

Independent

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Quetta

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PM urges all political forces to sign charter of economy for country's sake

Says time has come to decide whether we have to lead life of dignity or of beggar life; Wants people to espy performance of PML-N, PTI govts before taking decision in upcoming elections

LAHORE (APP) Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Saturday once again called for a charter of economy and democracy for the sake of continuity of policies and for the prosperous future of the country.

Addressing a ceremony to award laptops to talented students of the Danish Schools System, the prime minister regretted that the false allegations of thefts and corruption had divided the nation and spread venom.

He said during the past 15 months of the coalition government, they had faced

issues like floods, price hikes and an IMF agreement but he had never witnessed such a bitter divide in the society throughout his life.

The prime minister said that in different parts of the world, elections were being held, but the worst divide which had been created in Pakistan, had destroyed the country's progress and prosperity.

He stressed that a charter of economy and democracy would ensure continuity in policies, irrespective of change of governments, as had been pursued by different countries of the

world. The prime minister called upon all to realize the issues confronted by the country.

Termining the IMF's agreement as 'a breather for the country', he stressed that they should convert it into an opportunity, adding that it was also a moment of introspection for all.

"They should bury their differences and become one and if they decide it, then nothing could hinder the country from moving on the path of

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QUETTA: Chairman Senate Muhammad Sadiq Sanjrani, Speaker Balochistan Assembly Mir Jan Muhammad Jamali and others attending consultative meeting of Balochistan Awami Party

BAP decides to take wholehearted part in general elections; form alliance and seat adjustment

Independent Report
QUETTA: The Balochistan Awami Party (BAP) has reiterated its resolve to take wholehearted part in the upcoming general elections.

The party also decided to form electoral alliance and do seat adjustment with different like-minded parties in the elections.

The decision to this effect was made in a consultative meeting of BAP held here on Saturday.

The meeting was attended by the Chairman Senate, Muhammad Sadiq Sanjrani, Speaker

Balochistan Assembly, Mir Jan Muhammad Jamali, Member National Assembly, Nawabzada Khalid Khan Magasi, Senator Manzoor Ahmed Kakar, senior Provincial Minister, Sardar Saleh Bhotani, Senator Prince Umar Ahmedzai, provincial Minister, Abdul Rasheed, Wali Noorzai, Farooq Jamali, Malik Khuda Baksh Langove and others.

The meeting discussed the overall political matters besides the matters related to the next general elections, caretaker set up and other ones.

Strongly slams desecration of Qura'an in Sweden:

Canadian company finalized US \$ 1 million solar projects for Balochistan: GoB Spokesperson

Independent Report
QUETTA: The spokesperson of Government of Balochistan, Ms. Farah Azeem Shah has disclosed that a Canadian company has finalized a solar projects for the province costing US \$ 1 million.



The solar project would be used for the commercial sector in Balochistan, maintained the GoB spokesperson while addressing press conference at the Chief Minister's secretariat here on Saturday afternoon. The GoB spokesperson strongly condemned the incident of desecration of Holy Qura'an in Sweden saying that it hurt the sentiments of millions of Muslims in the world. She said that the provincial government has vast vision for promotion of trade in the province. She said that the slogan of the provincial government is that we want trade not hate.

Referring the ongoing tense situation in Wadh area, Ms. Farah Azeem Shah said that a committee has already been formed under leadership of Provincial Minister for Home and Tribal Affairs, Mir Ziaullah Langove.

GoB received Rs13.125 b from MRDL as royalty of Saindak Copper-Gold Project

QUETTA (APP): The Balochistan government has received Rs 13.125 from MRDL as royalty of Saindak Copper-Gold Project since 2004 to 2022.

As per the lease contract between Saindak Metals Limited (SML) and MRDL that a royalty of 5 percent of the gross sale proceeds to be

paid to the government of Balochistan. The details of the royalty paid to the government of Balochistan every year were taken from the audited financial statements of MCC. The above royalty amount is 5 percent of the gross sale proceeds of Copper, Gold, and Silver.

Sindh Governor meets KPK, Balochistan Governors

KARACHI (APP): Sindh Governor Mohammed Kamran Khan Tessori met Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa (KPK) Governor Haji Ghulam Ali and Balochistan Governor Malik Abdul Wali Khan Kakar at Governor House here on Saturday.

They discussed the promotion of inter-provincial coordination, the exchange of delegations and other issues of mutual interest.

The governors of KPK and Balochistan along with the Sindh governor rang the bell of hope.

Kamran Tessori also informed his counterparts about the purpose of the Bell of Hope.

The KPK and Balochistan governors lauded the steps of the Sindh governor.

Involvement of foreigners discloses in loan apps

RAWALPINDI (Online): Important development made in investigation against 'easy loan mobile apps', involvement of foreigners disclosed.

According to media reports Federal Investigation Agency's Cyber crime's inquiry team found links of foreigners attached to online loan black business.

FIA found foreigners who ordered to delete all digital proves of online loan app's blackmailing.

FIA gathered details including passport numbers of five foreigners involved in online loan apps.

Foreigners were appointed at the position of director finance and chief operating officers in loan apps. Assistant deputy director business development, deputy director business development were also foreigners.



SHARQAQPUR: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif offering addressing the groundbreaking ceremony of multiple infrastructure development project.

Local Govt. amended draft Act approved too: BA adopts condemnation motion against desecration of Holy Qura'an in Sweden

Independent Report
QUETTA: The Balochistan Assembly on Saturday adopted the condemnation resolution against the incident of desecration of Holy Qura'an in Sweden.

The resolution was tabled by the parliamentary secretary, Ms. Bushra Rind in the session of provincial assembly while it resumed after two-day break with chairman of panel, Qadir Ali Nayal on Saturday.

The resolution demanded of the Sweden government to give exemplary punishment to the person involved in the desecration of Holy Qura'an.

The assembly also adopted the amended draft of the Balochistan Local Government Act 2023.

It may be mentioned here that the draft law had been referred to the concerned standing committee

of the assembly for review.

Meanwhile, the MPA Nasrullah Zairay pointed out that CSS special examination is being conducted in October for Balochistan. In the meantime, the Balochistan Public Service Commissioner has announced to conduct examination on the administrative posts during the same days.

He pointed that the candidates are resented over conducting both the exams simultaneously. However, the leader of Opposition Malik Sikandar Advocate opposed to postpone the examination. He insisted that the CSS and Public Service Commissioner's exams may be conducted at the given time.

On this, chairman of panel said that ruling would be given on the matter in next session after opposition members may agree on

one thing.

Later, on another point of order, MPA Sanaulah Baloch pointed out that the housing and population census was conducted recently in Balochistan, in which people took wholehearted part in the census. He said that we expected that the results of population census would be accepted, but the federal government is not accepting the results.

He said that the resolution of population census has been excluded from the agenda.

On the point of order, Provincial Minister Finance said that the population census should be conducted in the areas which were left from the exercise.

MPA Nasrullah Zairay said that we didn't accept the population census as our population has been reduced.



QUETTA: Students and faculty members of University of Balochistan, Balochistan University of Information Technology, Engineering and Management Sciences, Sardar Bahadur Khan Women's University and Bolan Medical College photographed with Commander 12 Corps Lt. Gen. Asif Ghafoor during their visit to headquarters of 12 Corps

Drops bombshell on masses Govt decides to increase power tariff by up to Rs7.50 per unit

ISLAMABAD (INP): The federal government struck the inflation-ridden masses with a powerful jolt, as it decided to exorbitantly raise the power tariff in the middle of the night.

The electricity price has been hiked by Rs7.50 per unit. The basic tariff has been increased from Rs3 to Rs7.50 per unit.

The federal cabinet approved the summary for this massive price hike through circulation.

The National Electric Power Regulatory Authority has already approved an increase in electricity tariff for the current financial year.

The federal government has filed a request with Nepra for an increase in the basic price. The authority will now make a decision after conducting a hearing on the federal

government's request. After Nepra's decision, the federal government will issue a notification for the increase.

The price hike has been proposed to be implemented from July 1.

The price increase proposed for the consumers utilizing 100 units of electricity is Rs3 per unit. For those using 101 to 200 units, electricity will cost Rs4 per unit after the proposal is accepted.

For the electricity consumers using 201 to 300 units, the proposed price hike is Rs5 per unit. The electricity consumers using 301 to 400 units, it is proposed to increase the cost by Rs6.50 per unit.

Moreover, the government has proposed an increase of Rs7 per unit for the consumers utilizing 400 to 700 units

Beauty of Sapat Beach, Balochistan mesmerizes PM

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Saturday said that Pakistan was blessed with boundless gifts of natural beauty, ranging from majestic snow-capped mountains to exquisite sandy beaches and referred to fascinating Sapat Beach in Balochistan province.

On his Twitter handle, the prime minister said "It has much to offer to those who have the appetite to get with nature. Among these captivating destinations is Sapat Beach, a true marvel nestled in the province of Balochistan." He also posted a short video highlighting the natural beauty of Sapat Beach which is located in Lasbela district, approximately at a distance of 200 km from Karachi and 20 km from Kund Malir Beach. Its uniqueness is the formation of coastal sand rocks called Bujih Koh. The natural hidden beauty gem with crystal clear water is a magnetic attraction for tourists.

Reconciliation efforts of Nawab Raisani remained fruitful: Complete ceasefire announced between warring groups in Wadh

Independent Report
QUETTA: The hectic efforts made for reconciliation by the delegation led by the Chief of Sarawan and former Chief Minister Balochistan, Nawab Aslam Khan Raisani as the "complete" ceasefire has been announced between the warring groups in Wadh area of KHuzdar on Saturday.

Needless to mention here is that both the groups expressed confidence on Nawab Aslam Raisani and thus, after getting the tribal authority, he announced ceasefire from both the sides. However, it was decided that the pits (morchas) would remain intact from both the sides, but no one would resort to fire.

Meanwhile, a committee was also formed led by the general Secretary of Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam Balochistan, Ghulam Sarwar Mosiani. Two representatives having uncontroversial persona each of both the sides would be included in the committee. The ceasefire has been announced for an indefinite period on Saturday, the sources informed. Earlier, the same was announced for 24 hours.

The reconciliation delegation dealing the issue of Wadh was comprised Nawabzada Lashkari Raisani, Deputy Commissioner Khuzdar and other tribal elders and notables.

Speaking on the occasion, Nawabzada Lashkari Raisani confirmed that both the parties have announced formal ceasefire.

He said that we were endeavouring to resolve the issues amicably for last couple of days. He said that it is our endeavor that this issue may be resolved forever. He said that what's upsetting for us that the tribes are up against each other.



WADH: Chief of Sarawan Nawab Muhammad Aslam Khan Raisani and Nawabzada Haji Mir Lashkari Raisani holding separate meetings with Mir Shafiqur Rehman Mengal and Sardar Asad Jan Mengal

During PTI's era, media faced gag, effort made to impose black law to curb its freedom: Marriyum

Says media workers rights protected in PEMRA amendment bill

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Information and Broadcasting Marriyum Aurangzeb said on Saturday restrictions were imposed on the media due to the Pakistan Electronic Media Regulatory Authority's (PEMRA) order, during the PTI's era, they tried to bring the Pakistan Media Regulatory Authority black law, which was opposed by all political parties and media organizations.

"PEMRA Amendment Bill 2023 is the bill not of the government, this is a bill of Pakistan, the people of Pakistan, the media and journalists, in which the rights of journalists are protected. It includes the representation of journalistic



organizations, and they are empowered to make decisions", the minister said while addressing a press conference here.

