose honesty, dedication, and hard work were acknowledged by a country as esteemed as China, was unjustly thrown into jail during the previous regime's campaign of political victimization. She said the title of CPEC hero for Ahsan Iqbal also reflected the effective foreign policy of Pakistan which faced isolation during the four years rule of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI).

Mariyum said Pakistan's relations, dignity, and stature had been restored at the international stage during the one year of the incumbent government led by Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif.



QUETTA: Chief Secretary Balochistan Abdul Aziz Uqaili presiding over a high level meeting regarding preparation for monsoon rains in the province



CHAMAN: A large number of people participating in ANF Rally on World Anti Narcotics Day.

DC Ayesha Zehri says Departments should be alert in monsoon rains

Independent Report NASEERABAD: Deputy Commissioner Naseerabad Ayesha Zehri said, "It is the need of the hour to take advance measures under a solid strategy to give way to the expected monsoon rains and the heavy machinery of Irrigation B&R Department should be kept alert so that the people would be protected from the damages by taking timely measures, while urgent steps should be taken to deal with the emergency in civil hospitals, civil dispensaries and BHUs as well. The medical staff will be diligent and steps should be taken to clean all the drains of the city."

Khosha, DHO Dr Abdul Manan Lakki MS Dr Ayaz Hussain Jamali Exin B&R Bashir Ahmed Nasir XEN PHE Muhammad Kazim Loni, Deputy Director Agriculture Extension Atiqullah Khosha, Tehsildar Mujibur Rehman Satazkai, Syed Muhammad Shah, Syed Zulfiqar Shah, and other officers were present. During the monsoon rains, the work of opening the main drains of the city should be started from now. Municipal Committee B&R and other departments should be mobilized to provide relief to the people in emergencies. After the immediate restoration of the affected road network during the last flood, sufficient facilities were available to the public to deal with possible rains and emergencies this time as well. Actions should be taken in a better way, she instructed.

Javed Baloch condemns locking of press club

Independent Report SIBI: Provincial President of Regional Union of Journalists and Senior Joint Secretary Syed Tahir Ali, Senior Journalist Mir Javed Baloch strongly accused the press club representatives of locking the press club on behalf of the president of ANP Sibi yesterday, denouncing it in words, they said that Sibi Press Club has always carried out journalistic affairs in a better manner by reporting on the truth.

local registered journalists participated fully in the ANP rallies and processions. Block accused Sibi Press Club journalists of extortion and blackmailing and talked about locking up Sibi Press Club, which we condemn at every forum. We boycott all activities of ANP. Along with this, we hope the officials of the press clubs across Balochistan will announce a complete boycott of ANP news. We will protect their legitimate rights by protesting against which all the responsibilities will fall on the central and provincial leadership of ANP. Journalists of News Channel are performing their role in a better and more efficient manner, the officials and journalists of Sibi Press Club will not be pleased with such accusations and threats, they said.

Columnist goes underground...

Continued from page 1 or vanished altogether after being granted temporary bail by the courts. Speculations are rife that Fawad, known for his daring stance against the state, might have managed to flee the country through covert means, potentially crossing the land borders of neighboring India, Iran, or Afghanistan. The situation has become even more convoluted as conspiracy theories and clandestine investigations swirl within various security agencies, including the Federal Ministry of Defence. Fawad's involvement in multiple cases pertaining to conspiratorial news and social media campaigns against the government has led to an international travel ban and the revocation of his passport. The cloak of anonymity, these insiders have revealed that

if Fawad Ali Shah has indeed managed to secretly enter any foreign country, every available resource will be tirelessly deployed to ensure his swift repatriation. Collaborations with international agencies such as Interpol and Pakistani diplomatic missions abroad are being sought, as the government aims to establish connections and ensure Shah's return. The gravity of the situation cannot be overstated. Fawad's actions over the years have cast a shadow of disrepute upon the country, prompting the government to take resolute measures to hold him accountable for his alleged transgressions. As the nation braces itself for the unfolding drama, the eyes of the world are fixed upon Pakistan, waiting to see how this high-stakes saga will conclude.

We have no...

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AG said I have no personal objection. Justice Mansoor Ali Shah recused him from the bench. Justice Mansoor Ali Shah remarked "I never sat in such bench when there is doubt of partiality against me. CJP while moving to AG remarked "you are raising objection on what basis. Are you raising objection on the basis of clash of interest or partiality. We have always exercised restraint. We did not award punishment to those who have not implemented court's decisions. We think this time is for moving one step back. Government should not insult the judiciary. He further remarked "implementing court's decisions is moral obligation. "We have no stick for implementation of court's orders. Several people have stick. But what moral justification they have. Justice (Retd) Jawad S Khawaja is a dervish. He has no relevance with the politics. AG told the court he has no objection personally. CJP while addressing AG remarked "you are lawyer of good character and credibility. There is one full series wherein objection is being raised repeatedly. Earlier the debate remained this was decision of Punjab election of 4 judges or three judges. You are once again making bench controversial. Hamid Khan requested the judges to hear the case.

BHC issues stay order against...

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formation of the members of BoG of PCB vide notification dated 22.06.2023 in contradiction to the nomination of members of BoG by the Management Committee as notified on 20.06.2023, IPC excluded President Peshawar Region, President Karachi Region, President Lahore Region, President Rawalpindi region, representative of Khan Resarch Lab and illegally and unauthorisedly included National Bank of Pakistan, State Bank of Pakistan, president Larkana Region, President Dera Murad Jamali Region and President Bahawalpur Region as members of BoG of PCB; the formation of members of BoG of PCB is of great significance as according to Article 7 of the 2014 constitution of PCB, special meeting of members of BoG has to be convened to elect the Chairman PCB from amongst the members of the BoG by a majority of the total members of the BoG and if the special meeting of the Board for choosing the Chairman is conducted on the scheduled date of 27.06.2023 by the illegal and unauthorised members of the BoG of PCB, the same will be in violation of 2014 constitution of PCB and it will deprive the validly nominated members of the BoG which were notified by the Management Committee on 20.06.2023. Thus, in view of the above contentions so raised by the learned counsel for the petitioner, the court admitted the petition for regular hearing. The counsel contended that while issuing the above

Lt. Gen. among others sacked from...

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was made. However, the probe is underway and further proofs are being collected," he added. The Pakistan Army, relatives of the martyrs and veterans were perturbed and saddened over the May 9 tragic incidents, he said, adding, "The relatives of the martyrs are questioning whether their loved ones sacrificed their lives for the nation so that their symbols are desecrated? Will the evil elements continue disrespecting the sacrifices of martyrs and Ghazis to achieve their political goals? When will the planners of May 9 tragedy be brought to justice?" He said the heirs of the martyrs were asking the Army Chief whether he would be able to protect the sanctity of the martyrs in future. "The heirs of the martyrs and all the ranks are raising the question that if the sanctity of the sacrifices of martyrs were to be desecrated, then what is the need to sacrifice one's life?" The Pakistan Army, he said, represented all the (federating) units, schools of thought and classes and not a particular elite. "The basis of the stability of any country and nation is the relationship of trust and respect between the people, the government and the army." The DG ISPR reaffirmed that neither the black day of May 9 would be forgotten in the country's history nor the miscreants, planners and facilitators of the tragic incidents would be forgiven. "Those who obstructed all the measures against the facilitators related to this tragedy will also be dealt with iron hands with the support of the nation," he added. Major General Ahmed Sharif said 17 military courts, which already existed in the country, were dealing with the cases under the Army Act. "About 102 miscreants are being tried in the military courts and this process will continue as their cases have been transferred from civil courts after proper in-

vestigation and proofs," the DG ISPR said. He said the security forces carried out some 13,619 intelligence-based operations against terrorists and their facilitators during the current year. About 1,172 terrorists were arrested in the operations. "This year, 95 officers and men embraced martyrdom," he said, adding around 77 operations were conducted on daily basis against the scourge of terrorism. The entire nation paid rich tribute to the sons of the soil who had sacrificed their lives for the defence of the motherland, he added. The DG ISPR said the Pakistan Army initiated the self-accountability process in the aftermath of the May 9 tragedy to ascertain the reasons of failure to protect its installations. "After detailed departmental inquiries, three officers including a lieutenant general have been dismissed from service. Strict disciplinary action has been taken against 15 officers, including three major generals and seven brigadiers," he stated. Moreover, he added, the granddaughter of a retired four-star general, the son-in-law of a retired four-star general, the wife of a retired three-star general, and the wife and son-in-law of a retired two-star general were undergoing the same accountability process based on irrefutable evidence. Responding to media queries, the DG ISPR said 17 standing military courts, currently functioning across the country, were established much before the May 9 incident under the Army Act. The May 9 incident accused under trial in military courts had complete legal rights, including that of appeal to the High and Supreme Courts. He added that the International Court of Justice after due process of observation had validated the military courts' procedures. He brushed aside the misleading impression about the armed forces vis-à-vis the May 9 tragedy,

FIA once again arrests Ch Pervez

LAHORE (Online): FIA has once again arrested former Chief Minister (CM) Punjab Chaudhry Pervez Elahi. According to media reports FIA team has arrested Pervez Elahi from jail and taken him away in armored vehicle. The sources said FIA anti money laundering team has arrested Muhammad Zaman, gunman and front man of Pervez Elahi too. Sources said Muhammad Zaman is cash boy and front man of Chaudhry Pervez Elahi. He is involved in the transaction of illegal money of Chaudhry Pervez Elahi.

Role of journalist fraternity in strengthening democracy commendable: Tessori

KARACHI (INP): Sindh Governor Kamran Khan Tessori has commended the important role played by the journalist community in strengthening the democracy in the country. These views were expressed by him while addressing the journalist fraternity

during a ceremony held at Governor House in Karachi on Monday. Terming the journalists as eyes and ears of any society, Kamran Khan Tessori said that they can play an important role to guide the government towards the right direction and unifying

the people. He said IT courses are being arranged in the Governor's House for which tests will be taken after Eid. The Governor Sindh said that resolving the problems of the people was the top most priority of the government.

Government and private consumers of electricity should clear their dues: SDO

SIBI (INP): SDO WAPDA Sibi Engineer Ali Bakhsh Bugti has said that there are debts of lakhs of rupees on government-private consumers of electricity in Sibi. The termination may be possible, electricity is the trust of the country and the people, we are taking all possible measures to prevent the theft of electricity, and the complaints of WAPDA customers will be resolved in time," He expressed these thoughts

while talking to the national news agency INP. Besides LS Ghulam Hussain Arayan, Faisal Ahmed, Abdul Majeed Khosa, and other WAPDA officials were also present on this occasion. He further added, "If there are complaints, it is one of our responsibilities to solve them promptly. It is not possible to solve the problems faced by WAPDA until the Kunda system in Sibi is finished." WAPDA wants the

public and private consumers to realize their responsibilities as dues and electricity. Due to non-payment of bills on time, ongoing development work in WAPDA is affected. The representatives of WAPDA should ensure cooperation with WAPDA and provide awareness among the people so that the people would also get the benefit of timely collection of electricity bills including dues, he said.



QUETTA: Parliamentary Secretary Bushra Rind meeting with Principal Secretary to Chief Minister Imran Gichki

Govt placed promotion...

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blue economy was greater than the green one, he observed and noted that integration of both economies could boost the pace of the journey of development to a greater extent. The federal minister said that PML-N led government has expedited important projects under China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) that were integrated with the global Belt and Road initiative and open new vistas of growth and prosperity of the country. He said that under the sustainable development approach, it was our responsibility to secure and efficiently monitor the country's coastal line and maritime frontiers. The minister while lauding the services of PMSA for the protection of the borders of Pakistan said that the agency was equipped with state-of-the-art equipment and fleet and

was vigilantly securing the maritime frontiers of Pakistan. Additionally, PMSA has also earned a good name for the country across the globe due to its rescue and relief operations in the deep sea, he added. Ahsan Iqbal recalled that in 2014 operational capacity of PMSA was limited to a few old boats and it lacked an effective monitoring system. Then PML-N government vowed to modernise the agency and approved projects for the induction of 6 modern ships and boats in PMSA which had significantly improved the operational capacities of the agency, the minister said. He hoped that PMSA with its enhanced capacities would keep securing the maritime frontiers of the country and preventing the dumping of hazardous materials and elimination of illegal trade within their jurisdiction.

He further said that PMSS Kolachi was developed at the Karachi shipyard and inducted into a fleet of PMSA. The Karachi shipyard had the capability to manufacture even bigger ships that would not only further enhance the country's maritime forces but Pakistan could also earn precious foreign exchange. Earlier, Director General PMSA Rear Admiral Intiaz Ali, DDG Commodore Amir Iqbal Khan, Captain Shahid Sati and other officers received the federal minister on his arrival at the PMSS Kolachi and briefed him about the performance and future strategy of the agency. Meanwhile Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives, Ahsan Iqbal, on Monday, stressed all the sectors of the economy to work in unison as 'team Pakistan' for achieving economic growth and export expansion.