She said that there were 140 channels licensed by PEMRA in Pakistan, among them 35 were news

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QUETTA: Sunni and Shia Scholars addresses to media persons during press conference at Quetta press club

Pakistan faces blackmail on international stage: Fazal

KARACHI (INP): Maulana Fazlur Rahman, chairman of the Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM) and chief of Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam-Fazl (JUI-F), highlighted that Western nations' attempts to taint Islam under the guise of terrorism had failed.

He said this during his visit to Karachi where he met Pir Sadruddin Shah at his residence. Dr. Zulfiqar Mirza and Fahmida Mirza were also present.

Talking to media after meeting, he asserted that no provocative messages were given that would support such conspiracies, and categorically opposed any

desecration of holy books. After the meeting, Fazlur Rahman stated that Pakistan is being blackmail on internationally, with Western forces using the IMF as a front to pressure China and hinder its investments in the country.

Nevertheless, he noted that foreign exchange reserves are improving rapidly, and mega projects have resumed in Pakistan.

Commenting on Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) supreme Nawaz Sharif's return, Mr. Rehman said that it is ultimately former prime minister's decision to make, and if he chooses to return, the people will welcome him.



QUETTA: Provincial Ministers, Parliamentary Secretary and MPAs expressing their views on condemnation motion presented in Balochistan Assembly

Second Test: Pakistan look to double up against Sri Lanka after year-long drought

Sports Desk

LAHORE: Pakistan will look to use their newfound batting aggression to double up against Sri Lanka in the second Test starting Monday, after securing their first long-format victory for a year.

The visitors arrived in Sri Lanka without a Test win to their name in 12 months but despite a wobbly final-innings chase a four-wicket victory in Galle means they need only a draw in Colombo to win the two-match series.

A determined effort to raise their run rate with a more positive approach paid dividends, scoring at

more than 4.5 per over for much of their first innings and putting the Sri Lankan bowlers under pressure.

It is an approach that has echoes of England's new "Bazball" style.

The first hundred of Saud Shakeel's double century came off just 129 balls, his 177-run partnership with Agha Salman laying the foundation for Pakistan's 149-run first innings lead.

After the last Test cycle, Pakistan's management was "very firm" that one of the reasons they were not winning matches was that "we weren't scoring at such a high rate as the opposition", Shan Masood said.

There had been a "concentrated effort" at pre-tour training camps in Lahore and Karachi, he added.

"The emphasis was on scoring runs just to sort of put the opposition under pressure," said Masood, who scored 39 off 30 balls in the first innings in Galle.

"That has put us back in the game." Pakistan may want to include another seamer as the Sinhalese Sports Club track is known to provide bounce and movement, but will have to consider whether to make changes to a winning side.

Sri Lanka will have to improve if they are to win the match and draw the series.

Bilawal commends Turkey's role in securing grain deal

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Foreign Affairs Bilawal Bhutto Zardari on Saturday commended Turkey's role in achieving the landmark Black Sea Grain Corridor agreement in 2022 which has played a significant role in stabilizing global food prices, especially in developing countries and for the poorest of the poor.

In a tweet on social media platform Twitter, he said "Spoke to my brother FM of Turkey Hakan Fidan today. Commended Turkey's role in achieving the landmark Black Sea Grain Corridor agreement in 2022 which has played a significant role in stabilizing global food prices, especially in developing countries and for the poorest of the poor."



SHARQAQUR: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif unveiling a plaque to launch the project for the construction of interchange on Lahore-Abdul Hakim Motorway (M-3) at Essan

GPEI delegation concludes visit of Pakistan

ISLAMABAD (APP): A high-level delegation of the Global Polio Eradication Initiative (GPEI) concluded its visit to Pakistan.

The delegation including the Polio Oversight Board, visited Pakistan to discuss the impact of political transition on eradication efforts and the strategies in place to vaccinate children that remain unreached in the polio-endemic districts of southern Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

Led by Dr Chris Elias, Chair of the Polio Oversight Board and President Global Development, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, the delegation included WHO Regional Director for the Eastern Mediterranean Region Dr Ahmad Al-Mandhari, UNICEF South Asia's Deputy Regional Director Noala Skinner, CDC's Polio Eradication Branch Chief Dr Omotayo Bolu, Chief Programme Strategy Officer from Gavi-the Vaccine Alliance, Aurelia Nguyen, Trustee of Rotary International Foundation Aziz Memon, and High Commissioner of Canada in Pakistan Leslie Scanlon, who represented all donors to the GPEI.

This was the first visit by the POB and representatives from all GPEI partners to Pakistan in 2023.

The POB is the highest decision-making and oversight body of the GPEI.

During the four-day visit from July 16-20 that included Lahore, Peshawar and Islamabad, the delegates visited the National and Provincial Emergency Operations Centers, attended a meeting of the National Task Force on Polio Eradication, and held separate meetings with the leadership of Health Minister Abdul Qadir Patel.

"Pakistan continues to make important progress in the fight to eradicate polio. I'm impressed by the commitment I've seen again this week from the federal and provincial governments in getting the job done," said POB Chair Dr Chris Elias.

"The experience globally is that strong government leadership is key in the final push to defeat polio."

The delegation also met the governor of Punjab, the chief minister of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and provincial chief secretaries, health secretaries, commissioners and deputy commissioners of priority districts of Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa in Lahore and Peshawar, respectively, and met with the chief secretary of Balochistan.

Sindh cabinet decides on 40 more agenda items

KARACHI (INP): The provincial cabinet in continuation of the last cabinet meeting discussed and decided on 40 more agenda items on Saturday and took important decisions including approval of the Medico-legal act, Immunization Act in which denial has been made an offense, also approved water policy and upgraded hospitals.

The meeting was chaired by Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah here at Cm House and was attended by provincial ministers, advisors, special assistants, Chief Secretary Sohail Rajput, Advocate General Hassan Akbar, Chairman P&D Hassan Naqvi, PSCM Fayaz Jatvi, and other concerned officers.

Health Dept: The cabinet discussed and decided on nine agenda items for the health department under which important bills were approved and referred to the assembly. They are as follows:

Medico-legal Act: The health department told the cabinet that Presently, the Medico-legal Services in Sindh were unorganized with no service structure,

job descriptions, SOPs/ Guidelines, Performance Management Framework, and Key Performance Indicators. Consequently, the actors of the Criminal Justice System, namely the Police and Judiciary face problems in prosecution and conviction. This has created an urgent demand for substantial changes in the legal framework of Medico-legal Services, for which different forums such as UNWomen, Legal Aid Society, and the Gender Crime and Human Rights Department have raised concerns. Therefore, the health dept has decided to strengthen the Medico-legal system on modern scientific grounds.

The objectives of the proposed bill are to regulate the Medico-legal System, including its administration, examinations, and postmortems conducted in the different health facilities of the province through the establishment of the Sindh Medico-legal Directorate. The cabinet approved the act and referred to the assembly.

Upgradation of three hospitals: The cabinet was told that Children of Adam,

Karachi and the health dept have requested that cabinet may allocate Rs. 1.967 billion as Grant-in-Aid for five years to establish psychiatric facilities at three government Hospitals - Basic Health Unit Dumba Goth, New Urban Health Center Gadap and New Karachi Urban Health Center Goharabad.

The cabinet was told that a large segment of the population in the country has suffered from some mental illness. Unfortunately, there was a dearth of psychiatrists and psychiatric hospitals.

There are only five major Psychiatric hospitals to cope with major mental health disorders, depression, autism, anxiety, and obsessive-compulsive disorder in Pakistan. Hence, considering the issue, Children of Adam signed a MOU with the Sindh Health Department for creating psychiatric facilities at BHU Dumba Goth, New Urban Health Center Gadap, and New Karachi Urban Health Center Goharabad. The cabinet approved the proposal.



LAHORE: Ms. Shaza Fatima Khawaja, SAPM Youth Affairs Addressing to the closing ceremony of Prime Minister's Punjab Football and Hockey League at Lahore College Women University

Torrential rains claimed three lives, injured several in Mansehra

MANSEHRA (APP): At least three people died and several others were injured on Saturday in roof and wall collapse incidents occurred due to torrential rain in the district of Mansehra.

The collapse of the roof and walls of a house resulted in the loss of two lives, including a child and a woman. Five injured persons were rescued and shifted to the hospital by Rescue 1122 Mansehra.

According to Rescue 1122 sources, in first roof collapse incident occurred on Chinar Road, where a makeshift Afghan family's house collapsed while under the debris, a woman lost

her life, and a child was rescued in an injured condition and shifted to the hospital.

In another house collapse incident on Bedra Road, heavy rainfall caused the wall of Qadeer's mud house to collapse on a sleeping family. In this incident, a 9-year-old child Husnain sustained critical injuries and was rescued under the debris and rushed to the hospital. Unfortunately, the doctors confirmed his death and the other four family members who were rescued from the rubble and taken to the hospital by Rescue 1122 got minor injuries.

Mansehra police also found the dead body of an

unknown man from Sandisar stream and called Rescue 1122 to recover the body and was later shifted to King Abdullah Hospital Mansehra.

Besides the deaths and injuries, heavy downpours also created havoc in district Mansehra where from last night to 12 noon most parts of the city were drowned under the flash flood water and people were stuck in their homes.

In several areas of the city flood water also entered the residential and commercial buildings and people have to bear millions of rupees in losses.



ZIARAT: DIG Sibi Range Ali Sher Jakhri and SP Ziarat Akhtar Achakzai offering Dua after inaugurating DIG Sibi House Ziarat

PM urges all political forces...

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progress and prosperity. We have to resolve to equip young generations with the latest education, especially the poor and deprived classes," he added.

The prime minister maintained that Pakistan was blessed with natural resources, but these could not be fully explored rather the country had paid huge amounts on litigation abroad.

He said the disparity among different segments of society was not permissible in the country conceived by Q u a i d - e - A z a m Muhammad Ali Jinnah.

The ceremony was attended by Caretaker Chief Minister Syed Mohsin Naqvi, parliamentarians, relevant authorities and a large number of students.

The prime minister congratulated the students on their success and said they owed their success due to their talent and hard work and the dedication of their teachers, management and the provincial government's support.

The prime minister recalled that when Danish schools were established, they had faced stiff resistance from different quarters.

Today Danish schools had become model institutions for those students who could not afford expensive private education, he added.

He said if these students were deprived of such educational facilities, they would have wasted in the wilderness of the backward areas, but now these schools have turned them into gems.

He said about 50,000 students were being imparted education in the Danish schools.

The prime minister said that no nation could aspire to achieve progress unless its youth were properly educated.

Online adds: Prime Minister (PM) Shahbaz Sharif has said we will bow our head before what is decision of people in election. "Rs 50 billion went to Supreme Court (SC) account instead of going to national kitty. Time has come we should not go to IMF till dooms day, he said this while inaugurating development projects here Saturday.

"I call Nawaz Sharif architect of development and prosperity of Pakistan. Credit goes to Nawaz Sharif to put Pakistan on path to development and prosperity. Pakistanis Remember it who had evolved plan to make Pakistan Asian tiger was put to jail. Unfortunately development and prosperity path was blocked in 2018, he added.

He went on to say this was a big conspiracy against the development and prosperity of Pakistan. The previous four and half years were lost. Opposition was pushed to wall. All the development stalled during the previous regime.

During PTI's era, media....

Continued from pag 1

and current affairs channels, 52 entertainment channels, 25 regional channels, 6 non-commercial and education channels, 5 sports channels, 7 health and agro channels, and 10 education commercial channels.

The minister said that PEMRA Ordinance was promulgated in 2002 and now in 2023, the media landscape had changed and it became so diverse.

"We are all going through a new era of social media where new platforms have been introduced to express opinions, all these channels are present on cyberspace and social media", she added.

Mariyuum said that during the last four years of PTI, there was censoring on the media and the former Prime Minister Imran Khan got the title of "media predator", adding the title was not given to him by his political rivals or any organization of Pakistan, but by international journalistic organizations keeping in view the freedom of expression in Pakistan.

At that time, the programs running at that time were stopped, journalists and news channels were banned, she added.

She said that in the past, firing was done on journalists, they were kidnapped and tortured, their programs were stopped and

they were sent to jails.

Citing the example of Mir Shakeel-ur-Rehman, she said that he was arrested in a case in which everyone had now been acquitted.

By sending him to jail in the NAB case, Imran Khan gave a message that if he could go to jail, then other media house owners and journalists could also be prosecuted, she opined.

The minister said during PTI's tenure, the then information minister used to slap journalists, he used to threaten journalists and media organizations to support the draconian PMDA law.

Mariyuum said that last year, when she was appointed Minister of Information, she held first meeting with the Joint Action Committee on 23rd April 2022.

Representatives of PBA, APNS, CPNE, AMEND and PFU were included in the joint action committee.

The minister said that the laws regarding the rights of journalists, ethical media, media responsibilities and fake news within the regulatory bodies in many countries of the world were reviewed.

She said she was thankful to all these organizations that assisted her in preparing the PEMRA (Amendment) Bill 2023.

She said they guided her how to take steps to protect the rights of media workers and establish a responsible media.

Mariyuum said that the Joint Action Committee held several meetings over the course of 11 months for consultations with all stakeholders on the bill.

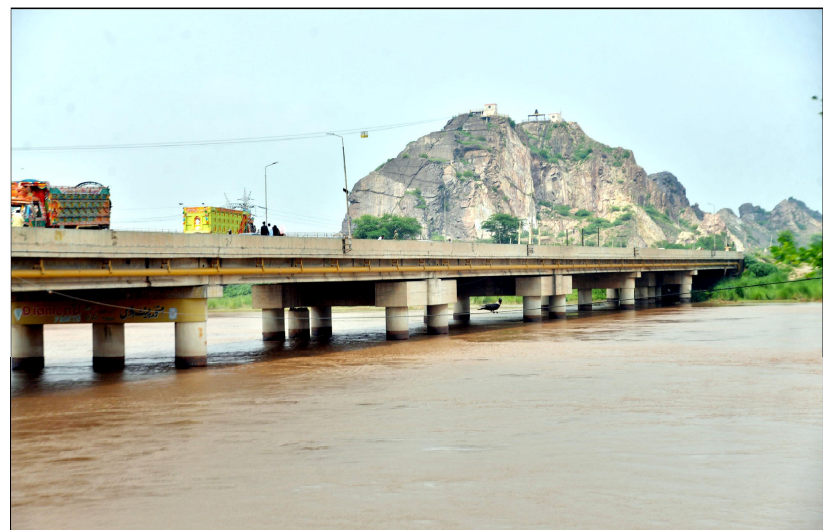
The minister said that the existing laws regarding the rights of journalists, ethical media, responsibilities of the media and fake news within the regulatory bodies in many countries of the world were reviewed, and PEMRA (Amendment) Bill 2023 contained international best practices.

She said that for the first time the definition of disinformation and misinformation had been included in the PEMRA law with the support of all media organizations.

"We clarified the difference between misinformation and disinformation in the bill", she said.

Mariyuum said that Implementation Tribal for Newspaper Employees existed for print media, but there was no forum to protect the rights of electronic media employee who were dismissed from jobs on political grounds.

She said that all stakeholders joined hands to protect the rights of journalists and media workers.



CHINIOT: A view of the water level in Chenab River, which is increased after massive rain fall of Moon Soon Spell across the country



MUZZAFFARABAD: Senior Member Board of Revenue Azad Jammu & Kashmir Dr. Liaquat Hussain briefed participants of Midcareer Management Course (MCMC) at Balochistan Civil Services Academy during their visit to AJK Civil Secretariat and Planning and Development Department

MQM-P warns of protests if HESCO doesn't end power outages in Muharram

HYDERABAD (APP): The MNAs of Muttahida Quami Movement-Pakistan (MQM-P) Sabir Qaimkhani and Salahuddin have accused

Hyderabad Electric Supply Company (HESCO) for carrying out

power outages even during Yom-e-Ashura.

Addressing a press conference at Hyderabad Press Club on Saturday, MNAs MPAs Rashid Khilji and Nadeem Siddiqui deplored that the company could not even

maintain an uninterrupted supply of electricity during the 10 days of Muharram.

"The smallest faults in the transmission system take as long as a day at least for repair," Qaimkhani said.

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Faisal Kundi terms in-time elections as only way to ensure political stability

ISLAMABAD (APP): Special Assistant to the Prime Minister on Poverty Alleviation and Social Safety, Faisal Karim Kundi Saturday termed in-time elections as the only way to ensure political stability in the country. Addressing a news conference here, Faisal Kundi said that Pakistan People's Party had a very clear stance that assemblies should complete their tenure and the caretaker government and Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) should conduct elections within 60 days.

The SAPM said, "60 days are enough for an election campaign, however, if coalition political parties want 90 days for the campaign, PPP is ready for that." Commenting on the reservations of political parties including PPP over conducting elections on the basis of the new census, he said, "It is better to conduct elections on the previous census."

About the Sindh government's rehabilitation efforts for the flood-affected people in the prov-

ince, Faisal Kundi said that the Sindh government had fulfilled its promise of providing houses to those families affected due to floods.

"The Sindh government has provided land rights to 5,000 flood-affected families in the province. The funds for the construction of 50,000 houses have been released so far."

The SAPM said, "The provincial government will provide a total of 2,00,000 to the women head of family."

He said although the flood had affected many parts of the country, the way the Sindh government had responded to this calamity in terms of providing relief to those affected was exemplary.

"The PPP government will replicate the same model of providing houses to its people in the other provinces too in the future," he said.

About the cipher issue, Faisal Kundi said that the former Principal Secretary of the former Prime Minister, Azam Khan had exposed all the false claims

related to the cipher.

"The whole country was handed over to a person who could not retain a piece of paper (cipher)," he said. Faisal Kundi said, "PPP is not against any political party but those involved in the May 09 violence should be taken to task." He said that the incident of May 09 would not happen if those involved in the attack on PTV in the past were punished.

Faisal Kundi said, "Foreign minister, Bilawal Bhutto has pursued effective diplomatic policies which helped revive and strengthen relations between Pakistan and other countries." He said that the coalition government had faced enormous economic challenges but succeeded in steering the country out of the crisis due to its prudent policies. About the Benazir Income Support Program (BISP), the federal minister highlighted that the first-ever dynamic National Socio-Economic Survey was being carried out successfully across the country.



ISLAMABAD: British Director Development Programme called on Federal Secretary Health Iftikhar Shallwani in his office.

Country's economy needs political stability: Senator

ISLAMABAD (APP): Senator Irfan-Ul-Haque Siddique has said that economic stability was among the challenges faced by Pakistan which required political steadiness and continuation of economic policies.

During a discussion with leaders of Pakistani community at Pakistani Embassy, Washington DC, the PML-N stalwart and senator maintained that unreliability and disruption in the policies could prove fatal for the economy.

Irfan Siddique said

that it was a matter of satisfaction that the political leadership, institutions and other stakeholders of the country were very well cognizant that the past mistakes should not be repeated.

He opined that the PML-N leadership had put the country on the path of progress, the growth rate increased to over 6 percent, and eliminated the scourge of terrorism, but the incidents of 2017 had inflicted huge damage to that journey of progress and prosperity, a press release on

Saturday said.

The senator further said that May 9 incidents had hurt the sentiments of every patriotic Pakistani, adding vandalism at installations of armed forces and disrespect to Shuhada of the country, who had sacrificed their lives for the motherland, were unacceptable to all Pakistanis.

He observed that throughout civilized societies, the miscreants were being made to face the law of the land, but now attempts were being made by raising human rights issues.

Diabetes Centre, PBM sign MOU to combat diabetes

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Diabetes Centre (TDC) and Pakistan Bait-ul-Mal (PBM) joined hands through a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to tackle the issue of diabetes together.

A formal ceremony was held to mark this partnership, attended by representatives from both organizations, including MD Aamir Fida Paracha and Dr Javed Iqbal from PBM, said a press release on Saturday. During the event, TDC warmly welcomed the Pakistan Bait-ul-Mal team and discussed various aspects of their collaboration to combat diabetes effectively.

essential duty of controlling diabetes. The partnership through the MOU is vital to TDC's long-term agenda of collaborating with other companies and institutions for comprehensive diabetes healthcare.

CEO Meesaq Arif reiterated how the MOU perfectly fits into their long-term agenda, aiming to collaborate with various entities for holistic diabetes healthcare.

During the ceremony, Brigadier Retired Dr Muhammad Ajmal Khan highlighted the importance of patient registration and treatment procedures at TDC for diabetic patients.

The signing of the MOU was then carried out, with MD Aamir Fida Paracha signing on behalf of Baitul Mal, and TDC being represented by Chairman Dr Asjad Hameed and CEO Meesaq Arif.

They expressed their gratitude to all the distinguished guests who graced the occasion.

MD Amir Fida Paracha from Bait ul Mal expressed strong belief in the alignment of TDC's services with Baitul Mal's goals, pledging full support and cooperation.

Chairman Dr Asjad Hameed emphasized the significance of national institutions' support in the



ISLAMABAD: The painter paints the metal railings of the pedestrian bridge with white paint at Islamabad Expressway.

SDG-4 workshop series concludes

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Pakistan Institute of Education has effectively concluded a series of three Capacity Building Workshops focused on SDG-4 (Sustainable Development Goal 4). The third and final workshop is presently underway at the Luxus Grand Hotel in Lahore, taking place from July 20-22.

The initial two workshops catered to participants from Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT), Gilgit-Baltistan (GB), Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK), Sindh, and Balochistan, and they have already been successfully completed, according to a press release issued here on Saturday. During the closing session, Dr Muhammad Shahid Soroya, the Director-General of PIE, presided over the event and expressed gratitude for UNESCO's valuable support in organizing the Capacity Building Workshop.

He encouraged participants to provide feedback to enhance future endeavors. Additionally, he shared insights into various projects, initiatives, and interventions, with a specific focus on the Development of Out-of-School Children (OOSC) programs by PIE.

Dr Soroya also highlighted some key accomplishments of PIE in recent months, which included the creation of a comprehensive Training Manual for conducting these workshops.

Furthermore, he mentioned the institute's significant contributions in providing technical input for the SDG-4 Mid-Term Review and its active participation in LaNA (Learning Assessment of National Accounts). The School Education Department Punjab played a key role in organizing and supporting the Workshop. Kulsum Saqib, the Special Secretary SED, Government of Punjab, presided over the inaugural session, where she expressed her gratitude to the Ministry of Education Islamabad and UNESCO for conducting this essential training on SDG-4. The workshop aims to enhance the capacity of EMIS professionals in comprehending, calculating, interpreting, and utilizing data related to SDG-4, thus fostering valuable skills in this domain. Federal Government has established the Pakistan Institute of Education (PIE) as a premier entity of the Ministry of Federal Education and Professional Training by merging its two sub-ordinate departments Academy.