EXTENSION OF DATE reference to PRQ No. 4405/13-06-2023 dated 13-06-2023 published in daily newspapers. all other terms and conditions will remain the same as published in daily newspapers, the name of work Construction of Primary School Kili Haji Allah Dad Sanzala District Chaman TSE No. 222306339953 date of tender on 28-06-2023 may be read as 05-07-2023.

Executive Engineer (Buildings) CW PP&H Department District Chaman PRQ No. 4506/26-6-2023 www.dpi.gov.pk @dpi_gob dpi.gov @dpi_balochistan

CONDOLANCE THE ALL PAKISTAN NEWSPAPERS SOCIETY expresses profound grief over the sad demise of mother of Mr. Saeed Ahmed Khan Accounts Officer, APNS. May Allah the Almighty rest her soul in eternal peace and grant courage to the family to bear the loss. All Pakistan Newspapers Society

India's systematic torture against Kashmiris- biggest challenge to world's conscience: AJK PM

ISLAMABAD (APP): Azad Jammu and Kashmir Prime Minister, Chaudhry Anwar ul Haq has said that India's systematic torture against Kashmiris was the biggest challenge to the world's conscience.

In a statement issued on the occasion of International Day of Support for Victims of Violence observed on Monday, the prime minister, while referring to the use and abuse of power by the Indian occupation forces in the Indian

Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IOJK), said that human rights abuses in Jammu and Kashmir ranging from mass killings, enforced disappearances, torture pose a serious threat to the people of Kashmir who have been reeling under relentless oppression and barbarism over the past several decades.

He said that sexual violence was being used by the Indian forces as a means to punish and humiliate Kashmiris.

He said that Kashmiris were subjected to the worst mental and physical violence in torture cells and interrogation centers set up in the length and breadth of the valley.

"India has been using these colonial-era tactics to strengthen and solidify its illegal control over the territory of Jammu and Kashmir", he said.

He, however, maintained that despite facing India's worst violence and nefarious tactics,

Kashmiris are determined to see their freedom movement to its logical conclusion. The prime minister while condemning the brutal repression of Kashmiris at the hands of the Indian occupation forces, said that IOJK had been turned into an open-air prison where Kashmiris were forced to live under the shadows of guns. The Kashmiri leadership, he said, has been booked under Draconian laws and thrown behind bars.



Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue, Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar chaired a meeting of the Steering Committee to oversee the outsourcing of airports' operations, at Finance Division in Islamabad



ISLAMABAD: Fateha is being offered over the sad demise of the aunt of the Acting President, Muhammad Sadiq Sanjrani, at Aiwan-e-Sadr.

Daraz Pakistan to donate 200 laptops to government schools

ISLAMABAD (INP): Daraz Pakistan has announced the donation of 200 refurbished laptops to government schools in Okara, a testament to the company's dedication to supporting education and ensuring that students have access to essential technology resources.

The donation aims to provide students enrolled in eight schools in Okara with refurbished laptops, enabling them to thrive in today's learning environments. Recognizing the importance of assisting the most vulnerable groups in society, this donation will be benefiting 3600 students, according to a press release issued on Monday.

This donation will help create a more equal educational landscape by granting children access to computers.

The laptops will facilitate innovative online learning experiences both inside and outside the classroom, breaking down barriers and ensuring equitable solutions. Daraz acknowledges that digital literacy is a prerequisite for most jobs today, and by providing students with personal devices, they will be better prepared for their future careers.

Zeeshan Khan, Regional Corporate IT Head, Daraz, expressed his enthusiasm about the donation, stating,

IHC summons SSP operations

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Islamabad High Court (IHC) on Monday summoned SSP Operations Islamabad police and directed him to appear in person in a case seeking the recovery of a missing bureaucrat Azam Khan.

Chief Justice Aamer Farooq heard the case regarding the matter. The officials of FIA, NAB, Interior Ministry, police officials and additional attorney general appeared before the court.

At the outset of the hearing, the police officials informed the court that the vehicle of the missing bureaucrat was not seen in the footage of Safe City Cameras.

The chief justice remarked that how it was possible as the vehicle to be driven across the city. He further said that it was a serious matter as the said bureaucrat was missing since June 15.

Dust, thunder storm with rain expected in most parts of country

ISLAMABAD (Online): Isolated heavy falls with isolated hail storm is expected in Northeast Punjab, Potohar region, Upper Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Kashmir during the next twelve hours. However, dust and thunderstorm with rain is expected in upper and central Punjab, Islamabad, Pothohar region, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, north and east Balochistan, Kashmir and Gilgit-Baltistan.

Temperature of some major cities recorded this morning:

Dar chairs meeting to oversee outsourcing of airports' operations

ISLAMABAD (Online): Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar chaired a meeting of the Steering Committee to oversee the outsourcing of airports' operations, at Finance Division, today.

Federal Minister for Aviation and Railways Khawaja Saad Rafique, Federal Minister for Commerce Syed Naveed Qamar, SAPM on Finance Mr. Tariq Bajwa, SAPM on Government Effectiveness

Dr. Muhammad Jehanzeb Khan, Secretary Aviation, DG CAA, IFC representatives and senior officers from Finance and Aviation attended the meeting.

During the meeting, IFC, transaction advisor, gave a presentation to the committee which took decisions as to the future roadmap for moving forward for outsourcing of the first airport in order to improve service delivery and match best international practices.

PM&DC prepares to conduct MDCAT at national level

ISLAMABAD (Online): Pursuant to the decision taken in the 2nd council meeting of Pakistan Medical and Dental Council held on 4th June 2023 at PM&DC Secretariat, Islamabad, Pakistan Medical and Dental Council, has approved the syllabus for MDCAT session 2023 and decided to conduct the National MDCAT-2023 examination on 27th August 2023 at National level through the respective provincial public sector admitting university.

Moreover, the letters written to provincial secretaries PM&DC emphasizes the gravity of MDCAT 2023 and requesting to provide the list of cities from each respective provincial government & admitting university where the examination centers will be setup accordingly so that the same list can be uploaded on the official website.

Citizens asked to adopt precautionary measures amid rainy spell

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Islamabad Electric Supply Company (IESCO) asked the general public to adopt precautionary measures owing to a rainy spell as a little carelessness or negligence can lead to a fatal accident.

The spokesman advised the general public to follow precautionary measures for the sake of saving life and important belongings.

Do not touch naked wire and get repaired defective wiring, use three pin plug along with proper earthing while using an iron, washing machine, refrigerator etc, put wooden pieces, flappers or rug under your feet and also use rubber soles shoes, further said.

The nomination will enable the conducting university in timely preparation of question paper, arrangement of venues, appointment of investigation staff and to meet the deadline of 27th August 2023 for the smooth conduct of MDCAT both at National & International Level.

As more than two hundred thousand students are going to appear in medical college admission test (MDCAT) on 27 August and due to extreme shortage of time and for the sake of students across the Country, council has adopted the last year syllabus already approved by the Medical & Dental Academic Board.

Pak int'l civil servant receives highest honor by Lao PDR

ISLAMABAD (APP): Representative of the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) to Lao People's Democratic Republic Nasar Hayat on Monday received a Cross-of-Friendship Medal from the Lao government, for his contributions to the country's development.

The award marks the completion of Nasar Hayat's four-and-half-year tenure as a UNFAO Representative in Lao PDR,

where he headed the FAO programme focused on the development of the agriculture sector, food security and disaster resilience in the country.

Laos, which borders Thailand, China, Cambodia and Vietnam, and has a population of 7 million, is one of the least developed countries in the world.

The award was presented by Phoxay Khaykhamphouthone, Vice-Minister of Foreign Affairs, on behalf of the Prime Minister of Lao PDR.

The ceremony was also attended by senior Lao officials from various ministries including the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, the Ministry of Planning and Investment, and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, along with the officials of the UN agencies.

In his speech at the ceremony, he expressed his gratitude to the Government of Lao PDR for the honour. "I am proud that through FAO's support, the sector of agriculture has been recognized as a key driver of economic growth in Laos. I am also pleased to have played a significant role in helping Lao communities to adapt to climate change," he remarked.

Now in the second phase, AIOU SWIFT Centers are being established across the country, providing all necessary information and facilities to existing and new students. These SWIFT Centers will be duly registered with AIOU to promote the academic services and activities of the university and serve as a digital facility centre for students.

PIMS denies news reports on heatstroke deaths

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Pakistan Institute of Medical Sciences (PIMS) has contradicted the news items appearing in some sections of media on deaths from heatstroke in the hospital. According to spokesperson Executive Director PIMS, Dr Mubashir Mushtaq Dahi, no any case of death from heatstroke was reported in the hospital.

He said that news items were not based on facts as the district administration had handed over four dead bodies to the hospital and it was just an assumption that the cause of death could be heatstroke. However there were no confirmed reports of this, he added.

He said that the hospital has made special arrangements for heatstroke patients.

Dr Mubashir Dahi said that the hospital's central air-conditioning system is being upgraded besides the installation of new air-conditioners and for this purpose Pakistan Public Works Department (PWD) has been given a deadline of June 30 to complete the project.

He said that the hospital is working on a war-footing basis to streamline its cooling system to facilitate the patients.

He said that on the direction of the Minister for National Health Services, nine air-conditioners have been installed on an emergency basis in its new emergency while the cooling system is fully functional in the pharmacy of the hospital.

Law Enforcement departments unite in Islamabad to tackle drug abuse: ICCPO

Independent Report ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad capital police, in collaboration with the Anti Narcotics Force (ANF) and educational institutions, conducted a significant meeting at the Central Police Office on the occasion of International Day

included Brigadier Ammar Ali, Regional Directorate Commander North from the Anti Narcotics Force, and high-ranking officers from Islamabad Capital Police, including the Capital Police Officer Headquarters, AIG Operations, and SSP Operations.

from this menace, highlighting that letters have already been dispatched to all institutions in this regard.

Representatives from educational institutions proposed the organization of refresher courses and awareness campaigns, aimed at shielding young



During the session, ICCPO Dr. Akbar Nasir Khan emphasized the critical role of social response and proper guidance in preventing youth from falling prey to drug addiction. He acknowledged the concerted efforts of law enforcement agencies, including ANF, in combating drug-related activities in Pakistan.

ICCPO Dr. Khan urged educational institutions to collaborate closely with law enforcement agencies to safeguard students

students from the dangers of drugs and promoting a comprehensive understanding of its adverse consequences. By fostering awareness among the younger generation, the aim is to break the network of drug dealers and prevent the destruction of young lives. ICCPO Dr Akbar Nasir Khan affirmed the commitment of Islamabad capital police to bring those involved in drug trafficking to justice and prevent them from jeopardizing the future of our society.

the meeting was chaired by Islamabad Capital City Police Officer (ICCPO) Dr. Akbar Nasir Khan, the meeting aimed to address the rising concern of drug abuse among the youth and strategize effective measures to combat this menace.

Soaring epidemic of children's mental health disorders

ISLAMABAD (APP): Behind the innocent smiles of our children lie unseen battles that often go unnoticed. The alarming surge in mental health disorders among our youth calls for immediate intervention. By acknowledging and addressing these hidden struggles, we can pave the way for a brighter future where our children's well-being takes center stage.

(Child Protection Campaign), Bushra Iqbal highlights, "Understanding a child's personality physiologically, mentally, and physically by giving them a conducive approach provides a protective environment, making them more successful and feel like useful citizens of society."

Psychologist Sobia Iftikhar adds, "Family and couple therapy are very helpful in dealing with children's mental health issues, including psychotherapy, family training therapies, stress management, and behavioral management." Parents play a crucial role in shaping their children's mental well-being. By actively engaging with their children, observing their activities, and addressing their thoughts and concerns, parents can create a nurturing environment that fosters emotional resilience. Open and support-

ive conversations at home can help alleviate fears and anxieties that contribute to mental health disorders, she added. Regular check-ins with children are essential in monitoring their emotional well-being. Emotions and moods can fluctuate, and by actively communicating and offering support, parents can normalize any fears or anxieties stemming from their environment. Reinforcing positive aspects of their lives, such as engaging in activities, spending time with loved ones, and pursuing hobbies, can significantly contribute to a healthy mental state.

However, the responsibility to address children's mental health issues extends beyond the confines of the home. Government and community efforts are crucial in providing accessible mental health resources and interventions. Prioritizing children's mental health, alongside physical health, should be a cornerstone of public health policies.

In countries facing specific challenges, such as polio eradication, the cooperation of parents becomes paramount. It is essential for parents to understand the implications of neglecting vaccinations, as it not only poses physical health risks but also contributes to mental and emotional distress in children. By prioritizing their children's health and actively participating in vaccination programs, parents can contribute to their overall well-being and protect them from potential mental health challenges.

Internal pressures, such as academic performance stress, excessive expectations, and constant comparisons, can significantly impact a child's mental health. Creating a supportive environment

that fosters individuality and encourages a balanced approach can help alleviate these pressures. Parents should promote a healthy perspective on achievements and ensure children have opportunities for relaxation and self-care.