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ISLAMABAD: Laborers are busy in their work during the construction of Margala Under pass. A street vendor is roasting the Corns in traditional mud oven on his handcart along the Murree Road in City.

Atta Tarar says: Not declaring gifts of Toshakhana is offence

ISLAMABAD (Online): Special Assistant to Prime Minister (PM) Atta Tarar said that Chairman PTI sold Toshakhana gifts in black market.

If it has been stolen then it must be accounted for.

Name a leader in the country's history who sold Toshakhana gifts in the black market.

While talking to Media in Islamabad Atta Tarar said PTI chairman sometimes makes one or the other excuse.

Sometimes he distrusts the judge and sometimes disagrees with my presence.

Chairman PTI wants case is decided on his own will.

He said that Chairman PTI sold gifts of Toshakhana in black market and did not deposit the amount.

The Toshakhana case is a day broad light robbery of Chairman PTI.

Toshakhana Case has been going on for 11 months. Chairman PTI appeared once.

Gifts of Toshakhana were the money of nation.

These were gifts worth billions of rupees.

Chairman PTI even did not declare gifts from Toshakhana and not declaring gifts of Toshakhana is crime.

Chairman PTI has taken date today and dates upon dates are being taken.

Testimonies are being recorded in the case.

Cross examination is taking place.

What was the justification for taking date today?

He further added that he used to tell us to give the receipts.

He himself made fake receipts sitting at home.

Farewell dinner organise in honor of Chairman FBR

ISLAMABAD (APP): A farewell dinner was organised in honor of Chairman Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) Asim Ahmad by the Heads of all IRS Field Formations of the Karachi region.

The Chief Collectors (Customs) in Karachi also attended the event.

During the event, all Heads of Field Formations expressed their gratitude to the Chairman FBR and shared their learnings and experiences of working under the leadership of the Chairman in different capacities, said a press release issued here on Saturday.

The Chairman FBR expressed his gratitude to the officers of the Karachi region for organizing the farewell dinner.

PM lauds students of Danish schools for brilliance, success

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Saturday said his project of Danish Schools had turned into a remarkable success and he was happy to see the success of brilliant and capable students who made their mark in studies.

In a tweet on social media platform Twitter, he said, "The way a gardener is happy after seeing his garden green and full of fruit, similarly today my heart wanted me to bow before Allah and express gratitude after seeing the brilliant, capable and successful students of Danish School."

"Despite harsh criticism, I planted this sapling with my own hands for the poor and helpless children, and now Danish School with the grace of Allah has turned it into a strong tree. Every student is dear to me like my own children, and my ears were eager to learn about their success in the world as a father is keen."

"To the capable children of my nation who were facing the darkness of poverty, I pledged as their servant that I will spread the light of progress by equipping them with education and skills."

IRSA releases 422,100 cusecs water

ISLAMABAD (APP): Indus River System Authority (IRSA) on Saturday released 422,100 cusecs water from various rim stations with inflow of 527,800 cusecs.

According to the data released by IRSA, water level in River Indus at Tarbela Dam was 1523.89 feet and was 125.89 feet higher than its dead level of 1,398 feet. Water inflow and outflow in the dam was recorded as 297,300 cusecs and 239,000 cusecs respectively. The water level in River Jhelum at Mangla Dam was 1213.20 feet, which was 163.20 feet higher than its dead level of 1,050 feet.

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ISLAMABAD: A street vendor take a shelter at Police Check Post at Sector I-11 to sell raw dates and earn daily wages for the livelihood of his family.

Toshakhana criminal proceedings case: Court accepts exemption plea of chairman PTI

ISLAMABAD (Online): District and Sessions Court has once again accepted exemption from attendance plea of PTI chairman in Toshakhana criminal proceedings case.

Toshakhana criminal proceedings case came up for hearing before additional sessions judge Hummayun Dilawar Saturday.

Barrister Gohar counsel for chairman PTI and Amjad Pervaz counsel for Election Commission (EC) appeared in the court.

Exemption from attendance plea was presented in the court in respect of chairman PTI.

Barrister Gohar said in his arguments it is requested to court to adjourn the hearing till Monday.

Raising objection over Chairman PTI exemption plea counsel for EC said no solid reasons have been mentioned in exemption plea. When trial is running then the accused should remain present. The court should give positive direction with reference to ensuring the presence of the accused. He requested the court to issue order to file affidavit for ensuring presence of chairman PTI.

Rivers Indus, Kabul, Chenab run in low flood: FFC

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Federal Flood Commission (FFC) has said that Rivers Indus, Kabul and Chenab are flow in low flood at Tarbela, Kalabagh, Chashma, Wasarak, Nowshera and Marala respectively while other rivers of the Indus River System are running normal.

According to the daily FFC report on Saturday, medium to high level flood was expected in Rivers Chenab and Jhelum along with associated nullahs of Rivers Ravi and Chenab during the next 48 hours.

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ISLAMABAD: An attractive view of clouds hovering over the sky after rain in the Federal Capital.

CII unveils comprehensive 'code of conduct' to foster peace, harmony in Muharram

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Council of Islamic Ideology (CII) on Saturday took a momentous step towards strengthening the values and principles that form the bedrock of Pakistan's identity by unveiling a comprehensive 'code of conduct'.

Addressing the press conference after a consultative meeting with prominent religious scholars and leaders, Chairman Dr Qibla Ayaz said the code, aimed at maintaining peace and tranquility, particularly in the Muharram-ul-Harram across the country, emphasized the importance of upholding the Constitution, respecting the dignity, and remaining loyal to the state under all circumstances.

He said the newly introduced code placed the duty on every citizen to acknowledge and abide by

the constitutional authority of the state, demonstrating unwavering allegiance to it and its institutions.

He said the key aspects of the code revolved around upholding the dignity and respect of fundamental rights as outlined in the Constitution. This included the principles of equality, social and political rights, freedom of expression, belief, worship, and assembly, he added.

Dr Qibla said the Islamic foundation of Pakistan's Constitution and laws would be preserved, with citizens being entitled to pursue peaceful efforts for the implementation of Shariah adding that to maintain the spirit of Shariah, the code strictly forbade any use of force in the name of Islam, armed actions against the state, violence, and incitement.

Additionally, he said

no individual had the right to declare anyone, including government officials, military personnel, or security agencies, as infidels.

He urged the scholars and individuals from all walks of life to extend their support to the state and its institutions, particularly those responsible for law enforcement and security, to eradicate violence from society. He said one crucial aspect of the code was the call for individuals to refrain from associating with movements driven by linguistic, regional, religious, or sectarian biases as the state stands firm in taking strict action against such groups to preserve unity and harmony.

Moreover, Dr Qibla said, "The code highlighted the importance of avoiding the imposition of personal views or ideologies on others, as it contradicts the

spirit of Shariah and can lead to corruption."

In the educational realm, he said, "Both private and government institutions, as well as religious educational establishments, must refrain from promoting militancy, extremism, and hatred alarming that those found involved in such activities would face legal consequences based on evidence and witnesses."

He categorically stated that stringent administrative and punitive measures would be taken against those promoting extremism and violence, irrespective of their affiliation with any organization or ideology.

While all Islamic schools of thought have the right to propagate their beliefs and ideologies, he mentioned that the code strictly prohibited inciting hatred or making baseless accusa-

tions against individuals, institutions, or groups.

The chairman said the code underscored the sanctity of religious figures by stating that no person or group had the authority to say indecent words about the Prophet Muhammad (Peace be Upon Him), other prophets, the wives of the Prophet, the Ahl-e-Bayt, the Rightly Guided Caliphs, or the companions."

"However, the decisions regarding blasphemy cases would be under the purview of the courts," he added. Dr Qibla said, "The code ensured that no individual shall declare another Muslim as a non-believer adding that only qualified religious scholars could discuss Islamic principles based on religious doctrines, and decisions on apostasy would be determined by the courts in accordance with the Constitution."



ISLAMABAD: Families are enjoying at Public park during pleasant weather after rain in Federal Capital.

Daily Voice of Masses
Independent
Sunday July 23, 2023

Bulldozed

If there is one trait that seems common to almost all Pakistani lawmakers regardless of their political affiliation, it is a barely concealed disdain for parliament and legislative procedure.

Where once they derided the PTI government for running an 'ordinance factory' instead of executing its legislative business through parliament, the ruling parties have done little better since assuming power, having finally reduced the National Assembly to a rubber stamp for their legislative agenda.

On Thursday, the first day of the 15th National Assembly's farewell session, the House allowed critical legislation without the required number of lawmakers present for proceedings, with Speaker Raja Pervaiz Ashraf binning House procedures to allow the draft of two laws to be drastically amended, and then having the amendments passed by a voice vote before they were even tabled.

According to reports, he gave Aviation Minister Saad Rafique the floor to introduce extensive amendments, including 100 new clauses, in the Pakistan Airports Authority Bill, 2022, and the Pakistan Civil Aviation Bill, 2022, with less than two dozen members present. Both bills had been moved a year ago and were approved by the relevant committee in their original form.

The privilege to amend or introduce rules and laws is not a prerogative that can be exercised without checks and balances. What was so important about the amendments that they could not be put to debate and discussion before the elected representatives of the people, as is required?

Had the government been sleeping for the last few months that it finally realised it had necessary business to conduct at the eleventh hour? And what does it say about our lawmakers that less than two dozen deigned to attend the session — which, as is now usual, started hours later than its scheduled time — despite there being much legislative work still pending before the NA?

It is unfortunate that the government appears to have disregarded all criticism of the manner in which it has gone about making and changing laws over the last 15 months.

Despite there being no meaningful opposition in the NA to obstruct its efforts and some weeks remaining till the end of its tenure, it still opted to pass legislation without having it debated or endorsed by public representatives. What else can this be described as if not contempt of parliament?



Tabish Gauhar

Modern lifestyle would not have evolved without the widespread use of fossil fuels over the past century. The burning of coal, oil, and gas increased overall global prosperity, but their unabated greenhouse gas emissions were hardly priced in the economic growth model. And as mankind grapples with climate change in the so-called Anthropocene Age, the energy sector is decarbonising and decentralising in a fundamental shift.

There are many who still believe that the climate debate is deliberately rigged by the 'liberal wokerati' to project a doomsday impact of a global average temperature exceeding 1.5 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels (we have already hit 1.1°C). However, the energy transition is not being

spearheaded by starry-eyed, tree-hugging environmentalists but by hard-core private capital. And despite the recent political pushback against ESG financing and reducing carbon footprint as a form of virtue signalling, the global clean energy space continues to attract tons of institutional capital because it now makes pure economic sense to go 'long' on clean energy vis-a-vis hydrocarbons.

These billions of dollars are being put to work across the value chain, including in wind and solar power as Chinese 'economies of scale' manufacturing drives down installation costs. Although Covid and recent supply chain constraints have marginally arrested the declining cost curve, these mainstream green asset classes are still cheaper than thermal power even without subsidies and carbon taxes. But because of their intermittent nature (the sun and wind do not always shine and blow), a reliable base load power system is also attracting investment in long-duration storage solutions, such as grid-connected batteries and green hydrogen. Research on various battery chemistries and electrolyser technologies is being boosted

by massive amount of cleantech financing, and it would be bold to bet against human ingenuity figuring out a few technological breakthroughs, that are also commercially viable and scalable, sooner than later. Another hot investment theme is demand-side management to connect various consumer-distributed energy resources (such as rooftop solar PV, home and electric vehicle batteries) to the distribution grid. Abi-directional and AI-driven digitised relationship between multiple sellers and buyers of electrons not only reduces peak load but also the quantum of investment required to upgrade the transmission infrastructure as the energy sector further 'electrifies'. There is also now renewed focus in the West on developing a 'circular economy' to cut down on waste and improving energy efficiency.