Addressing name-calling, bullying, and fostering a culture of respect within schools and communities is essential. By educating children on the importance of kindness and empathy, we can create inclusive environments where all children feel safe and valued. "As a society, we must increase awareness and prioritize the mental health of our children. Parental education programs and counseling services within educational institutions, led by experts like Sobia Iftikhar, can equip parents with the knowledge and skills needed to identify and address potential mental health disorders.

Over 49,000 Hajj Pilgrims receives medical care in Madinah

ISLAMABAD (APP): Over 49,000 pilgrims have received medical care services in seasonal health centres and facilities in Madinah since the beginning of the month of Dhul Qa'eda, 1444 AH.

Saudi Arabia's Ministry of Health has provided comprehensive medical care services to the pilgrims during their stay in the province of Madinah.

Since the beginning of the previous Hijri month, a total of 43,445 pilgrims have received healthcare services in the seasonal health centres near the Prophet's Mosque and in the central area, as stated by the Ministry of Health, Saudi Press Agency reported. Furthermore, the emergency departments of hospitals have attended to 5,654 pilgrims during the same period. The medical services in Madinah have included six open-heart surgeries, 88 cardiac catheterizations, 76 other surgeries, and 134 dialysis sessions. 192,552 pilgrims have received health education and awareness services.

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Daily Voice of Masses Independent

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Revised budget

Budget 2023-24 that was passed by parliament yesterday after the introduction of large fiscal-tightening measures to sweeten it for the IMF might resuscitate the bailout deal with the Fund, stalled since last November.

As Finance Minister Ishaq Dar said in his closing budget speech, the IMF's concerns regarding the original budgeted deficit of 6.5pc of GDP have been largely addressed through the imposition of additional taxes of Rs215bn and spending cuts of Rs85bn.

In its comments on the original budget unveiled in May, the IMF had said that it "misses the opportunity to broaden the tax base in a more progressive way". The lender had also objected to certain other budgetary measures like the 'no-questions-asked scheme' to attract new dollar inflows from Pakistanis abroad.

Unfortunately, the details of the new fiscal adjustments show that the government has wasted yet another opportunity to broaden the tax base despite meeting the IMF condition.

It has imposed a total of Rs438bn — taxes of Rs223bn were introduced in the original draft — and there is no major effort to bring undertaxed sectors, such as retail, agriculture and real estate, into the net. No reform of the SOEs has been planned either.

Although the government has increased the withholding tax on property transactions in the hope of netting Rs35bn, the measure is unlikely to produce the targeted revenue without drastic documentation of the sector. Much of the burden of the additional taxes will be borne by the organised corporate sector and salaried classes.

Mr Dar's speech indicated that agreement on the new adjustments had been reached between the two sides after three days of hard negotiations. That means that one of the three concerns of the lender has been met before it restarts the funding.

How much progress has been made on the other two demands regarding the removal of controls on the exchange rate to keep the rupee from going into free fall, and the gap between the two sides on the IMF's external financing gap estimates for the outgoing fiscal year?

The government has already moved towards restoring the proper functioning of its foreign exchange market, and it is anticipated that the Fund will relax its condition on external financing gap projections.

Since the 'thaw' in ties between the lender and Islamabad has come only after Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif's repeated interactions with IMF managing director Kristalina Georgieva, including their recent Paris meeting, both sides seem to be softening their positions. Though just a few days are left before the rescue facility expires on June 30, there is still enough time to seal the deal. This is crucial if Pakistan is to avoid the looming sovereign default; without the deal, the country could exhaust its forex reserves in the next few months.



Maleeha Lodhi

Amid much fanfare, the government last week announced an "economic revival plan" focused on what it calls "untapped potential in key sectors of the economy" to attract foreign direct investment from "friendly countries".

A new body has been created, the Special Investment Facilitation Council, to undertake this task. Any initiative to address the dire economic situation is to be welcomed. But serious measures have to be rooted in reality and not reflect wishful thinking.

A policy aim that side-steps the country's macro-economic crisis and deteriorating state of public finances can only be construed as a flight from reality. Patchwork measures taken in isolation of the overall economic environ-

ment won't work.

The roots of Pakistan's economic crisis lie in chronic fiscal deficits, responsible for its perpetual balance-of-payments problems, high inflation and macroeconomic instability.

What is needed, therefore, is a comprehensive plan to address structural issues and chart a path to sustainable growth that can end the vicious cycle of high budget/ balance-of-payments deficits, rising debt and chronic foreign exchange crises, which have led to repeated IMF bailouts.

Unless structural issues are tackled, the country will not escape from the trap of anaemic growth, low savings and investment, high deficits, heavy borrowing, growing indebtedness and soaring inflation.

Investment levels only increase in an environment of economic and political certainty and stability, which can build confidence. Uncertainty undermines investment prospects and keeps investors hesitant.

It is a predictable and liberal business regulatory framework and commitments of policy continuity

by governments that can foster a positive investment climate.

No one invests long-term capital if the rules of the game are frequently changed. Moreover, a level playing field for investors is necessary to attract significant investment — something the recent policy announcement fails to do, and therefore marks a step backwards in investment facilitation.

The fundamental factors that will determine Pakistan's chances of achieving sustainable economic recovery are political as well as economic. The most important prerequisite is 'n', in fact, economic.

It is the quality of the country's leadership and whether it leads a competent government that sees the significance of structural reform and has the motivation and credibility to take measures, painful in the near term, but which yield enduring dividends in the long run.

Pakistan's economic crises have all been rooted in governance crises, with reform-averse ruling elites almost always seeking pain-free ways to deal with deep-seated economic

problems.

Pakistan isn't unique in facing a severe economic crisis. Many countries across the world — in Southeast Asia, Latin America and our neighbourhood — faced similar if not worse crises but were able to overcome imposing challenges to bounce back stronger and more resilient.

In each case, crises were turned into opportunities. Wrenching structural adjustments, tight fiscal policy and other reform measures were launched by leaderships who were convinced that long-term commitment and consistent policy implementation were essential to move ahead.

Leadership is key. But so is an able and knowledgeable team of professionals who can assist the government in formulating and implementing reforms to deal with crises and ensure the country's transition to sustained economic revival and growth. It is generally agreed that in every successful case of a country that created a better economic future, the quality of professionals who shaped and oversaw the reform

process was critical.

Again, leadership matters. Leaders select the right team and then inspire it to stay the course and deliver. Institutional strength is also important. That determines how effectively policy measures and reforms are implemented. The secular decline in the quality and capacity of Pakistan's civil service and its continuing generalist nature are now among the key impediments to policy implementation.

An important study commissioned by the World Bank, the Growth Report, examined the experience of countries around the world to draw lessons on what worked to make them economically successful. The report was put together by the Commission on Growth and Development set up by the World Bank, which comprised distinguished members, mostly from the Global South.

Though published in 2008 its conclusions remain just as valid today. Most instructive is the identification of characteristics shared by countries that executed successful growth strategies. They ensured macroeconomic stability, maintained

high rates of saving and investment, allowed markets to allocate resources and fully exploited the world economy.

Most important, they all had credible and capable governments. Above all, the report points to the understanding by policymakers that "successful development entails a decades-long commitment and a fundamental bargain between the present and the future".

In striking such a bargain, both the urgent and important have to be addressed. The urgent is, of course, the immediate financial crisis and the need for comprehensive measures to address that on a durable basis. But the bargain with the future also involves dealing with issues that are just as consequential to economic progress and the country's future.

The most important of these is the coverage and quality of education that is on offer. Economic progress cannot be achieved without a solid educational base. An educated and skilled workforce is what makes the difference between the success or failure of economic development. This requires long-term policy decisions. — Courtesy Dawn

Bargain with the future

HEC, Holi and identity crises



Dr Naazir Mahmood

Changing the world for future generations is one of the primary tasks of education, more so of higher education. A recent letter by the executive director (ED) of the Higher Education Commission (HEC) to heads of institutes of all public and private sector institutes of higher education in Pakistan reflects how our state has been trying to shape the world for our youth. The PML-N government has been on the same destructive path that the PTI government was following. Rather than appointing some sensible and forward-looking persons on some of the top positions in the education ministry and in the HEC, it has appointed — or has continued with — some of the worst possible choices in the ministry and in the commission. The govern-

ment has tried to rebrand the same Single National Curriculum (SNC) with a slightly different name. It removed a highly competent and enlightened chairman Dr Tariq Banori, and has given extension to a retired bureaucrat as executive director.

The letter in question has the subject line: "On campus celebrations of events & (sic) festivals". It begins with a long sentence reminding all rectors and vice-chancellors of universities across Pakistan that "Higher Education Institutions (caps original) are inter alia responsible for dissemination of knowledge and are essential actors in transforming youth into humane, caring, and cultural individuals, besides creating a [workforce] that has skill sets in accordance with the prioritized needs of the country and also espouses the cultural and moral values as laid down by our religion."

Before discussing the actual intent of the letter — prevention of Holi celebrations — this opening sentence itself calls for a dissection. The honourable executive director assumes that the heads of all private and public sector universi-

ties including some of the best and most prestigious institutes in Pakistan such as the Aga Khan University (AKU), Lahore University of Management Sciences (LUMS), Institute of Business Administration (IBA), National University of Science and Technology (NUST), the National Defence University (NDU); the universities in Balochistan, Gilgit-Baltistan, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Punjab, and Sindh — all lack an understanding of what they are responsible for.

Before the learned executive director arrogated to herself the authority to pontificate about the responsibilities of over 200 rectors and VCs, she herself directly needed a better understanding of higher education. It is more about building knowledge and creating new possibilities rather than disseminating knowledge which is an old and outdated conception at higher education. More than being 'essential actors in transforming youth', HEIs should be facilitators and providers of a conducive atmosphere where learners are not 'acted upon' by essential actors. Rather they have an enabling environment to ask

questions, breathe freely, communicate openly, and are able to demonstrate their art, culture, and diversity.

It is not anybody's responsibility to 'transform' anybody else, let alone the captive audiences we call pupils. Grooming and nurturing is what a good institution or teacher does by offering a safe and sound campus where learners acquire better understanding of other cultures, become more tolerant, and see themselves grow as equal and responsible citizens. They become caring and humane where their elders and institutions themselves are caring and humane. If our administrators and bureaucrats are not friendly, loving, and sympathetic to all nuances of beliefs and cultural activities, they end up braising our youth in a simmering liquid that we dish out as education.

Being humane means being tender, showing compassion and sympathy, especially to those who are suffering injustices or are distressed just by the fact that they are on the margins of society. A humane person causes least harm to anyone, including animals. Is there any celebration of a festival that causes harm to

others, I leave the answer to the reader to ponder. The HEC executive director also talks about "cultured individuals" — perhaps without realizing what a cultured individual does. A cultured individual carries a refined and enlightened attitude and that is reflected more in cultural pursuits, of course with some help from parents and teachers — and not from bureaucrats.

Then she goes on to write about "a workforce that has skill sets in accordance with the prioritized needs of the country". Wait a minute! May we know what the prioritized needs of the country are? Who set them? When? Where? How? By Jove, look at any education policy or white papers and commission reports — and we have had dozens of them — you will find plenty of clichés but no substance. A lot of paperwork with "learning outcomes" and other fancy words without the required intellectual capacity in our education managers to produce any positive results.

The letter exhorts the heads of HEIs to "espouse the cultural and moral values as laid down by our religion". One would like to ask if there is any consensus on

our cultural and moral values. This assumes that in Pakistan there is only one 'our religion'; ideally she should have used a plural expression 'our religions', as in Pakistan we also have Ahmadis, Bahais, Christians, Hindus, Sikhs, and Zoroastrians. And look what we have done to our youth in the name of the values that we have been trying to impose on them.

The executive director in her letter has also reminded the heads of HEIs of the mandate the HEC enjoins as "laid down in its ordinance" to formulate policies and priorities "based upon the concepts embodied in our own culture, values, and traditions, thus preserving the nation's ideology". First, the mandate does not authorize the HEC to impose a ban on celebration of events and festivals. Second, there are no concepts embodied in our own culture, because Pakistan is a multicultural, multi ethnic, and multilingual society; attempts to prove otherwise resulted in alienation of Bengalis — which was not a result of a foreign conspiracy as our 'fifth generation warriors' would like us to believe. — Courtesy TheNews

It's all geopolitics



Huma Yusuf

Kicking off his US visit with a yoga session on the north lawn of the United Nations, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi assumed the positions of a cobra, crocodile, and frog. Pakistanis watching the visit unfold last week probably hurled more animal slurs his way. But the visit should leave Pakistan introspective.

My compatriots have been incensed at the US-India joint statement calling on Pakistan to do more to counter terrorism, and inviting further FATF scrutiny of our efforts to counter terrorism financing. Similar statements with similar phrasing have been issued by four US administrations to smooth the course of the US-India bilateral relationship. It is the least of our worries.

Much has already been written to explain why Modi — once banned from entering the US due to his involvement in the anti-Muslim pogrom in Gujarat — is now feted as America's great friend. The answer is always geopolitics: India, with its burgeoning population and robust economy, is in America's eyes the only convincing counterpoint to China in Asia; there is no managing Beijing without befriending New Delhi.

And then there's the Russia angle. With growing urgency to resolve the Ukraine conflict and weaken Russia sufficiently to prevent future such transgressions, Washington needs New Delhi to take a more critical stance vis-à-vis Moscow, historic defence ties notwithstanding.

When Great Games are underway, everyone starts to bend the rules. In the US case, that means choosing to largely ignore India's horrific human rights record with regard to Kashmir and the Indian Muslim population, and the rapid erosion of India's democratic culture in the form of press censorship and clampdowns on the political opposition.

So where does this leave Pakistan? We could cry foul at being told (yet again) to clamp down on home-grown militancy. But this is not a way to make friends and influence people (least of all China and Saudi Arabia, long-term allies who discreetly signalled to Pakistan in recent years that the strategy of maintaining state-sponsored 'assets' is no longer welcome).

Here's another option: we could initiate a serious rethink of our foreign policy. The major challenge for Islamabad arising out of Modi's visit is the question of how to balance its ties with Washington and Beijing. We need to maintain our links with both these superpowers: we need the loan rollovers from Beijing, the IMF bailouts from the US. We need China's infrastructure investments, and American IT innovations. We do not want to have to choose.

Arguably, the visit we should have obsessed over last week was that of US Secretary of State Antony Blinken to China. The trip aimed to ease tensions between the superpowers after the US shot down a Chinese spy plane in February. Some progress was made to stabilise ties and improve communication, but relations soured again when US President Joe Biden referred to China's president as a "dictator".

Could Pakistan add value to both its allies by playing a productive mediator? Unlikely given our current political melt-

down, but these are questions we should be asking. Another 21st-century reality highlighted by Modi's visit is that unless you have something to offer the world, the world doesn't care what happens to you. Our long-term strategy of negotiating under pressure has run its course. Rather than agonise over the impressive defence deals that New Delhi has struck with Washington, let's consider what else makes India an attractive partner for the US.

Geopolitical might aside, Modi arrived in Washington with semiconductor assembly and other manufacturing capacity, critical minerals, climate finance opportunities and an ambitious space programme.

For supporting the diversification of supply chains away from China and facilitating the global green transition, India is receiving the kind of inward investment that will help covet: not just hundreds of millions dollars into manufacturing facilities, but also an agreement to train 60,000 Indian engineers to boost India's capacity to develop semiconductors.

Pakistan will be lost if it doesn't marry economic policy (our vague premise of doing better on agriculture and IT) with foreign policy and geopolitical realities. Ultimately, it will have to reappraise the cost of premising its foreign policy on enmity with India.

Areas for cooperation — food and water security, climate adaptation and mitigation, supply chain integration, access to technology, and even regional stability — are proliferating and need to be explored (perhaps one day in a threesome with Washington too?). Without a more agile approach, Pakistan will only hasten its isolation. — Courtesy Dawn

Token legislation?



Haris Zaki

Today marks the 26th International Day in Support of Victims of Torture, commemorating the adoption of the UN Convention Against Torture in 1987 and the absolute prohibition on torture in any and all circumstances. Each year, this day provides a platform for stakeholders to come together in universal condemnation of the reprehensibility of torture, and to rally support for the victims and survivors.

Pakistan's relationship with the phenomenon of torture has always been an uneasy one. Despite repeated condemnation by the state and accession to various international human rights instruments, torture is an institutionalised practice that permeates nearly every facet of our criminal justice system. Impunity breeds violence, and in the absence of clear-cut accountability mechanisms, those in power were free to exercise this violence to coerce, intimidate and extract unlawful confessions from the public.

When the president put his assent to the Torture and Custodial Death (Prevention and Punishment) Act, 2022, in November last year, it seemed as though years of effort were finally yielding some progress; the past decade had seen the introduction and subsequent failure of five separate bills criminalising torture. As such, the passage of this law (introduced by the previous government's interior ministry and taken up by the incumbent one) was

nothing short of momentous. It may have been out of a sense of duty to the public, or perhaps to protect themselves from the victimisation they inevitably face depending on which way the ballot goes, or even a step towards compliance with international obligations. Regardless of their motivations, our lawmakers have succeeded in bringing to life a procedural framework within which torture by public officials is defined, criminalised and penalised.

Since then, however, there has been no documented use of this law, despite the rampant prevalence of the term 'custodial torture' in today's public discourse. Seven months on, it seems the general public, particularly those who most regularly find themselves in the police's cross hairs, are largely unaware of this Act and the protections it offers. The true success of any law lies not in whether it receives the approval of our legislature, or how many brownie points it gets us in the UN Treaty Body reporting phase. Without passing rules that detail responsibilities, powers and procedures, similar to those notified under the Anti-Rape (Investigation and Trial Act), 2021, the Act criminalising torture will remain a token piece of legislation introduced as a cosmetic measure in advance of Pakistan's GSP-Plus reapportionment.

On this International Day in Support of Victims of Torture, perhaps more than simply bringing attention to the prevalence of torture in the country (which is no great secret), the priority should be ensuring every Pakistani who has or may unlawfully suffer at the hands of public officials knows how to hold them to account.

Under the Torture and Custodial Death (Prevention and Punishment) Act, 2022, the Federal Investi-

To control drug abuse Governor underlines need to evolve comprehensive mechanism in universities

Independent Report
LAHORE: Governor Punjab/Chancellor Muhammad Balighur Rehman chaired a meeting of Consortium on Drug and Narcotics Control today at Governor House Lahore. In the meeting, suggestions and recommendations regarding the prevention of drug abuse in universities were discussed.

Speaking on the occasion, Punjab Governor Muhammad Balighur Rehman underlined the need to evolve a comprehensive mechanism in universities to control drug abuse at the campuses of the universities. He said that the 2021

policy of the Higher Education Commission is an effective and comprehensive policy in this regard. Governor Punjab urged all the vice chancellors to ensure the implementation of this policy.

He said that there is a need to train the faculty in this regard as well. Governor Punjab emphasized that regular awareness campaigns should be conducted to make students aware of the ill effects of drugs. He added that there should be counseling facility for students in the campuses in this regard.

On this occasion, the members of the Consortium briefed the Governor

Punjab in detail about the various recommendations.

Convener/Pro-Vice-Chancellor Bahauddin Zakaria University, Dr. Muhammad Ali, Vice-Chancellor Faisalabad Medical University Prof. Dr. Zafar Ali Chaudhry, Vice-Chancellor Nishtar Medical University Multan Prof. Dr. Rana Altaf Ahmed, Vice-Chancellor GC University Lahore Prof. Dr. Asghar Ali Zaidi, Vice-Chancellor University of Health Sciences Lahore Professor Ahsan Waheed Rathore, Vice-Chancellor Women University Multan Professor Dr. Director ANF Raja Tariq Mehmood participated in the meeting.



LAHORE: Governor Punjab/Chancellor Muhammad Balighur Rehman chairing a meeting of Consortium on Drug and Narcotics Control at Governor House

State-of-the-art Command & Control Centre established for Redzone security

PESHAWAR (APP): Corps Commander Peshawar Lieutenant General Hassan Azhar Hayat formally inaugurated the "Command & Control Centre" established for the security of Redzone at the Central Police Office (CPO) here on Monday.

Upon his arrival, he was received by the Inspector General of Police Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Akhtar Hayat Khan. A smart contingent of police presented a guard of honour to the guest.

The chief guest laid a floral wreath on the Yadgar-e-Shuhada-e-Police and offered Fateha. The chief guest was given a special briefing about the newly established Center.

It merits mention here that the newly established Center is the first of its kind in the country which is fully equipped with the latest modern gadgets.

The basic purpose of the Centre was to ensure security to the installation

situated in the Redzone as well as to make an integrated automatic system of the entry of the Registered Employees.

The system has four main salient features which consist of vehicle identification, pedestrian identification, visitor identification and the latest modern communication system.

Moreover, state-of-the-art cameras and other latest communication tools have been installed in this system.

Likewise, facial identification, Automatic identification vehicle number plates (ANPR), Under Automate System (UAS) of vehicle checking and vehicle intrusion, pedestrian identification camera have also been installed due to which vehicle checking, wanted people's identification and, wanted vehicle identification carried out.

Similarly, an alarm is being generated on entry of suspicious persons and vehicles in the Redzone and all field officers are

promptly informed through a communication system to alert the suspicious person and vehicle.

Likewise, road blockers, tyre burst and turn style gates have been installed to deny forced entry of any vehicles and person into the Redzone.

This is the first phase of a highly guarded security system established for security from Central Prison gate Peshawar, Police lines main gate, Civil Secretariat, Governor House, Chief Minister House and Secretariat and other important buildings.

One of the features of the Command and Control Center is that it can make prompt and easy access to all field commanders as well as improve the operational capabilities of the police to tackle Emergency and crisis situations.

The chief guest expressed full confidence in the newly established latest security system and appreciated the KP police efforts in this regard.



SARGODHA: Police recruiters are showing their skills during 92nd Police Passing out parade at Police Training School.

Mayor assures citizens of municipal grievances

KARACHI (APP): Mayor Karachi Barrister Murtaza Wahab Monday said citizens' complaints regarding cleaning and other municipal problems would be resolved on priority.

He was presiding over a meeting in his office for a detailed review of the problems faced by the citizens in the limits of, Tehsil Municipal Committee (TMC) Orangi, Manghopir and Mominabad and issued instructions for their immediate solution by the relevant bodies.

He said that Karachi Water and Sewerage Board should solve the problem of leakage from water supply and drainage lines in Manghopir. Solid Waste Management Board should keep in full contact with the TMCs regarding sanitation in their area. All the concerned officers should solve the problems of the citizens through mutual contacts, he observed.

Deputy Commissioner West Ali Zulfikar Memon, Managing Director Sindh Solid Waste Management Board Syed Imtiaz Shah.

CS Punjab lays foundation stone of MIT Park in Murree

RAWALPINDI (APP): Chief Secretary Punjab, Zahid Akhtar Zaman on Monday laid the foundation stone of MIT Park in Murree.

The chief secretary during a visit to Murree instructed the authorities to utilize all available resources to provide the best possible facilities to the tourists, particularly during the Eid ul Azha holidays.

On the occasion, Commissioner Rawalpindi Division, Liaquat Ali Chatha, Deputy Commis-

sioner, Hasan Waqar Cheema and DG of Parks and Horticulture Authority (PHA) Rawalpindi Ahmed Hasan Ranjha were present.

The DG PHA gave a detailed briefing to the Chief Secretary on the park project. A kid's area and an open-air gym would be constructed in the park, the Chief Secretary was informed. The chief secretary appreciated the performance of DG PHA and directed the authorities to complete the project within a stipulated time frame.

KP registers 40 dengue cases in one week

PESHAWAR (APP): The provincial health department, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa on Monday called for more pragmatic measures to control the spread of dengue fever in the province as at least 40 cases were reported within a week from across the province.

A comparative report of dengue fever cases issued here by the department revealed that 13 cases were reported from Mardan, 11 Peshawar, five Bajaur, three Chitral, two each from DI Khan and Swabi and one each from Bannu, Lakki Marwat, Khyber and Kohat districts.

It said that the health department in collaboration with the district administrations and other line departments kept the dengue cases under control this year as compare to the last year.

Brothers killed after being hit by oil tanker

DERA GHAZI KHAN (APP): Two teenage brothers were killed after the motorcycle they were riding was hit by a mini oil tanker near 33-More, Kot Chutta town, on Monday.

Those killed included Muhammad Farhan (16), Muhammad Zeeshan (15) while another teenager Sharjeel (15) was injured and hospitalized, rescuers said. The rescue team rushed to the accident site where they found the two already dead.

Kot Chutta police reached the site and started investigations against the driver of the oil tanker. The bodies of the deceased were handed over to their legal heirs.



PESHAWAR: Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Haji Ghulam Ali addressing 1st Convocation of University of Technology Nowshera at chief guest

CM Punjab puts line departments on alert

Independent Report

LAHORE: Caretaker Chief Minister Punjab Mohsin Naqvi has directed all line departments including the provincial administration, Punjab Disaster Management Authority, Rescue 1122, and Water and Sanitation Agency to maintain a state of high alertness, operating round-the-clock, in response to heavy rainfall in Lahore and other cities. The chief minister directed the officers concerned to remain present in the field, ensuring prompt drainage of stagnant water. He emphasized the need for expeditious water drainage, without any compromise, utilising available machinery to implement the

planned drainage strategy within the designated timeframe. He sternly emphasised that no negligence would be tolerated in carrying out the vital task of water drainage.

Addressing the issue of traffic management, the CM emphasized the need for special arrangements to facilitate the smooth flow of vehicles, with active efforts required to resolve public grievances.