The increasing adoption of electric passenger vehicles (primarily in China and Europe, and increasingly so in the US) will significantly depress future demand for petrol and diesel and associated crude oil refining. The e-mobility sector is growing rapidly due to falling battery costs, improving technology,

regulations, subsidies, an expanding charging infrastructure footprint, and more EV manufacturers entering the space. Long-haul road transportation, shipping, and aviation are, however, unlikely to be electrified, but could be decarbonised with synthetic fuels derived from green hydrogen (such as ammonia, methanol, and other sustainable molecules) if their economics, logistics and scalability issues work out.

Likewise, other 'hard to abate' sectors, such as steel and cement, may partially be retrofitted to burn green hydrogen instead of coal for process heat. Gas-fired boilers are increasingly being re-p-laced in Europe by electric heat pumps for dom-estic space heating, and building (and social) codes are being revised to improve energy conservation.

Geopolitics remains a key factor in the energy world, and increasingly so after the Russian invasion of Ukraine. For example, while it weans off its 'addiction' to cheap Russian gas and accelerates its energy transition, Europe is simultaneously competing against China's dominance of critical raw materials supply chain, as well as President Biden's

massive \$370 billion subsidies and tax incentive package for clean energy in the US. Re-shoring and friend-shoring, in the name of energy security and jobs creation, are also in vogue that may result in balkanising the global energy landscape through protectionism, and higher consumer prices ultimately.

While China and the US (the top two global economies and emitters) are strategically battling it out for clean energy supremacy, developing countries (including Chile, Indonesia, and Congo) that are endowed with clean metals and minerals such as lithium, copper, cobalt, nickel, manganese, and graphite, will soon rival the geopolitical importance of major oil and gas producers.

Who will dominate the emerging new energy world order remains to be seen as the fossil fuel industry pushes for curbing emissions via carbon capture and storage technologies, and against actual 'phasing down' of hydrocarbons to achieve the Paris Agreement goals by mid-century. Natural gas, including LNG is likely to remain a key 'transition fuel' for the foreseeable future, albeit with increasingly strin-

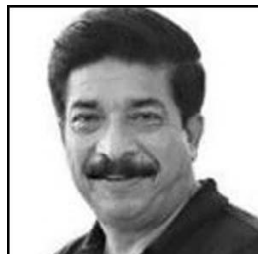
gent regulations on methane leakage. Traditional oil and gas companies that are not least cost producers, or do not stick to their core competencies, will be pushed aside by energy upstarts just like Tesla, Amazon, and Netflix upstaged the incumbents in their respective industries.

The availability and cost of climate finance required to achieve a 'just' energy transition for developing nations is a key agenda item at this year's COP28 climate conference. If, and when, we decide to structurally reform our energy sector with less (not more) role of the government, a fair share of this global climate capital will also gravitate towards Pakistan.

With the right policy framework and minimal red tape, we could use this money to finance private projects across a wide spectrum including critical raw materials' mining, nature-based carbon offsets, e-buses and e-rickshaws, wind and solar hybrid power, and smart grids. We need more than just 'adaptation' financing to deal with annual floods and heatwaves. -- Courtesy Dawn

The new energy world order

CPEC: a decade of transformation



Dr Imran Khalid

A momentous milestone is being commemorated this month as Pakistan and China celebrate a remarkable decade of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) — the flagship project of China's Belt and Road Initiative. Undoubtedly, this decade has witnessed an unprecedented surge in China's unwavering commitment to bolstering Pakistan's economic prospects, strengthening an unbreakable bond between the two nations. The significance of this enduring partnership cannot be overstated as China has emerged as the foremost benefactor, extending its generous hand in the form of substantial investments, loans and grants to fuel Pakistan's growth.

The genesis of the remarkable CPEC can be

traced back to the day of July 5, 2013, when the first Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for the long-term plan for the corridor was inked. However, it was not until the historic visit of Chinese President Xi Jinping to Pakistan in April 2015 that CPEC truly sprang to life, igniting a transformative journey of progress and cooperation between the two nations.

CPEC heralded the beginning of a grand vision, uniting Pakistan and China in a resolute pursuit of shared prosperity, connectivity and enduring friendship. Under the project, China committed to inject a staggering \$58 billion investment into Pakistan's infrastructure, energy and production sectors. This pledge arrived precisely when traditional international donors were quite hesitant and Pakistan's economy was teetering on the brink.

CPEC's transformative potential for Pakistan draws comparisons to the Marshall Plan in post-war Europe. With the initial forecast of creating over 2.3 million jobs from 2015 to 2030 and an impressive 2.0 to 2.5 percentage points added to Pakistan's annual

economic growth, the corridor was considered to be a catalyst for transformative impact on Pakistan's economy.

So far, in the last ten years \$25.4 billion in direct Chinese investment has flown into diverse sectors — such as transport, energy, and infrastructure — all part of the transformative connectivity and investment corridor project within the ambitious Belt and Road Initiative, spearheaded by Beijing. In what can be seen as a display of solidarity, China has also provided invaluable support to Pakistan's economic stability by dispensing a considerable 30 billion Chinese yuan in loans and establishing a currency swap arrangement.

This invaluable assistance has acted as a robust shield, safeguarding Islamabad's financial health, reinforcing its capacity to manage debts and alleviating the pressure on its debt repayment obligations. This strategic partnership has also enabled Pakistan to diversify its trade dealings, reducing reliance on the dollar and bolstering its foreign exchange reserves.

Through its vast net-

work of roadways, CPEC has deftly intertwined rural and urban landscapes, fostering a harmonious synergy that resonates with the power of progress. The strategic placement of nine special economic zones (SEZs) along these arterial road links has proven to be a masterpiece, with huge potential to lure hefty investment towards Pakistan. In the aftermath of the Covid-19 scourge, the charm of these SEZs has become even more potent, promising economic rejuvenation.

Four out of the nine SEZs designated under CPEC are about to take-off. With the completion of the first phase of CPEC, these initial SEZs sprouting along the network of motorways are expected to start operations by 2025 while the remaining five SEZs are likely to become fully operational by 2030.

Gauging the impact on Pakistan, CPEC has emerged as a formidable catalyst for change, unfurling a panorama of opportunities for Pakistan. Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Wang Wenbin says "the projects are creating 192,000 jobs, generating 6,000MW of power,

building 510 km (316 miles) of highways, and expanding the national transmission network by 886 km (550 miles)."

Of particular significance is CPEC's role in nurturing Pakistan's blue economy. The Gwadar Port, a central player in this ambitious initiative, has undergone a remarkable metamorphosis, evolving into a fully operational maritime juncture, linking Pakistan to the world and bolstering trade and commerce in the region. As the Gwadar sea port reaches full operational capacity, it will bring tangible improvements to the growth of the economies of both countries.

The imminent completion of the Gwadar international airport promises to amplify its strategic significance, expanding the scope of opportunities in the days ahead. The upgrade of Pakistan Railways' ML-1 (Main Line 1, Peshawar to Karachi) has been agreed, paving the way for industrialization and export-oriented connectivity. Originally conceived as a visionary endeavour to connect the Gwadar Port in the southwest of Pakistan to China's northwestern region of Xinjiang, CPEC's

objectives have evolved into a multifaceted mission encompassing energy, infrastructure development, industrial cooperation and the promotion of Gwadar as a pivotal trade hub.

CPEC's impact spans borders, fostering regional integration and trade. As a BRI linchpin, it bolsters connectivity between China, Pakistan and neighboring nations. Improved transport infrastructure, such as the Karakoram Highway and the Peshawar-Karachi Motorway has greatly helped in accelerating travel and facilitating efficient movement of goods and people.

With the progress on nine SEZs surging forward, particularly in the thriving Gwadar Free Economic Zone, CPEC is increasingly emerging as one of the most attractive "investment destinations" in the region. Chinese companies are eagerly joining the fray, registering in significant numbers to establish production facilities. Already, close to 50 Chinese firms have set their sights on Gwadar economic zone, while a promising 200 more are in the queue. -- Courtesy TheNews

ChatGPT dilemma



Nazir A. Jozgezi

Five days after its launch last year, OpenAI's ChatGPT had been used by a million people. The number almost crossed 100m with 1.8 billion visits recorded by the OpenAI site, making it the fastest growing application. In contrast, popular social media applications took much longer — two and a half months for Instagram, 10 months for Facebook and two years for Twitter to touch the million-user mark.

ChatGPT is designed to generate human-like text in a conversational mode. Deriving information from books, websites and other digital resources, it responds to user queries using natural language processing. The chatbot composes essays, stories and poems and translates and performs other tasks too.

ChatGPT received an unprecedented response from various fields, including education and research. Critics have differing views on whether it will undermine human control or is a step towards human progress. Some welcome it, others propose limits as it abuses human ingenuity.

Developed societies with robust education systems have considered the latter view, with academia concerned about AI-generated material being used in student assignments. Fragile academic systems such as Pakistan's are especially susceptible to the detrimental impact of ChatGPT and AI.

Covid-19 transformed global education, promoting modified and self-directed knowledge. Online learning,

equipped with digital resources, is a norm in the post-pandemic era. Dialectical pedagogy using generative AI, like ChatGPT, can facilitate faster, personalised and self-paced education.

Teachers can employ responsible human-AI communication, creating content and assessments that foster critical thought and deep learning. This occurs when an education framework views human beings as moral, thinking and sentient beings, capable of taking informed decisions.

The non-holistic existence of our education structure with sociopolitical, socioeconomic and sociocultural ecology and history is a dilemma, where learners are often passive recipients of knowledge, which limits their decision-making skills.

Curricula and pedagogy assessment and management are developed and implemented in silos. Similarly, rote learning (there is little critical thinking) has led to the accumulation of information that is not in sync with practical life.

Effective learning is entirely dependent on practical experience including societal practices and behaviour that validate curricula and pedagogy, or otherwise. Pakistan's educational history too has not moved beyond idealistic curricular reforms, and is as disconnected from the sociocultural and socioeconomic terrain of the classroom as training, assessment, and supervision. Consequently, these reforms are simply populist tactics to serve the vested agendas of the ruling elite.

With a tool such as ChatGPT, we are inclined to develop superficial regulatory guidelines. Our monitoring procedures regarding, for instance, cheating in exams, revolve around forced closure of photocopy businesses in the area and penalties. But cheating has

surged. Meaningful regulation involves modifying the exam format to create more versions of the same paper for the same group or altering questions to assess critical thinking rather than just memory.

Pakistan's response to ChatGPT should not be coercive. It should focus on an educational landscape less susceptible to AI abuse. This requires learning orientation and value judgements of learners to determine whether AI is effective or a negative influence, a primary requisite for policy and regulatory steps.

The present form of segregated education sans horizontal and vertical alignment within its tutoring, evaluation and broader social ecology, cannot benefit from ChatGPT. Instead, it is vulnerable to ChatGPT abuse. Memorisation and parental grade-conscious attitudes leave little room for ChatGPT usage that can encourage critical thinking.

Also, given that the number of publications is a criterion for promotion in academic ranks, there will be an increase in the production of plagiarised research articles by members of higher education faculties, who will misuse AI without qualms.

On other fronts, ChatGPT and AI can lead to social anxiety, challenges of lost jobs and the evolution of new industries that overlap with robotics, biotechnology and other areas. Hence, a comprehensive overhaul of the education routine, particularly in higher education, is necessary to counter these perils. Given our currently limited resources and the time intellectual capacity of our higher education institutions, it is unlikely that this endeavour can be pursued. However, we can liberate curricula and pedagogy from spurious knowledge and distorted historical narratives with fresh methods through the ethical use of ChatGPT and AI. -- Courtesy Dawn

CVE policy outline



Mohammad Ali Babakhel

Pakistan has been gripped by the menace of violent extremism (VE) since 1979, and has sought to counter it primarily through kinetic means. Thousands of terrorists and extremists have been killed and captured, yet the virus of extremism continues to incubate and there has been a noticeable increase in the number of violent extremists.

For a long time, 'countering extremism' remained a missing link in our counterterrorism policy framework. The National Internal Security Policy (NISP-I, 2014-18) was the first to incorporate the term 'extremism', citing it 37 times.

It acknowledged that non-traditional threats from extremism had not only impacted the peace index, economic stability and social harmony, as well as instilled a sense of insecurity, they had also negatively impacted the state of fundamental human rights and the country's image.

NISP-I was based on the idea of a 'Comprehensive Response Plan' — a composite process based on dialogue with all sections of society, which also included infrastructure development, rehabilitation of victims of terrorism, creating a national narrative, reconciliation, reintegration, and legal reforms.

The National Counterterrorism Authority (Nacta), in consultation with the other institutions supporting NISP, was supposed to design, develop and implement a National De-

radicalisation Programme. NISP-I identified the use of religious rhetoric to motivate gullible youth to commit suicide missions.

The National Counterterrorism Policy Guidelines 2018 were formulated through a multidisciplinary and cross-functional process stretching over 34 rounds of deliberations among more than 305 stakeholders.

The NCEPG identified six major areas for policy intervention, including: the rule of law and service delivery; citizen engagement; media engagement; integrated education reform; reformation, rehabilitation, reintegration, renunciation; and promotion of culture.

NCEPG is the first-ever policy guideline that clearly defined 'extremism' as having absolute belief in one's truth with an ingrained sense of self-righteousness. This entrenched sense of righteousness enables the holder of the belief to develop a judgemental attitude towards other people's beliefs, which is followed by intolerance.

NISP-II (2018-23), recognising the success of the hard measures carried out in the wake of the adoption of NISP-I and NAP, prioritises the effective undertaking of soft interventions to consolidate the gains made during the preceding five years. NISP-II notes with concern the rise in incidents of VE on educational campuses. It rightly points out that Pakistani security challenges cannot be resolved through administrative actions and developing counter-narratives alone. The deeper, structural socioeconomic drivers must be addressed as they create a sense of deprivation and act as a breeding ground for VE.

According to NISP-II, inadequate application of the writ of the state and violations of human rights are crucial drivers of extremism. The growth of exclusionary identity discourses around gender, religion, sect, and

ethnicity has also contributed to the rise of extremism.

NISP-II rightly points out that minimum national standards must be set for madrassahs, as well as the public and private education sectors. At least four per cent of GDP is recommended to be allocated to education. Curriculum reforms and training of teachers on how to prevent the growth of VE on educational campuses has been highlighted.

NISP-II advocates a comprehensive national narrative against extremism predicated on the celebration of diversity and acceptance of the plurality of thought. It urges that steps be taken for the implementation of Pemra regulations pertaining to hate speech, fake news, racial prejudice and the glorification of terrorism and terrorist organisations. Ten per cent of the content is to be earmarked for public service messages, to be used to share messages against extremism.

To effectively combat extremism, it is imperative to reconsolidate the security apparatus, including the role and functioning of Nacta, as well as CVE measures into short-, medium- and long-term plans. To prevent and counter extremism, Nacta must be legally and operationally linked to the provincial counterterrorism departments.

The cyber-policing capabilities of CTDs need generous allocations. Madrassahs and campuses should be the other top priorities. The surveillance of proscribed persons and organisations should also be made stricter and more realistic. Without building the capacity of preachers, teachers, parents, social workers, women and police to sniff out the virus of extremism, defeating miscreants may remain an elusive dream. The antidote to extremism is education: let us start with bringing 22.8 million out-of-school children to our schools. -- Courtesy Dawn

Governor KP for prompt actions to provide necessary aid to rains affected in Chitral

PESHAWAR (APP): Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Haji Ghulam Ali on Saturday expresses deep grief and sorrow over the losses caused by heavy rains and floods in Chitral and surrounding areas and has taken prompt actions to address the situation to provide necessary aid to the affected communities.

The governor had a telephonic conversation with the Chief Secretary of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa to ensure all possible assistance to the flood and rain-affected people in Chitral and other regions.

The Governor asked for immediate measures to restore the ground route to Upper Chitral.

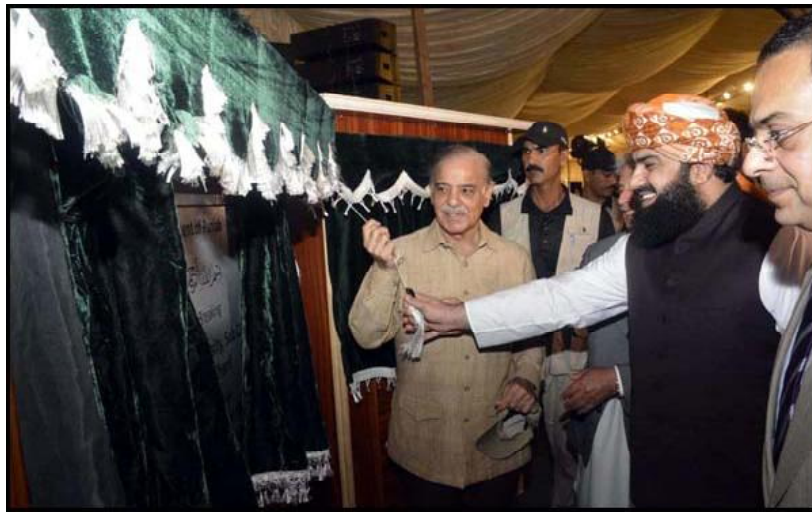
The governor instructed that no effort should be spared in providing aid to the affected people in the Chitral district and other regions, hit by floods and heavy rains.

He also contacted the Chairman of the Red Crescent Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, directing him to ensure prompt relief operations. Urgent actions are to be taken to safely relocate local residents, travellers, and tourists to secure locations in Chitral, said Governor Ghulam Ali.

Due to the disruption of the ground link to Upper Chitral, arrangements will be made to ensure the delivery of essential supplies, including food and other necessities, to the affected area, he added.

The business community of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, including Karachi, was prepared to extend support to those affected in Chitral and surrounding areas, he said.

The district administration urged to establish immediate communication channels for any requirements, Governor Ghulam Ali assures full cooperation.



SHARQPUR: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif unveils a plaque during the groundbreaking of Sharaqpur Campus Quaid-e-Azam University.

Governor Sindh visits city areas, reviews arrangements for Moharram-ul-Haram

KARACHI (APP): Sindh Governor Mohammed Kamran Khan Tessori here on Saturday visited different areas of the metropolis and reviewed the arrangements for the month of Moharram-ul-Haram.

He visited Ancholi area of the city and met with Alama Aqeel Al-Gharavi.

The Governor said that everyone had to fulfill his responsibility to ensure law and order situation during the month of Muharram-ul-Haram.

He said that cooperation with the law enforcement agencies (LEAs) was vital to maintain law and order.

He urged the Ulema to preach the teachings of Islam and said that he believed in serving the people.

Meanwhile, Sindh Governor Mohammed Kamran Khan Tessori said that the Chartered Accountants were playing an important role in the economy of the country.

While addressing the Silver Jubilee Ceremony of the Institute of Chartered Accountants of Pakistan here Saturday, he said that the institute played a significant role in the development of the country's economy.

The Governor said that the guidance of the institute for the future generation could be of much importance.

Tessori here on Saturday visited different sections of the Pakistan American Cultural Centre (PACC) and plant a sapling as part of the tree plantation drive. On this occasion, he said that English learning was the need of the hour as one could perform their work by learning any language in a better way. He lauded the PACC to be part of the plantation campaign. The Governor said that everyone was worried of global warming whereas the present government.



LAHORE: Caretaker Chief Minister Punjab Mohsin Naqvi paying a visit to different areas of Lahore in rain, issues directions to the administration and WASA officials for speedy water drainage.

SAPM says: Govt takes exemplary measures for sports opportunities to youth

LAHORE (APP): Special Assistant to the Prime Minister (SAPM) on Youth Affairs Shaza Fatima Khawaja on Saturday said that the present government was taking exemplary measures for the promotion of sports activities among the youth as merit based selection was being ensured in various sports games at grassroots level.

Addressing as a chief guest at the closing ceremony of Prime Minister's Punjab Football and Hockey League here, she said that the Talent Hunt Youth Sports League under PM's youth program was a unique initiative to provide equal opportunities to talented boys and girls in various sports games.

Hockey provincial league being closed today was started last year as various trials were held to select outstanding players from every corner, she said adding that PM's vision was being implemented to conduct merit based trials across the country to give them an opportunity where they could display their abilities.

She said that current hockey junior team was consisted of multiple players selected through these trials and they have represented the country at international level terming it a pride moment.

The SAPM regretted that departmental sports which were closed down by the previous government in 2019, have well been restored by the present government led by Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif. She expressed the optimism that players selected in these trials would also get employment in various government departments so that they could perform well in the games.

A Rs 5 billion fund have been allocated for sports by the federal government out of which, Rs 2 billion endowment fund would be established for the welfare of present and retired players. Meanwhile Rs 2.5 billion had also been allocated in them a opportunity where they could display their abilities.

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Bodies of 2 women found in Regi area

PESHAWAR (APP): Bodies of the two women were found in Regi area of district Peshawar which were shifted to hospital for post-mortem, officials of the Regi Police told here Saturday.

The women were identified who had left their home for the doctor on Thursday this week. Apparently, the cause of their death is due to high transmission electricity line passing in the area, police said. A case was registered on the complaint of the father. The police also arrested the alleged accused named in the case. Investigation has been started on various aspects of the incident, the police said.

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LHC cancels appointment of GC university Faisalabad's VC

LAHORE (Online): Lahore High Court (LHC) justice Asim Hafiz has cancelled the notification of appointment of vice chancellor of GC university Faisalabad and issue stay orders. Court stopped VC doctor Nasir Amin from his job in written notification. Governor Punjab had appointed doctor Nasir Amin as VC of GC University. Doctor Nasir Amin was fulfilling the responsibilities of VC of GC university due to unavailability of permanent VC.

Youth shot dead over old dispute, two suspects held

CHAKWAL (NNI): Armed men gunned down a youth over dispute in Chak Koka of Chakwal on Saturday. Police arrested two suspects. According to details, the culprits shot dead a 24-year-old Muhammad Bilal s/o Muhammad Arif in Neela police station jurisdiction over old row. The body was shifted to DHQ Hospital Chakwal for postmortem.

The police arrested two suspects and after registering a case into the incident started an investigation.

Cipher conspiracy based on lies: Sherpao

PESHAWAR (APP): Qaumi Watan Party (QWP) Chairman Aftab Ahmad Khan Sherpao on Saturday said that the cipher conspiracy was based on lies and it was PTI chief, who had conspired against the nation.

Addressing a gathering of party workers at his native village in Charsadda district, he said the time had come to take PTI chief to task and get him punished for all his wrongdoings, including the Al-Qadir Trust case.