He urged administrative officers and WASA staff to oversee and complete the water drainage operations, while emphasizing the initiation of immediate emergency measures in the event of any unfortunate incident.

Ahmed Hassan says: PML-N to come up to people's expectations

LAHORE (APP): Prime Minister's Coordinator Khawaja Ahmed Hassan said on Monday the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) government was determined to steering the country out of prevailing crises and it would come up to people's expectations.

He was addressing a meeting, called to review the ongoing development work in the city and arrangements in connection with the Eidul Azha at the Aiwan Iqbal Complex. With sincere efforts of the government, the country would get out of the prevailing crises soon, he said adding that the leadership would mitigate the effects of the damage, caused to the economy by politics of

vandalism, and it would be compensated by working hard.

Former MNA Mehar Ishtiaq, MPA Ch Shehbaz, Rabia Farooqi, Ramzan Siddique Bhatti, Syed Tauseef Shah, MD LWMC Babar Sahibuddin, DG PHA Naem Watto, DMD WASA Abdul Karim, representatives of Walled City of Lahore Authority, Punjab Police and others were present.

Khawaja Ahmed Hassan said that despite difficult circumstances, the government was providing resources worth billions of rupees to improve the quality of life to people whereas comprehensive reforms were being introduced for rapid development of the province.

Kundi for ensuring all possible facilities at BISP payment centers

Independent Report

DERA ISMAIL KHAN (APP): Minister of State for Poverty Alleviation and Social Safety Faisal Karim Kundi on Monday directed for ensuring the provision of all possible facilities to the beneficiaries at payment centers of Benazir Income Support Program (BISP).

He issued these directions during his visit to different payment centers of BISP in Dera Ismail Khan. On this occasion, the state minister was accompanied by Pakistan People's Party (PPP) District President Malik Farhan Afzal Dhap, Tehsil General Secretary Malik Khizer Hayat, Tehsil Information Secretary Haji Sooba Khan and others.

He listened to the issues and difficulties being faced by the beneficiary women at these payment centers and directed the on-duty staff to take steps for

immediate resolution of the problems being faced by the deserving people.

He warned that no negligence would be tolerated in ensuring smooth payments to the beneficiary women.

The state minister said that on the special instructions of PPP Chairman and Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari, this time the aid amount has been increased from Rs 8,500 to Rs 9,000.

Similarly, he said, educational scholarships worth Rs 17 billion were being given under the Waseela-e-Taleem programme. The stipend amount for the children of deserving women has also been increased. The female student would be given Rs 2,500 and the male student would be provided Rs 2,000 stipend amount.

Faisal Kundi said the cards of 7,000 women in Dera Ismail Khan which

were closed during the previous tenure had been restored.

"I believe in practical steps rather than false promises," he said.

He said an amount of Rs 1.37 billion was being distributed among 150,000 deserving women of Dera Ismail Khan.

He said the government was making an effort to make these deserving people self-reliant in the future so that they

could play their role in the betterment of the country's economy instead of taking aid.

He acknowledged the BISP staff for working in severe weather conditions.

The beneficiary women present there said they were grateful to BISP and Minister of State Faisal Karim Kundi. "We are being paid in a good environment near our homes," they added.



LAHORE (Online): 3 siblings died due to traffic accident in provincial capital Lahore.

According to rescue authorities, a tragic traffic accident took place on Soi Asal Road near Kahana where two speeding motorcycles have been collided with a tractor trolley parked on the side of the road.

Authorities have said that as a result of the accident, three siblings died while the mother and two sons were injured.



LAHORE: US Counsel General Lahore William K Makanoole gives away certificate to a girl during prize distribution ceremony of English Works Program at a local hotel.

GB unveils over Rs116 bln budget for fiscal year 2023-24

GILGIT (APP): The Gilgit Baltistan government on Monday announced an Rs116 billion 15 crore budget for the next fiscal year 2023-24 in the Assembly held here on Monday.

Gilgit Baltistan Finance Minister Javed Ali Manwa presented the budget in the House.

In the budget of the new financial year, 74 billion rupees have been allocated for non-developmental expenditure, while 28 billion 45 crore rupees have been allocated for development expenditure. 13 billion 70 crore rupees have been proposed for subsidy on wheat. The finance minister announced a 35 per cent increase in the salaries of government employees up to 16 and 30 per cent in the salaries of employees from grades 17 to 22.

He further said that more than one billion 37 crore rupees have been allocated for the improvement of the health sector.

Heer said that more than 1 billion 57 crore rupees have been allocated for education, 45 crore rupees for agriculture, animal husbandry and fisheries, and 4 billion 17 crore rupees have been proposed for the power sector.

More than 24 crore rupees have been allocated for the sector irrigation, 1 billion 33 crores for physical planning and housing, 3 billion 46 crores for the communication system and 28 crore 53 lakh have been proposed for IT.

Earlier, the Gilgit-Baltistan cabinet meeting was held in Gilgit, and Chief Minister Khalid Khurshid presided over the meeting. The budget proposals for the next fiscal year were approved in the meeting.



GILGIT: Chief Minister Gilgit-Baltistan Khalid Khurshid Khan chairing a cabinet meeting of Budget approval at CM Secretariat.

Minister vows to arrest miscreants behind attacks on Sikh youth

PESHAWAR (APP): Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Minister of Information Barrister Feroze Jamal Shah Kakakhel on Monday said the law enforcing agencies and police were actively pursuing the two attacks on Sikh youth in the provincial capital and assured that soon the miscreants would be brought to justice.

The Minister arrived here at Gurdwara Bhai Joga Singh, Mohalla Jogan Shah and condoled with the bereaved family of 32-year-old Mamohan Singh a Sikh shopkeeper who was shot dead in Rashidgarhi Bazaar here on Saturday.

The Minister conveyed his heartfelt sorrow and grief to later Mamohan Singh's father and brother and assured that soon the culprit would be arrested and given exemplary punishment.

He said that no one would be allowed to disturb the peace and atmosphere of brotherhood in the province and reiterated the resolve of the KP government to ensure protection of lives and properties of the minorities.

He said the minorities enjoy equal rights in the province and they were practicing their religious, cultural and traditional ritual without any fear and restriction.

The Minister said that there was a complete harmony and cohesion in the province but a handful of miscreants were carrying out such activities as part of an agenda of anti-state elements to defame the country's image.

Meanwhile the provincial minister also visited Tarlok Singh, who got injured in a similar attack on Friday here, at his residence and inquired after his health.

The Minister directed provision of best medical treatment to him and also handed him over Rs 500,000 cheque as financial assistance.

Mayor assures to address issues of PK-82

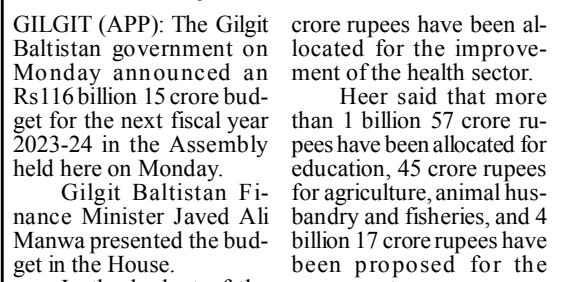
PESHAWAR (APP): Mayor Peshawar, Haji Zubair Ali on Monday said Capital Metropolitan Government was striving to provide needed facilities to its people at their doorstep.

He was talking to a delegation from PK-82, Suhail Abad at his residence here wherein local residents of the constituency and elites were present.

The delegation apprised the Mayor regarding various issues in their area relating to cleanliness, installation of electricity transformers, power outages and gas shortages.

The Mayor while paying prompt attention towards the problems, issued directives to the administrative officers of the department concerned to address the same on an urgent basis.

The delegation thanked the mayor for listening to their problems and expressed gratitude. The delegation also assured all-out support to the mayor.



RAWALPINDI: People are boarding in a wagon at Faizabad Bus Terminal to travel their hometowns for Eid celebrations.

Dogar held Fawad, Mazari responsible for knocking down PTI

MULTAN (APP): Former Chief Whip of PTI, Amir Dogar has blasted out at Fawad Chaudhary and Sheri Mazari as becoming political pawns to knock down the party in the current scenario.

In an informal talk with journalists after their appearance in court here, Dogar found fault with the working of PTI's chairman as the latter had committed mistake after mistake mainly over suggestions of the sycophants were roaming around him.

None of 125 NA's members was ready to tender resignations, he believed as he said.

"We had been told that PDM would go away with everything and we would languish in prison, but

Fawad Chaudhary's group didn't weigh any of our words to avoid the chaos, he stated." He also hit out at Usman Buzdar, calling him as the main responsible for 'Punjab destruction' as CM of the province.

Buzdar was an unfaithful person who could never be trusted, he maintained.

He categorically condemned the May 9 incidents with a paid tribute to the sacrifices of the Armed Forces. I believe soldiers at borders have made our lives peaceful, he maintained.

Pak Army and Pakistan are part and parcel with each other, he said. Amir Dogar said he belonged to a patriotic family. He said the city's administration was a witness that he waged peaceful protest on the day.



KARACHI: A large number of vehicle are stuck in the massive traffic jam at Pakistan Avenue in Provincial Capital.



QUETTA: A delegation of All Balochistan Property & Builders Association led by Ameer Hamza meeting with Governor Balochistan Malik Abdul Wali Khan Kakar

PARC, BoP collaborate to promote research based agriculture

Independent Report
ISLAMABAD: (PR & P PARC) Pakistan Agricultural Research Council (PARC) and The Bank of Punjab (BoP) have entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the aim of boosting agricultural productivity and sustainability in Pakistan. Under this agreement, BoP will provide financial support for research activities that are mutually agreed upon and driven by demand, with the goal of promoting the welfare of the farming community and ensuring sustainable food security. In an initial step, BoP will finance the specific needs of the potato-growing community, focusing on the production of disease-free seeds for potato growers in the Punjab region. This financial backing from BoP aligns with the broader objective of fostering growth and green sustainability throughout the country. Additionally, both PARC and BoP have expressed their commitment to engaging the youth in the agricultural sector through their participation in various agriculture trades training programs under the Prime Minister's youth loan scheme.



During the event, Dr. Ghulam Muhammad Ali, Chairman of the Pakistan Agricultural Research Council (PARC), highlighted the critical role of agricultural research in attaining economic stability and promoting rural development. Dr. Ali emphasized the paramount significance of allocating resources to expand agricultural research activities, as it drives product innovation, strengthens food security, and creates opportunities for exports. Such investments are instrumental in ensuring the long-term prosperity of the nation and the well-being of rural communities by facilitating sustainable agricultural practices and advancements. Chairman Dr. Ali expressed his profound appreciation for the visionary approach presented by BoP and assured the bank of wholehearted cooperation in future endeavors.

PEW says: Govt's new tax measures to intensify miseries of poverty-stricken masses

ISLAMABAD (INP): Senior Vice President of Pakistan Economy Watch (PEW) Dr. Hanif Mughal has said that newly introduced tax measures of the government will further intensify the hardships of the poverty-stricken masses who are in the grip of the unprecedented inflation and unemployment in the recent years. In a statement issued here on Monday, he said that various changes have been made by the government in budget of the including fiscal tightening measures in a last-ditch effort to secure critical funding, but it will also hit the masses badly, he said. Dr. Hanif Mughal said that the government now aims to generate another Rs215 billion in taxes and cut spending by Rs85 billion without reducing the federal development budget or the salaries and pensions of government employees, which will be difficult. The IMF orders will revise the revenue collection target to Rs9.415 trillion; put total spending at Rs14.48 trillion and the share of provinces would be increased to Rs5.39 trillion from Rs5.28 trillion, he added.

The business leader said that the government will collect Rs70 billion from fertiliser duty, Rs45 billion from hike in tax on buying, selling property, and Rs30 billion from increased tax on people earning above Rs200,000 per month. **MOU signed between FPCCI and CCR**
Relentless efforts to improve Pakistan, Russia economic ties

Independent Report
ISLAMABAD: The Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce & Industry and the Chamber of Commerce of the Sakha Republic (Yakutia), Russia have signed an MOU desiring to contribute to the expansion of friendly relations in the future through the development of cooperation projects aimed at mutually beneficial development of joint business projects in the Sakha Republic (Yakutia) and Pakistan, guided by the desire to develop foreign economic relations between the Sakha Republic (Yakutia) and in Pakistan; The MOU was signed after a week of 75th anniversary on the establishment of bilateral relations between Pakistan and Russian Federation, at the Saint Petersburg economic forum 2023. Mr. Umar



public of Russia, located in the Russian Far East, along the Arctic Ocean, and with a population of roughly 1 million Sakha comprises half of the area of its governing Far Eastern Federal District. According to the signed MOU, both Parties will help establish direct contacts and exchanges between themselves and individuals of both Parties in the spheres identified by the Protocol of Intentions. Both Chambers will also develop cooperation for the development of joint business projects based on mutual benefit and under the laws of their states in the field of foreign economic relations.

Naeem stresses to enhance Pak-Africa economic integration

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan's High Commissioner for the African country Rwanda Naeem Khan on Monday said that the African region is very important for enhancing economic integration with Pakistan. Africa is the largest consumer market in the world due to the lack of large-scale industry and production at the local level, he said. Pakistan's High Commissioner for the African country Rwanda Naeem Khan expressed these views during his visit to Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry, said a press release issued here. He said there are immense opportunities for Pakistan's business community in this region. Naeem Khan said that the way Islamabad Chamber has made efforts for trade relations with other African countries including Ethiopia for some time is commendable. "I hope that as the Head of Mission to Rwanda and other countries, I will continue to receive the full support of the Islamabad Chamber and the business community."

Gold prices up by Rs 800

ISLAMABAD (APP): The per tola price of 24 karat gold increased by Rs 800 and was sold at Rs 215,300 on Monday against its sale at Rs.214,500 the previous day. The price of 10 grams of 24 karat gold also increased by Rs .685 to Rs 184,585 from Rs 186,043 whereas the price of 10 grams 22 karat gold went up to Rs 169,203 from Rs 168,574, All Sindh Sarafa Jewellers Association reported. The price of per tola silver increased by Rs.50 to Rs2,550 whereas that of ten gram went up by Rs.42.87 to Rs2,186.21. The price of gold in the international market increased by \$11 to \$1931 from \$1920, the association reported.



HYDERABAD: Vendors selling sacrificial animals at Animal Market Hathri Bypass in connection with upcoming Eid ul Azha.

PSX witnesses bullish trend, gains 1,371 points

ISLAMABAD (APP): The 100-index of the Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) witnessed bullish trend on Monday, gaining 1,371.78 points on Monday, a positive change of 3.42 per cent, closing at 41,437.10 points against 40,065.32 points the previous day. A total of 226,821,151 shares were traded during the day as compared to 136,899,866 shares the previous day, whereas the price of shares stood at Rs.7,010 billion against Rs. 3,372 billion on the last trading day. As many as 327 companies transacted their shares in the stock market; 269 of them recorded gains and 43 sustained losses, whereas the share price of 15 companies remained unchanged.

Shipping activity at Port Qasim

KARACHI (APP): Port activities were reported on Sunday, where four ships namely, MSC Flosta, Magnum Force, Sadah Silver and Opera Scheduled to load/offload Containers, Cement, Palm oil, Gas oil and Chemicals, berthed at Container Terminal, Liquid Terminal, Oil Terminal and EngroVopak Terminal respectively. Meanwhile six more ships, OOCL Le Havre, MSC Mundra-VIII, Hua Wei-8, GC Berly, Silhouette Island and Milaha RasLafan with Container, Palm oil.

CDNS to launch four Shariah compliant product from July 1st

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Finance and Revenue Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar on Monday reiterated firm resolve of the government to implement Shariah Compliant financial system to promote and encourage interest-free Islamic banking and finance in the country. Addressing the launching ceremony of the Shariah Compliant products by the Central Directorate of National Saving (CDNS), the minister said the directorate has designed and introduced Shariah-compliant investment and saving scheme which would be formally launched by July 1, 2023. In a first, the minister said the CDNS has launched four investment and saving products based on one-year, three-year and five-year terms, besides initiating saving account facility, adding that it is a flexible scheme with monthly profit and to withdraw principle amount that would encourage savings and ensure full returns. Ishaq Dar informed that soon after assuming the charge as finance minister, he had directed the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) and National Bank of Pakistan (NBP) to withdraw their petitions against the decision of the Federal Shariah Court in which the Court had ordered to implement interest-free banking and financing system in the country. Meanwhile, a high power steering committee headed by the Governor SBP was formed to find ways and means to promote Shariah-compliant financial system in the country. The committee was comprised of other prominent scholars and experts from the banking and finance sectors. He said during the last tenure of the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz government, a committee was also constituted, which had taken several steps and produced positive results as due to these efforts, the spread of Islamic banking grew by 21 per cent, adding that the balance sheets of banks with Shariah Compliant finance products witnessed a remarkable increase. The minister said the government had recently promised to introduce Islamic finance products, adding in this regard all the concerned departments of the Ministry of Finance and other attached departments worked hard to materialize the commitment. Besides, all the commitments made in the federal budget 2023-24 would be fulfilled one by one to achieve sustainable economic growth and social prosperity in the country, he added.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar addresses the launching ceremony of Sarwa Islamic Savings Products by National Savings at Finance Division.

Federal Cabinet approves board of directors for newly established HESCO

ABBOTTABAD (APP): Pakistan Muslim League-N and Federal Minister for Parliamentary Affairs Murtaza Javed Abbasi, Prime Minister Shahbaz Sharif and the entire leadership of PML-N. With the establishment of Hazara Electric Supply Company, all electricity-related issues, including load shedding will be resolved locally and thousands of unemployed youth will receive employment opportunities. Federal Minister for Parliamentary Affairs, Murtaza Javed Abbasi, and other leaders of the PML-N have been making efforts for the establishment of Hazara Electric Supply Company for the past several years. A year ago, after the formation of the PDM government, Murtaza Javed Abbasi and other PML-N leaders demanded the establishment of HESCO from the Prime Minister of Pakistan Shahbaz Sharif, who approved it. The federal cabinet has now approved the establishment of HESCO. The Chairman, as well as other members, have been appointed from Hazara to the Board of Directors of HESCO. After the announcement of the Board of Directors Federal Minister for Parliamentary Affairs, Murtaza Javed Abbasi congratulated the people of the region and said that HESCO will soon become operational. He further said that we are grateful to Prime Minister of Pakistan Shahbaz Sharif and our leader Muhammad Nawaz Sharif who has presented the gift of Hazara Electric Supply Company to the people of Hazara, overcoming all obstacles that were hindering the rights of the people of the region. The minister said that the progress of Hazara is guaranteed by the PML-N and HESCO is the biggest project for the development of the people.

Rupee gains 03 paise against US Dollar in interbank

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistani Rupee on Monday gained 03 paise against the US Dollar (USD) in the interbank trading as it closed at Rs 286.70 against the previous day's closing of Rs 286.73. However, according to the Forex Association of Pakistan (FAP), the buying and selling rates of dollars in the open market stood at Rs 289.5 and Rs 292 respectively. The price of the Euro went up by 56 paise to close at Rs 312.22 against the last day's closing of Rs 311.66, according to the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP). The Japanese Yen remain unchanged to close at Rs 2, whereas an increase of Rs 0.59 was witnessed in the exchange rate of the British Pound, which traded at Rs 365.18 as compared to its last day's closing of Rs 364.59.



QUETTA: Leaders of Kissan Ittehad Haji Maqsood Ahmed, Dr. Maqbool Ahmed and others addressing a Press conference

Tasneem Qureshi says: Promotion of agro based industry vital

SARGODHA (APP): State Minister for Production and Industries Tasneem Ahmed Qureshi Monday stressed the need for promotion of the agro-based industry. He said agro-industry contributes to GDP, earns foreign exchange through exports, promotes rural development, ensures food security, and adds value to agricultural products. Talking to APP, he said a strong and vibrant agro-based industry was crucial for sustainable economic growth, poverty reduction and overall developments. He said the agro-based industry was crucial for ensuring food security in Pakistan. With a growing population, it is essential to have a robust agricultural sector that could produce an adequate quantity of food to meet the domestic demand, he added. He said value-added products from the agro-based industry, such as processed foods, textiles, leather goods, and pharmaceuticals, had a higher value in both domestic and international markets, contributing to higher revenues and economic growth. He said agriculture had long been the backbone of Pakistan's economy, employing a large portion of the population that encompasses various sectors.

Shahid Rasheed says: IMF, WB political institutions, promoting poverty, inequality in world

ISLAMABAD (INP): Former President of Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) Dr. Shahid Rasheed Butt said on Monday that the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Bank (WB) and other related institutions are promoting poverty and inequality in the world. Their aim is to increase the wealth and influence of Western countries by robbing the poor countries of their resources, he added. In a statement issued here, Shahid Rasheed Butt said that because of the tactics of these institutions, five percent of the world's population has occupied eighty percent of the resources. The majority of the richest people in the world belong to a Western power, and the IMF is adopting every legal and illegal tactic to increase their wealth, he observed. The business leader said that at present more than seventy countries, including Pakistan, are unable to pay their debts. Self-interested elites who can sell the country's assets but cannot reduce spending control most of these countries.

SCCI highlights role of global organizations in sustainable eco. growth

PESHAWAR (APP): Sarhad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCI) stressed the need for building up a close liaison and coordination between government institutions concerned, businessmen and international development organizations to resolve trading community issues under a one-window operation. Jaz Khan Afridi, the acting president of the SCCI said the International development organisation has played a pivotal role in sustainable economic growth and development of Pakistan. He, however, said owing to a lack of proper coordination and contacts between government relevant institutions, chambers and relevant stakeholders, there were creating hurdles to achieving the sustainable economic development goals and setting targets under the global commitments made by Pakistan. The acting president urged the international organisations to make chambers, the business community and relevant stakeholders consultation to resolve business community difficulties.

SMEDA to sign MoUs with six public sector organisations

LAHORE (APP): The Small and Medium Enterprises Development Authority (SMEDA) is going to sign six memorandums of understanding (MoUs) with six public sector organizations to celebrate World SME Day, 27 June as World MSME Day. The signing ceremony would be attended by Makhdoom Syed Murtaza Mehmoody, Federal Minister Industries and Production as chief guest. The organisations joining the signing ceremony of MoUs included Punjab Small Industries Corporation (PSIC), Federal Tax Ombudsman (FTO), Punjab Information Technology Board (PITB), Messalaha International Center for Arbitration and Dispute Resolution (MICADR), Urban Unit Government of the Punjab and Government of Gilgit Baltistan. Talking to media here Monday, CEO SMEDA Farhan Aziz Khawaja highlighted the significance of World SME Day, and said that the United Nations General Assembly, in order to recognize and streamline the importance of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) in any economy had declared 27 June as world MSME Day and the first MSME day was celebrated on 27th June 2017. The objective of celebrating this day was to provide a platform for MSME owners to tell their stories of entrepreneurship and its challenges, while governments, international organizations and business support organizations show their commitment to supporting their development, he explained.

Russian PM urges citizens to rally behind Putin after aborted mutiny

Monitoring Desk
MOSCOW: Russian Prime Minister Mikhail Mishustin said on Monday that the country had faced "a challenge to its stability" and must remain united behind President Vladimir Putin following Saturday's abortive mutiny by heavily armed mercenary fighters.

Under a deal late on Saturday that defused the crisis and averted possible bloodshed, the Kremlin said the Wagner Group mercenaries would return to base, while their leader Yevgeny

Prigozhin would move to Belarus. All criminal charges against him and his fighters would be dropped, the Kremlin said.

In what appeared to be the first public comments by a senior Russian official since then, Mishustin appealed at a televised government meeting for national unity in the face of what he said were efforts by the West to undermine Russia.

"The main thing in these conditions is to ensure the sovereignty and

independence of our country, the security and well-being of citizens," said Mishustin, a technocrat who was appointed prime minister in 2020.

"For this, the consolidation of the whole of society is especially important; we need to act together, as one team, and maintain the unity of all forces, rallying around the president," he said. Mishustin, a former head of Russia's federal tax service, also took a swipe at the West.

"As the president

noted, virtually the entire military, economic, information machine of the West is directed against us," he said.

Putin said on Saturday that the rebellion by the Wagner mercenary force had threatened Russia's very existence under threat and vowed to crush it.

However, he has not publicly commented since then on the dramatic events or on the deal brokered by Belarusian President Alexander Lukashenko that defused the crisis.



President Joe Biden arrives in the East Room with Vice President Kamala Harris and Jeff Sessions for an event about high speed internet infrastructure at the White House.



Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Andrei Rudenko and Chinese Foreign Minister Qin Gang in Beijing.

Biden says the US and NATO had no involvement in the insurrection in Russia by a mercenary force

Monitoring Desk
WASHINGTON: President Joe Biden on Monday said United States and NATO had no involvement in the short-lived insurrection in Russia by the Wagner Group mercenary force. He said it's "too early" to assess the impact on the war in Ukraine.

Biden said he held a video call with allies over the weekend and they are all in sync in working to ensure that they give Rus-

sian President Vladimir Putin "no excuse to blame this on the West" or NATO.

"We made clear that we were not involved. We had nothing to do with it," Biden said. "This was part of a struggle within Russian society."

Biden also spoke with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy over the weekend about the situation and said he intended to speak with him again later Monday or early Tuesday.

Kremlin releases first video statement by Putin since Wagner mutiny

Monitoring Desk
MOSCOW: Russian President Vladimir Putin on Monday issued via the Kremlin website his first statement since an armed mutiny by the Wagner mercenary group, congratulating participants of an industrial forum.

It was not immediately clear when or where Putin's statement was recorded.