"The investigations, which are taking place, should be taken to the logical conclusion," Aftab Sherpao demanded, adding that it was the former prime minister, who sabotaged the International Monetary Fund's programme during his tenure.

Condemning the May 9 mayhem, he said that attacking the army installations was a serious incident, therefore, its masterminds and perpetrators should be punished in accordance with the law.

He said as the National Assembly was going to complete its five-year term in August this year, it must pass the electoral reforms to ensure the holding of free and fair elections. "Nobody would have reservations about the election results if the National Assembly passes the electoral reforms," he maintained.

3 killed in road accident on motorway

LAHORE (Online): 3 persons have died in road accident near Sukheki on Lahore motorway.

According to motorway police spokesperson, the driver of the car on its way to Lahore slept during driving and car collided with a truck coming from back side. This resulted into death of 3 persons.

On information sector commander motorway police Faisal Akram reached the scene and started monitoring rescue operation.

All the three victims hailed from Lahore. The dead bodies were shifted by motorway police to the local hospital. Later the traffic was restored.

May 9 vandalism exposed PTI's chief hooliganism based politics: Muqam

DIR (APP): Adviser to the Prime Minister for Political, Public Affairs and National Heritage, Engr Amir Muqam here on Saturday said that Pakistan Tehreek e Insaf has deceived the people of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa on the name of change and the May 9 vandalism exposed the real face of PTI chief.

He said PTI chief hooliganism-based politics was fully exposed before the nation on May 9 and would face people's wrath in the upcoming election.

Addressing a big public gathering after inaugurating NADRA and Passport offices here, he said that people of Dir districts had seen attacks on Dir fort, schools and govt installations during May 9 vandalism and would reject PTI in the upcoming election due to its negative politics.

The Adviser said PTI has destabilized the economy and created the political chaos after its chief was ousted from power through a successful no-confidence motion and later his cypher drama also flopped.

Muqam said the people of Pakistan including Khyber Pakhtunkhwa were looking for a change after the poor performance of PTI and would vote for PML-N due to its outstanding track record of development and people welfare projects in the country.

Amir Muqam said Nawaz Sharif Govt has eliminated terrorism and load shedding besides making Pakistan's defence impregnable and constructed a network of motorways.

He said Pakistan Muslim League-N has strong roots in the masses and would emerge victorious in the upcoming election in the country including KP.

He said that Pakistan Muslim League-N would address the people's problems at their doorsteps.

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PESHAWAR: Police Personal standing alert on the way of the procession.

Islamia University decides to conduct drug tests of Vice Chancellor, employees

BAHAWALPUR (Online): Islamia University of Bahawalpur has announced that it will conduct drug test of all employees including Vice Chancellor Professor Dr Atahar Mehboub.

As per media reports, this decision has been made by keeping in view the arrest of University Chief Security officer Syed Husan Shah.

Police recovered ice, sex pills and objectionable videos of students and officials from possession of said officers.

In a press release issued by the Public Relations Officer, Islamia University Bahawalpur claimed that the university, under the direction and

guidelines of the Higher Education Commission (HEC), has adopted a zero-tolerance attitude towards drugs in the campuses.

After the arrest of the Chief Security Officer, the Vice-Chancellor decided to conduct blood tests of all employees, including him, to identify drug peddlers.

Objectionable videos of university students and officials have also been recovered from mobile phone of arrested chief security officer but it has not been told what steps the university has taken in this regard.

University registrar will ensure complete transparency in medical tests conducted by reputed laboratories.

Dost Khosa for strict action against smugglers

DG KHAN (APP): Ex-Chief Minister Punjab and PPP leader Sardar Dost Muhammad Khosa suggested strict action against the menace of smuggling.

While holding a press conference here on Saturday, Dost Muhammad Khosa stated that petroleum products were being smuggled via the district of Dera Ghazi Khan.

The administration should take strict action against the smugglers.

Khosa also criticised the PTI Chairman and stated that those who were terming him a red-line had disappeared.

He stated that the PTI government could not deliver during their tenure.

Responding to a query, Khosa stated that some people were trying to register a bogus case against him in matters pertaining to the purchase of 247 kanal land. He added that he had fulfilled all legal criteria for purchasing the land.



LAHORE: Commuters are facing trouble due to flooded roads after heavy rain fall of Moon Soon in Provincial Capital.

LHC issue written order to cancel 'stay order on cipher inquiry'

LAHORE (Online): Justice Baqar Najafi of Lahore High Court (LHC) issued written order to take back stay order on cipher investigation against Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf Chairman Imran Khan on Saturday (Today).

Court took stay order back on the request of federal government and issue two pages written order.

Despite court orders, PTI chairman Imran Khan's lawyer did not appear in court, said in verdict.

According to Additional Attorney general notices were sent on Islamabad address and due to Islamabad's issue it excludes from LHC jurisdiction.

Government advocate also presented court's verdicts to support his argument. Court cancelled stay order that was issued on December 06, 2022. Court accepted federal government cross-plea.

One PHE, 3 roads repair schemes approved

SARGODHA (APP): Commissioner Sargodha Muhammad Ajmal Bhatti Saturday chaired a Divisional Development Working Party (DDWP) meeting and approved three schemes of roads repair worth Rs 300 million and one scheme of Public Health Engineering worth Rs 70 million.

The meeting was attended by deputy commissioners of all four districts and officers of departments concerned.

The approved schemes of highway department are about repair of roads, including a road with length of 6-km from Shahdara to Dewal via Kot Musa of Sargodha with estimated cost of Rs 100 million, repair of road length 5-km, from Khushab Pael Chakwal Road via Pael Paddar, with an estimated cost of Rs 100 million, the third road with length of 10-km from Piplan Harnoli Road Adda ¾ miles, from Ulakh Khanwala via Nasir Wala of Mianwali district, with an estimated cost Rs 100 million included.

In the meeting, the scheme of PCC, tough tiles, sewerage and soling was approved at the cost of Rs 70 million.

Speakers stresses need for unity among all Muslim sects

SUKKUR (APP): Speakers at a gathering stressed the need for unity among all Muslim sects for sake of peace and foil conspiracy being hatched against Pakistan by external forces to destabilize the country.

An event was organized by Inter Global Human Development Society (IGHDS) on Muharram-ul-Haram here on Saturday.

They said that Islam is a religion of peace and preaches for tranquility," said the speakers and urged the Muslim Ummah to forget all their internal differences and unite against the international imperialist.

On the occasion, Deputy Mayor Sukkur Dr Arshad Mughal, Arif Nawaz, Molana Abdullah Hakro, Maqsood Imam and other religious and social leaders addressed the event.



KARACHI: Jamat-e-Islami (JI) Karachi Chief, Hafiz Naeem-ur-Rehman addresses to media persons during press conference held at Idara-e-Noor-ul-Haq in Karachi.

ANF seizes 58 kg drugs, arrests five accused during five operations

RAWALPINDI (APP): Anti-Narcotics Force in its ongoing operations against drug-peddlers on Saturday, arrested five accused from different areas of the country and recovered 58 kg of drugs from their possession.

According to an ANF Headquarters spokesman, in an operation on M-1 Motorway Toll Plaza Islamabad, ANF recovered 32.4 kg hashish and 3.6 kg opium concealed in secret cavities of a vehicle. An

accused, resident of Nowshera was also arrested.

In two different operations at Sialkot International Airport, two suspects, residents of Haripur and Chakwal, who were going to Sharjah on flight no PK-209, were arrested. ANF recovered 198 heroin and Ice-filled capsules filled from their possession.

In the fourth operation conducted in Dastagir Block 9, Karachi.



KARACHI: Residents of Qayyumabad block road as they are holding protest demonstration against the shortage of drinking water due to the monopoly of illegal water hydrant and tanker mafia in their area, water at Korangi road.

Dar vows to provide maximum support for improvement in PIA

Dispels impression to impose a new tax on agri, construction sectors

ISLAMABAD (Online): Finance Minister Ishaq Dar has expressed the commitment to provide maximum support for improvement in Pakistan International Airlines.

Dar here expressed the firm commitment of the government to provide maximum support to Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) for the improvement of its services in order to make it

a profit-oriented entity for the country. The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of PIA Air Vice Marshal Muhammad Amir Hayat met with Finance Minister and discussed matters related to PIA, besides requesting further financial support from the government. The Finance Minister expressed his commitment to provide maximum support for the improvement of PIA and

also indicated full support from Aviation Minister Khawaja Saad Rafique to improve PIA's performance and start PIA flights to Europe as soon as possible. He was talking to CEO of PIA Air Vice Marshal Muhammad Amir Hayat in Islamabad on Saturday. The Finance Minister also indicated full support for Aviation Minister Khawaja Saad Rafique's efforts aimed to

improve PIA's performance and early resumption of PIA flights to Europe. Meanwhile, Minister for Finance and Revenue Senator Muhammad Ishaq Dar here Saturday categorically cleared that the government had not imposed any new tax on agriculture and construction sectors under the International Monetary Fund (IMF) agreement.



ISLAMABAD: Air Vice Maeshal Muhammad Amir Hayat CEO PIAC called on Finance Minister Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar at Finance Division.



FAISALABAD: Vendors are taking part in bidding to buy onions from whole sale dealers at Sadhar Vegetables Market in City.

ICCI demands to withdraw high taxes on real estate sector

ISLAMABAD (INP): President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari has said that the construction and real estate sector was the backbone of the economy as it facilitates the growth of over 70 allied industries, generates economic activities, attracts investment and creates plenty of new jobs. However, the government in the budget 23-24 has imposed high taxes on the real estate sector that would destroy property businesses and ultimately retard the overall growth of the economy.

While addressing a seminar on tax issues of real estate sector organized by

ICCI in collaboration with Islamabad Estate Agents Association (IEAA) and Federal of Realtors Pakistan (FORP) here on Saturday, he said that the government should urgently engage realtors in consultation and rationalize high taxes on this important sector to save the businesses and the economy from their destructive consequences.

Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari said that many businesses from real estate sectors have already closed down due to high tax rates and if these taxes were not revised, more businesses would face closure. He said that instead of imposing high taxes, the government should provide attractive

incentives to the construction and real estate sector that would bring more investment to the country and help in early revival of the economy. He assured that ICCI would fully cooperate with IEAA and FORP in their efforts for resolving tax issues. Speaking on the occasion, President, Islamabad Estate Agents Association and President, Federation of Pakistan Realtors, Sardar Tahir Mehmood highlighted the major tax issues of the real estate sector. He said that the 1% tax on deemed income of immovable assets under Sec-7E entails destructive consequences for the real estate and property sector.

PFC delegation visit Turkiye to explore opportunities

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan Furniture Council (PFC) delegation Saturday left for Turkey on a 10-day visit to explore investment avenues, boost exports, and seeking joint ventures.

Talking to a delegation of furniture manufacturers led by Nabeel Ahmad here today prior to departure CEO PFC Mian Kashif Ashfaq said the visit would have significant benefits for the furniture industry in Pakistan.

Such visits often serve as a platform for businesses to showcase their products, network with potential partners, and gain valuable insights into international markets, he added.

He said during their trip, the delegation will engage in various activities, including attending business meetings with Turkish companies, participating in trade shows or exhibitions, visiting furniture retailers and manufacturers, and meeting with government officials to discuss trade and investment

opportunities. He said the delegation's goals likely include expanding their market reach, building partnerships with Turkey-based companies, and exploring opportunities for collaboration in the furniture sector. The trip could also lead to an increase in foreign investment in Pakistan's furniture industry and facilitate the export of Pakistani furniture products to the Turkish market.