Putin made a national address to the Russian people on Saturday condemning the mutiny by Wagner mercenaries as a "stab in the back" and vowing to crush it.

He has not commented publicly on the subsequent deal, announced late on Saturday, that appeared to defuse the crisis and avert possible bloodshed by allowing the Wagner fighters to return to base and their leader, Yevgeny Prigozhin, to move to Belarus.

Lebanon's militant Hezbollah group says it shot down an Israeli drone near the southern border

Monitoring Desk
BEIRUT: Lebanon's militant Hezbollah group said its fighters shot down an Israeli drone Monday that was flying near the border and over southern Lebanon.

The group gave no further details about the type of drone that it claimed was downed near the village of Zibqine just north of the border with Israel.

An Israeli military spokesman said in a tweet that a drone crashed in Lebanon when an Israeli force was performing routine activities. The spokesman, Avichay Adraee, added in Arabic that there were no concerns of information being leaked.

The incident comes after weeks of tensions along the Lebanon-Israel border, mainly in a disputed area known as Chebaa Farms. Earlier this month, Israeli soldiers fired tear gas to disperse scores of Lebanese protesters who pelted the troops with stones along the border. Some of the demonstrators and Lebanese troops suffered breathing problems. The protest took place on the edge of Kfar Chouba hills, which Beirut says is Lebanese land occupied by Israel. The hills and the nearby Chebaa Farms, are areas captured by Israel during the 1967 Mideast War and claimed by Lebanon.

North Korea holds rallies denouncing US, warns of nuclear war

Monitoring Desk
SEOUL: North Korea held mass rallies in Pyongyang where people shouted slogans vowing a "war of revenge" to destroy the United States, as it marked the 73rd anniversary of the outbreak of the Korean War, state media reported on Monday. About 120,000 working people and students took part in the rallies held across the capital on Sunday, state news agency KCNA reported.

Photos released by state media showed a stadium crowded with people holding placards reading

"The whole U.S. mainland is within our shooting range" and "The imperialist U.S. is the destroyer of peace."

Sunday's anniversary came amid concerns Pyongyang could soon conduct another launch of its first military spy satellite to boost monitoring of U.S. military activities after its first attempt ended in failure on May 31. North Korea now had "the strongest absolute weapon to punish the U.S. imperialists" and the "avengers on this land are burning with the indomitable will to revenge the enemy."



Presidential candidate for the Semilla party Bernardo Arevalo speaks with members of the party during a press conference on the day of the first round of Guatemala's presidential election in Guatemala City, Guatemala.

China expresses support for Russia after failed mercenary revolt

Monitoring Desk
HONG KONG: China has expressed support for Russia's efforts to maintain national stability in the wake of a failed uprising by mercenaries that posed a brief but unprecedented challenge to Russian President Vladimir Putin's rule.

Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Andrei Rudenko was in Beijing on Sunday, a day after Yevgeny Prigozhin called off an advance on Moscow by his Wagner mercenary group forces and agreed to leave for Belarus in exchange for charges being dropped. "The Chinese side expressed support for the efforts of the leadership of the Russian Federation to stabilize the situation in the country in connection with the events of June 24, and reaffirmed its interest in strengthening the unity and further prosperity of Russia," the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs said in a statement afterward.

Rudenko and Chinese

Foreign Minister Qin Gang discussed China-Russia relations and "international and regional issues of common concern," the Chinese Foreign Ministry said on its website. Rudenko's trip had not been previously announced, according to The Associated Press, and it was not clear when he had arrived in Beijing or whether his trip was related to the uprising.

The Chinese Foreign Ministry later described the rebellion as "Russia's internal affair." "As Russia's friendly neighbor and comprehensive strategic partner of coordination for the new era, China supports Russia in maintaining national stability and achieving development and prosperity," an unnamed spokesperson said in a statement on Sunday. The statement did not mention Putin or Prigozhin.

Russia and China are not formal allies, but Putin and Chinese President Xi Jinping, who refer to each other as "dear friends."

Blinken says Wagner insurrection shows 'cracks' emerging in Putin's rule

Monitoring Desk
WASHINGTON: US Secretary of State Antony Blinken said Sunday that the brief and chaotic insurrection in Russia led by the Wagner paramilitary group shows "cracks" in Russian President Vladimir Putin's role as a leader of the country.

"This is just an added chapter to a very, very bad book that Putin has written for Russia. But what's so striking about it is, it's internal," Blinken told CNN's Dana Bash on "State of the Union," describing the situation as "extraordinary."

"The fact that you have from within someone directly questioning Putin's authority, directly questioning the premises that — upon which he launched this aggression against Ukraine. That, in and of itself, is something very, very powerful. It adds cracks. Where those go, when they get there, too soon to say, but it clearly raises new questions that Putin has to deal with," he said.

The comments from

the nation's top diplomat underscore the short-lived intensity of a crisis that started when Yevgeny Prigozhin, the head of the Wagner Group, marched his fighters toward Moscow, taking control of Russian military facilities along the way. Prigozhin on Friday openly accused Russia's military of attacking a Wagner camp and killing a "huge amount" of his men.

For months, he had railed against Russian Defence Minister Sergei Shoigu and the country's top general, Valery Gerasimov, whom he blames for Moscow's faltering invasion of Ukraine. The Kremlin responded to the show of force from the Wagner Group by deploying heavily armed troops to the streets of Moscow and warning residents to stay indoors. By Saturday afternoon, the Kremlin said a deal had been reached to end the insurrection, with Prigozhin heading to neighboring Belarus and Wagner fighters turning back from their march.

US intelligence had

painted a grim picture, with the expectation that Prigozhin's march toward Moscow would encounter much more resistance and be "a lot more bloody than it was," according to one US official. There was surprise that Russia's professional military didn't do a better job of confronting Wagner troops as they moved into Rostov and up towards Moscow, the official said. Compounding that surprise was the swiftness of the deal that was struck to cease the insurrection. "We assessed it was going to be a great deal more violent and bloody," the official told CNN. The remarkable challenge to Russian leadership — while brief — threatened to plunge the country into crisis and destabilize it's already stumbling war efforts in Ukraine. "We don't know the effect this will have, but it clearly once again shows the world the difference between what is happening in Ukraine and what is happening in Russia," Democratic Sen. Amy Klobuchar of Minnesota told Bash in a separate interview on "State of the Union."

At least 3 dead, dozens of homes damaged after storms hit US Midwest, South

Monitoring Desk
INDIANA: Tornadoes and thunderstorms hit the US Midwest and South a day earlier, leaving dozens of homes damaged and at least three people dead in Indiana and Arkansas, authorities said on Monday.

The National Weather Service said multiple tornadoes and severe storms were reported on Sunday in central Indiana and Arkansas.

Emergency officials from Martin County, Indiana, confirmed one death in the area. Emergency Management Director Cameron Wolf said the victim's injured partner was airlifted to hospital. They lived in a two-storey log cabin, which was destroyed by the storms. Further details were not immediately available.

"Damage is random, it's kind of widespread," Wolf said in an interview with PBS. The damage mostly happened out in the countryside, he said, adding that towns were not hit that hard by the storms.

The Lonoke County Sheriff's Office confirmed that two people were killed after a tree fell on a home in Carlisle, Arkansas, due to severe storms on Sunday, a CBS News affiliate said.

Images and footage from local media showed fallen trees had blocked roads and homes were damaged. A large hail storm was also reported in Indiana and adjacent states, officials said. Fire Chief Eric Funkhouser from the town of Bargersville, south of Indianapolis, said that while no casualties were reported there, about 75 homes sustained moderate to severe damage after the weather, according to an NBC News affiliate.

Emergency shelters were set up in central Indiana for those whose homes were damaged and destroyed. As of Monday morning, about half a million utility customers faced power outages due to the weather in the US Midwest and South.



Leader of New Democracy conservative party Kyriakos Mitsotakis attends the swearing-in ceremony, to become the new Greek Prime Minister, following a general election, at the Presidential Palace, in Athens, Greece.

Airport worker dies after plane engine 'ingests' him

Monitoring Desk
WASHINGTON: US regulators said on Sunday they are investigating an incident in which a Texas airport worker was killed after being sucked into a passenger plane engine.

A Delta flight had arrived in San Antonio, Texas from Los Angeles on Friday night and was taxiing to the gate with one engine on "when a worker was ingested into that engine," the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) said in a statement.

"The NTSB is continuing to gather information about the event," it said. The worker was employed by Unifi Aviation, a company the airline giant contracts with for ground crew operations, according to local media.

UN agencies warn of impact if Black Sea grain deal ends

Monitoring Desk
GENEVA: An end to the Black Sea grains deal would hit the Horn of Africa hard, aid officials said on Monday, warning that another hike in food prices would add to the tens of millions of people facing hunger.

Moscow has been threatening to walk away from the deal known as the Black Sea grain initiative - brokered by the United Nations and Turkey in July last year - if obstacles to its own grain and fertilizer

shipments are not removed. A Ukrainian envoy has said he was 99.9% certain Russia would quit when it comes up for renewal on July 18.

Famine in parts of the Horn of Africa was averted this year as the rainy season, projected to fail for a fifth consecutive year, beat expectations.

But aid officials say some 60 million people are still food insecure in seven east African countries and worry about the impact of a further blow.

Australia to provide more armoured vehicles to Ukraine

Monitoring Desk
SYDNEY: The Australian government will provide a new A\$110 million (\$73.5 million) package to Ukraine including 70 military vehicles to defend against Russia's invasion, Prime Minister Anthony Albanese said on Monday.

The fresh commitments take Australia's total contribution for Ukraine to A\$790 million, including A\$610 million in military support, since the conflict began in February 2022.

"This additional support will make a real difference, helping the Ukrainian people who continue to show great courage in the face of Russia's illegal, unprovoked and immoral war," Albanese said during a media briefing in Canberra.

He said the package was not prompted by events in Russia over the weekend when heavily-armed Russian mercenaries briefly took control of the Russian city of Rostov, in one of the biggest challenges to President Vladimir Putin's grip on power.

"No, we have been working on this proposal, with a view to taking it to cabinet this morning, for

some time," Albanese said. Australia is one of the largest non-NATO contributors to the West's support for Ukraine and has been supplying aid, ammunition and defence equipment including scores of Bushmaster armoured vehicles. It has banned exports of alumina and aluminium ores, including bauxite, to Russia, and has sanctioned about 1,000 Russian individuals and entities.

To prop up Ukraine's economy and trade, Albanese said Australia will also extend duty-free access for goods imported from Ukraine for another 12 months. The latest military assistance package will include 28 M113 armoured vehicles, 14 special operations vehicles, 28 medium trucks and 14 trailers.

Albanese said his government welcomed the Australian high court's decision to dismiss a challenge by Russia to prevent the federal government to take control of land leased to build a new embassy near the parliament house in Canberra. "We expect the Russian Federation to act in accordance with the court's ruling," he said.

UN ship agency chief urges decisive action at environment talks

Monitoring Desk
LONDON: Countries must take decisive action at talks aimed at accelerating decarbonisation in the shipping industry, the United Nations' shipping agency chief said on Monday, as pressure for change builds.

Shipping, which transports around 90% of world trade and accounts for nearly 3% of the world's carbon dioxide emissions, is facing growing calls from environmentalists and investors to deliver more concrete action including a carbon levy.

Delegates of the U.N.'s shipping agency, the International Maritime Organization (IMO), are meeting in London.

Myanmar junta says failing to halt surge in drug trafficking

Monitoring Desk
YANGON: Myanmar junta authorities said they torched almost half a billion dollars worth of illegal drugs on Monday but warned they were failing to stop a surge in the production and trafficking of narcotics.

Head-high piles of heroin, cannabis, methamphetamine and opium were burned in the commercial hub Yangon, AFP reporters said, in an annual spectacle to mark International Day Against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking.

Televised torchings also took place elsewhere in the country, with a total of \$446 million of narcotics going up in smoke, according to junta officials.

But in a rare admission, the head of Myanmar's Central Committee for Drug Abuse Control said its efforts to crush the multi-billion-dollar trade were having no im-

pact. "Even though countless drug abusers, producers, traffickers and cartels were arrested and prosecuted, the production and trafficking of drugs have not declined at all," Soe Htut told the Global New Light of Myanmar newspaper.

The "Golden Triangle" border region between Myanmar, Laos and Thailand has long been a hotbed of illegal drug production and trafficking, particularly of meth and opium.

This includes Myanmar's Shan state—Southeast Asia's primary source of meth, according to the UN—home to a patchwork of ethnic rebel groups and militias aligned with the country's army. Analysts say the military, which ousted an elected government and seized power in 2021, is not serious about ending the lucrative trade.

SBP raises policy rate to 22% amid recent financial developments

KARACHI (APP): The State Bank of Pakistan, on Monday, decided to raise the policy rate by 100 bps to 22 percent for keeping real interest rate firmly in the positive territory amid recent developments. The decision, effective from 27th June 2023, was taken in an emergency meeting of Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) convened here to review the overall economic situation particularly the potential effects of budgetary measures and relaxation in imports, said a statement issued here by the Central Bank.

The MPC in its meeting held on 12th June decided to maintain the policy rate unchanged at 21 percent the then monetary policy stance as appropriate

to achieve the objective of price stability "barring any unexpected domestic and external shocks." The MPC further noted that, this outlook was "contingent on effectively addressing the prevailing domestic uncertainty and external vulnerabilities." The Committee in its emergency meeting, however, had noted two important domestic developments since the last meeting, certain upward revisions in taxes, duties and PDL rate in FY24 budget and withdrawal of SBP's general guidance for commercial banks on prioritisation of imports that have slightly deteriorated inflation outlook and which could potentially increase pressure on the already stressed external account, the statement said.

The measures have increased the upside risks to the inflation outlook, the MPC noted and viewed that additional tax measures were likely to contribute to inflation both directly and indirectly, while the relaxation in imports may exert pressures in the foreign exchange market. "The latter may result in higher-than-earlier anticipated exchange rate pass-through to domestic prices," it further added. The MPC termed the decision as necessary to keep real interest rate firmly in the positive territory on a forward-looking basis and hoped that it would help further anchor inflation expectations - which are already moderating over the last few months.



MUZAFFERABAD: Activists of All Parties Hurriyat Conference holds banner and shouting slogans during protest in the favor of their demands in the capital of AJK.

BNP announces to launch protest drive against Wadh, & related issues on July 3

Independent Report
QUETTA: The Balochistan National Party's central committee has decided to launch protest campaign against the lingering law and order situation in Wadh and other related issues in which what it claimed the party is being targeted. The decision to this effect was announced by the secretary General of BNP, Jahanzaib Baloch while addressing a hurriedly called urgent press conference at the Quetta Press Club on Monday. He was flanked by the parliamentary leader of BNP, Malik Naseer

Shahwani, MPAs Sanaullah Baloch, Ms. Shakeela Naveed Dehwar and others. The BNP senior leader announced that wheel jam strike would be observed on all highways of the province on July 3. While protest rallies would be taken out on July 8 and shutter down strike would be observed on July 14, adding he announced. Jahanzaib Baloch alleged that the political victimization is continued against the BNP even after the change of government. He also alleged that an armed group is being patronized and given funds even.



HUB: Pakistan Coast Guard Officials are showing huge apprehended drugs worth millions of rupees, during raid on local area of Kapkpar, during press conference held at PCG Headquarters.

DC Loralai chairs meeting regarding monsoon rains

Independent Report
LORALAI: Under the chairmanship of Deputy Commissioner Loralai Suban Salem Dashti, a meeting of officers was held regarding the contingency plan to be implemented because of the recent monsoon rains. Police Officer Asif Faraz Mastoi, Assistant Commissioner Zahoore Ahmad Baloch, Deputy Director of Agriculture Extension Ghulam Muhammad Uthmankhil Education Bahadur Nasir, Irrigation Engineer Ahmed Shah Nasir XEN PHE Muhammad Ali Samit, officers of all departments

participated in the meeting and informed Deputy Commissioner Loralai about the recent monsoon rains. A detailed briefing was given by Deputy Commissioner Loralai Suban Salem Dashti while addressing the meeting said. "All departmental officers and their supporting staff are on alert, the machinery of all departments is on standby in case of any emergency during the rains, all government rest houses, government buildings have been reserved, the control room of police department and Levies have been restored."



KARACHI: Woman lineup at Benazir Income Support Center after Stampede broke out during the distribution of funds of the Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP) among deserving women as several women were injured in the stampede at Benazir Income Support Center in Provincial Capital.



BERLIN: Participants of the 16th Special Olympic World Games Pakistan athletes in a group photo after the closing ceremony at Brandenburg Gate.

Saudi media minister affirms strong fraternal relations with Pakistan, calls it 'his country'

MAKKAH (APP): Saudi Arabia's Minister of Media, Salman Al-Dosari, expressed his deep bond with Pakistan, referring to it as his country, while emphasizing that Saudi Arabia serves as a second home for Pakistanis.

During a comprehensive meeting held in Mina the other day, the Minister engaged with a delegation of Pakistani journalists, underscoring the strong fraternal relations between the two nations.

Al-Dosari conveyed his heartfelt sentiment that Pakistanis are considered brothers, and Saudi Arabia welcomes them as a second home.

Recognizing the importance of fostering bilateral cooperation in the media sector, Salman Al-Dosari highlighted the ongoing efforts to strengthen ties with Pakistani media.

Emphasizing the significance of mutual collaboration, he affirmed that both countries are actively promoting this alliance.

In response, the Pakistani delegation expressed sincere appreciation to the Saudi authorities and government for the impeccable arrangements made for Hajj 2023.

After a three-year hiatus, this year's Hajj was

held in its full glory, and the delegation conveyed their gratitude for the excellent management of the sacred pilgrimage.

They said the reaffirmation of close ties between Saudi Arabia and Pakistan, coupled with efforts to enhance media cooperation, exemplifies the commitment of both nations to further strengthen their relationship.

The Pakistani delegation was comprised of Abdul Qayyum Bokhari of GTV, Sanaullah Khan of DWAN, Syed Savez Ali of BOL, Ayaz Khan of Express, Hafiz Tariq of SAMA and Rehan Khan of APP.



QUETTA: Balochistan Chief Secretary Abdul Aziz Uqaili, Provincial Secretaries and others watching Balochistan Assembly proceeding

Pak, Kazakhstan hold political consultations

ISLAMABAD (APP): The second round of Pakistan-Kazakhstan Bilateral Political Consultations (BPC) was held on Monday in Astana, Kazakhstan. Sved Ahsan Raza Shah led Pakistan side while Kazakh side was led by Kanat Tumysh, Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Kazakhstan.

During the consultations, both sides held extensive discussions on various facets of bilateral relations in the political and diplomatic, trade, economic connectivity, science & technology and culture sectors.

The two sides also exchanged views on issues of regional and global importance. Cooperation between two countries within

the framework of United Nations, CICA, OIC, ECO and SCO was also reviewed.

The two sides agreed towards early finalization of the Transit Trade Agreement which would become the catalyst for enhanced trade between the two countries. It was also agreed to enhance connectivity between the two countries and welcomed the resumption of direct flights commencing early next month.

The consultations offered an opportunity for both sides to comprehensively review the current level of bilateral relations. Both sides also identified new areas of mutual interest and reiterated the desire to further strengthen bilateral relations.

Stampede breaks out during distribution of BISP funds

KARACHI (INP): Stampede broke out during the distribution of funds of the Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP) among deserving women in Karachi.

The stampede broke out outside the BISP office near KPT Ground in Karachi's Kemaria area. As a result, 20 women lost fell unconscious.

Getting the information, the rescue teams reached the spot and moved the women to the hospital. Last Monday, Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP) announced releasing the fourth quarterly tranche of Benazir Kafaalat cash assistance.



QUETTA: Provincial Finance Minister Zamrak Khan Achakzai and leaders of Zamindar Action Committee meeting with Member Balochistan of NEPRA Mathar Niaz Rana

New Gwadar Intl Airport set to go green

ISLAMABAD (INP): The New Gwadar International Airport (NGIA) is all set to go green in the backdrop of fresh decision to set in motion "Green Coverage Initiative", fulfilling commitment of BRI's global greener practices.

Decision in this regard has been taken during comprehensive meeting among the Civil Aviation Authority, the Gwadar Development Authority, the China Overseas Port Holding Company (COPHC) on June 23.

In first phase, according to Gwadar Pro on Monday, trees will be planted on more than 3 kilo meters long incoming and outgoing roads of the NGIA. In second phase, tree plants on designated patches of Airport will be grown to bolster the green ecosystem in an area of 4,300 acres of the NGIA.

According to an official of the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA), most plants will be taken from Plant Tissue Culture Lab and Green House, integral parts of the Belt and Road Engi-

AC takes action against bakers

Independent Report
QUETTA: Assistant Commissioner City Quetta Attual Munim arrested 13 bakers and sent them to jail for selling low-weight and expensive bread.

According to the instructions of Deputy Commissioner Quetta and the people complained that the bakers in their area were selling bread at Rs 30 to Rs 60 which was also a violation of the rate list by the district administration and the weight was not fulfilled.

On which the Assistant Commissioner of City Quetta took immediate action and cracked down on the bakers in different areas of the city. During this time, the weight of the bread of many bakers was very low and the bakers were selling bread from 30 to 60 rupees. The Assistant Commissioner City expressed his anger and arrested 13 bakers for selling low-weight and high prices.

On this occasion, he said that selling low-weight bread will not be tolerated.

Pak wins 10 golds as Special Olympics ends

KARACHI (INP): Pakistan won a total of 10 gold medals in the 16th Special Olympics World Games, which concluded on Sunday in Berlin.

The number of golds increased after cyclist Safer Abid clinched one in the 10km time trial race during the games' cycling event. He completed the 10km distance in 23 minutes and 02.02 seconds.

This was the first time that Safer, who hails from Karachi, has participated in the World Games. The cyclist had been preparing for the special sporting event since the last two years, he said.

"I have the passion to win more medals for Pakistan in the upcoming international events," Safer said. In the 500m time trial race, Madecha Tahir of Pa-

kistan won the silver medal by covering the distance in 1 minute and 14.15 seconds, while Amina Arshad won the bronze medal by covering the distance in 1 minute and 16.82 seconds.

In the final of the futsal event, Oman won the gold medal by defeating Pakistan by 6-3 goals. Pakistan finished second with the silver medal.

Pakistan doubled fourth in women's doubles, men's singles and unified men's doubles of the tennis event.

In the Bocce team event, Pakistan's Mahnoor, Simran Mahesh Lal, Jamilur Rahman and Farhan Aslam won the silver medal after defeating Canada, Australia and New Zealand.

Farhan Aslam won the bronze medal in men's singles, and Mahnoor won the bronze medal in women's singles.



QUETTA: Provincial Minister Muhammad Khan Lehri meeting with Governor Malik Abdul Wali Khan Kakar

Marriyum says: Big news - new policy parameters to boost music industry

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Information and Broadcasting Marriyum Aurangzeb on Monday announced finalization of the country's first-ever music policy draft, which would ultimately prove to be a big news for the industry.

The new policy incentives and initiatives would eventually boost the music industry since they would effectively redress piracy, copyrights and other pertinent issues, she said in a statement.

The minister said the music policy had been prepared in accordance with the international standards and also considering the relevant laws in vogue in the neighbouring countries.

She said the artists' public performance, production, distribution, adaptation, duration, and mechanical and communication rights were also brought into legal framework through the policy.

The stampede broke out outside the BISP office near KPT Ground in Karachi's Kemaria area. As a result, 20 women lost fell unconscious.

Getting the information, the rescue teams reached the spot and moved the women to the hospital. Last Monday, Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP) announced releasing the fourth quarterly tranche of Benazir Kafaalat cash assistance.

QUETTA: Provincial Minister Mir Sikandar Ali Unrani meeting with Provincial Minister Sardar Abdul Rehman Khetran

Seminar for learning lesson from miserable life of drug addicts, not to hate them

Independent Report
QUETTA: The speakers at an awareness seminar on "International Day against drug abuse and illicit trafficking" have underlined the need to learn lesson from the miserable life being led by the drug addicts in the society instead of hating them.

They also stressed that every individual of the society would have to play one's effective role in prevention of the drugs and illicit trafficking.

The speakers were addressing the seminar organized by the Excise, Taxation and Anti-Narcotics,

Government of Balochistan, at the Government Sandeman High School here on Monday.

The Secretary Excise and Taxation, Zafar Ali Bokhari, Secretary Law and Parliamentary Affairs, Abdul Saboor Kakar, eminent psychologist, Professor Dr. Ghulam Rasool, academician, Gulab Khan Khilji, DG Excise, Muhammad Jahangir Kakar and Principal Dr. Naseer Shah addressed the seminar.

They highlighted the ill effects of the use of narcotics and delivered lectures on the life skill education.

Monsoon rains DA Hub issues advisory to relevant institutions

Independent Report
HUB: District Administration HUB has issued an advisory to the relevant institutions on the advance reports of monsoon rains from the Department of Meteorology.

In the meeting, in light of the orders of Chief Minister Balochistan and Chief Secretary Balochistan Abdul Aziz Uqaili, the meeting was held in the deputy commissioner Hub office. Decisions were made regarding the coordination between all relevant government departments and the formation of emergency quick response teams and the correctness of storm

drains and sewage systems. Addressing the officials, he said, "There are clear instructions from the Chief Secretary of Balochistan that the Monsoon Plan should be effective and coordination between the government agencies should be ensured. Watering pumps should be prepared and rescue personnel should be alerted.

On this occasion, the officials of the relevant government departments briefed the meeting participants regarding the proposals and preparations for the monsoon plan. Janshir Chairman of Municipal Committee Wunder FC 54 Wing Major Saad Ullah Drijji.