Mian Kashif Ashfaq said overall, this visit will represent a strategic move to promote Pakistan's furniture industry on a global scale and strengthen economic ties between Pakistan and the Turkish

The success of his delegation would depend on effective planning, networking efforts, and the ability to showcase the uniqueness and quality of Pakistani furniture products to potential investors and buyers in Turkish.

SECP and PTA foster collaboration for a safer digital ecosystem

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chairman of the Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan (SECP) Akif Saeed on Saturday held a meeting with the Chairman of Pakistan Telecommunication Authority (PTA) Major General Hafeez Ur Rehman, HI (M), aimed at fostering effective collaboration and exploring areas of mutual interest between the two institutions.

The high-level meeting witnessed constructive discussions and deliberations on several key areas of mutual interest. Both organizations firmly expressed their commitment to enhancing collaboration to make Pakistan's digital/cyber

landscape more secure. Recognizing the significance of joint efforts, it was agreed that SECP and PTA will formalize their collaboration through the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding. The MoU will lay a foundation for future collaborative initiatives, strategically aimed at fortifying the regulatory framework and effectively dealing with issues falling within their respective regulatory space. Specific to illegal lending apps it was agreed to set up a joint monitoring and reporting mechanism for ensuring appropriate and timely action.

The Chairman SECP apprised his counterpart about the SECP framework for digital lending apps and

the envisioned role of cyber security auditors to certify the confidentiality and security requirements of digital apps. It was informed that the SECP publishes a White list on its website for validating the legal status of digital lending apps operating in Pakistan.

Akif informed the Chairman PTA that, in light of the growing digitization in the corporate and financial sectors, SECP was building a cyber security framework and would share it with PTA for feedback. The Chairman PTA appreciated SECP's extensive regulatory framework for lending Apps, especially highlighting the importance of data localization measures.

SCCI chief chairs meeting of Sialkot EPZ investors

SIALKOT (APP): President Sialkot Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCI) Abdul Ghafoor Malik chaired a meeting of the Sialkot Export Processing Zone (EPZ) investors to address the issue of cancellation of plots and a plan for the future.

The meeting's highlights included success in stopping the auction and obtaining an extended construction time-frame from the provincial government.

Investors were instructed to submit their project proposals and construction drawings within three months, with a one-year deadline for facility establishment. Further extensions from the government would not be granted, except for ongoing construction cases, considered on a case-by-case basis.

Malta launches financial support to encourage organic farming

VALLETTA (Xinhua/APP): Maltese authorities on Saturday launched a financial scheme that incentivizes organic production by farmers. Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Animal Rights Anton Refalo launched the scheme aimed at farm owners who rent their land to farmers who choose to carry out only organic production.

He explained how the owner who wants to rent the farm with a five-year contract will receive a payment of 1,174 euros (1,306 U.S. dollars) per hectare, in the first two years.

The payment is 587 euros in the first and second year, and for the following three years the owner is given a payment of 300 euros per hectare each year. Director for Agriculture Marco Dimech explained how through this

measure they are incentivizing land owners to enter into an agreement with farmers so that the land is used for the production of products with organic certification. Ambassador for Organic and Sustainable Food Sonya Sammut emphasized how this measure is also leading to the realization of one of the actions of the National Plan for Organic Food that was launched earlier this year. "The incentives we are offering are a very important tool because in addition to leading the farmer to have greater access to the farm, we are increasing the amount of land where we can grow food certified as organic," said Sammut.

"In Malta in 2016, the total of agricultural areas transformed to organic farming amounted to 24 hectares.

China's service outsourcing industry sees steady growth in H1

BEIJING (Xinhua/APP): China's service outsourcing industry saw steady expansion in the first half of this year, according to data from the Ministry of Commerce.

Chinese firms inked service outsourcing contracts worth nearly 1.1 trillion yuan (about 153.9 billion U.S. dollars) during the period, up 10.6 percent year on year. The executed contract value stood at 740 billion yuan during this period, with a year-on-year increase of 14.7 percent.

Of the total, the value of offshore service outsourcing contracts rose

15.1 percent compared to the same period last year, reaching 630 billion yuan.

In terms of the executed contract value, offshore service outsourcing involving the United States, the European Union and members of the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership expanded 16.4 percent, 14.8 percent and 22.2 percent year on year, respectively, in the first six months of 2023.

In the January-June period, the industry brought in 330,000 new hires, with 73.2 percent of these individuals holding a university degree or above.

Gold rates decline by Rs 100

ISLAMABAD (APP): The per tola price of 24 karat gold decreased by Rs100 and was sold at Rs 222,800 on Saturday against its sale at Rs 222,900 the previous day. The price of 10 grams of 24 karat gold also decreased by Rs. 85 to Rs191,015 from Rs191,100 whereas the price of 10 grams 22 karat gold went down to Rs 175,097 from Rs. 175,176, all Sindh Sarafa Jewellers Association reported. The price of per tola and ten-gram silver remained constant at Rs 2,750 and Rs 2357.68 respectively.

PIA passengers can fly to 16 Chinese cities via Beijing

BEIJING (APP): Passengers traveling by Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) can now fly between Pakistan and 16 captivating cities in China via Beijing in partnership with Air China. The Chinese cities include Guangzhou, Shanghai, Wuhan, Chengdu, Chongqing, Changchun, Hangzhou, Harbin, etc, an official of PIA told APP on Saturday. The national flag carrier has also offered a 20 percent discount for students on flights between Pakistan and China.

PIA offers low fares with free baggage of 80 Kg for economy class and 100 Kg for executive economy.

Tripartite railway project to reduce Pak-Uzbekistan cargo time by 5 days: PBF

LAHORE (INP): Pakistan Business Forum (PBF) has said that the 760-kilometre tripartite railway agreement inked between Pakistan, Afghanistan, Uzbekistan is expected to reduce delivery times of cargo between Uzbekistan and Pakistan by about five days.

While talking to media on Saturday, the PBF spokesperson Zainab Jatoti said that it was matter of extraordinary accomplishment that Pakistan, Afghanistan, and Uzbekistan have marked a joint convention to lay out a rail connect that would assist with interfacing Pakistan with Central Asia and Russia via Termez city in southern Uzbekistan hailing the improvement as a "unique advantage" for the district.

She termed it a new rail economic corridor which to tap the potential of this region will pass through Termez, Mazar-i-

Sharif and Logar in Afghanistan, and extend till the Kharlachi border crossing in Pakistan's northwestern Kurram tribal district.

The line would support both passenger and freight services, and contribute to regional trade and economic growth, according to PBF.

"The project will help connect Central Asia and Russia with Pakistan. This railway track will be a game changer," Zainab Kausar Jatoti further said the "monumental achievement" reflected their commitment to strengthen regional cooperation and enhance relations. The PBF thanked the Government of Pakistan and Minister for Railways.

According to PBF spokesperson, currently most trade between Europe and South Asia was dependent on sea routes.

RPSEZ soon to become int'l, industrial trade hub in KP: CEO KPEZDMC

PESHAWAR (APP): Attracted about Rs 85 billion in investment so far, Rashakai Prioritized Special Economic Zone (RPSEZ) is going to become an international trade and industrial hub after the completion of its phase ahead of six months of the completion time under CPEC in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP).

Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Economic Zones Development & Management Company (KPEZDMC) Javed Iqbal Khattak said this while talking to APP on Saturday. He said, "Being the first mega project of CPEC completed in KP, RPSEZ's first phase inauguration has reflected the strong commitment and economic cooperation between the time-tested friends Pakistan and China."

It demonstrated exceptional efforts and

unwavering commitment to the Government of KP and China Road and Bridge Corporation (CRBC).

"Encompassing 247 acres of modern facilities designed to attract domestic and foreign investors, Phase I of RPSEZ helps spur economic growth and job creation for a skilled workforce that would further strengthen Pakistan-China cooperation in diverse fields under CPEC," he added.

"RPSEZ's Phase-I houses 18 zone enterprises, with seven under construction; mobilizing an estimated investment of Rs 85 billion that would become a catalyst for regional prosperity, economic and industrial development," said Javed Iqbal Khattak.

"RPSEZ Phase-I scheduled to be completed

by December this year, was completed six months ago and was inaugurated by caretaker Chief Minister (CM) Azam Khan on Friday last," he said.

"Located at the most strategic site on Islamabad-Peshawar Motorway in the Nowshera district with major international markets of Central Asia, Afghanistan, CARs, China, and SAARC in its proximity, RPSEZ is an emerging international business hub that would serve as a trade gateway for the promotion of industrialization and economic development of Pakistan."

"The project will bolster industrialization, promote Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs), construction, pharmaceutical, food, and marble industries in addition to increasing trade volume between Pakistan

and the aforementioned countries."

"The completion of RPSEZ Phase-I comprising three phases and covering an area of 247 acres, has reflected the better team-work and coordination with China Road and Bridge Company (CRBC)," he added.

He said that RPSEZ Phase-I was the first completed project initiated under CPEC in Pakistan.

Javed Iqbal Khattak said, "An investment has already been made in the zone and Chinese several domestic and major industrial groups started investing in it."

"Units for manufacturing Active Pharmaceutical Ingredients (APIs) raw material for pharmaceutical industrial units are going to be set up and another investor has also shown interest in establishing a vaccine manufacturing unit," he

"Paki-stan Oxygen, the largest oxygen manufacturing unit, has already invested in RPSEZ."

Following the official announcement of CPEC, around 37 zones were proposed as Special Economic Zones (SEZs) for all provinces, out of which the establishment of nine SEZs was prioritized including RPSEZ, Dhabeji, Bostan Industrial Zone, Allama Iqbal Industrial City Faisalabad, ICT Model Industrial Zone Islamabad, Industrial Park Pakistan Steel Mills Port Qasim, Mirpur Industrial Zone AJK, Mohmand Marble City and Moqondass in Gilgit-Baltistan (GB).

"However, RPSEZ is holding a unique competitive advantage due to its close proximity to the first juncture of the CPEC route.



HYDERABAD: A worker is packing mangoes in wooden boxes at Fruits Market.

Russia comes under pressure at UN to avoid global food crisis and revive Ukrainian grain shipments

Monitoring Desk
UNITED NATIONS: Russia came under pressure at the United Nations Security Council from its ally China and developing countries as well as Western nations to avert a global food crisis and quickly revive Ukrainian grain shipments.

Moscow was also criticized by the U.N. and council members for attacking Ukrainian ports after pulling out of the year-old grain deal and destroying port infrastructure—a violation of international humanitarian law banning attacks on civilian infrastructure.

In response to Russia declaring wide areas in the Black Sea dangerous for shipping, the U.N. warned that a military incident in the sea could have “catastrophic consequences.”

Russia said it suspended the Black Sea Grain

Initiative because the U.N. had failed to overcome obstacles to shipping its food and fertilizer to global markets, the other half of the Ukraine grain deal. The Kremlin said it would consider resuming Ukrainian shipments if progress is made in overcoming the obstacles, including in banking arrangements.

China’s deputy U.N. ambassador Geng Shuang noted U.N. Secretary-General Antonio Guterres’ commitment to make every effort to ensure that both Ukrainian grain and Russian food and fertilizer get to world markets. He expressed hope that Russia and the U.N. will work together to resume exports from both countries “at an early date” in the interest of “maintaining international food security and alleviating the food crisis in developing countries in particular.”

U.S. Ambassador Linda Thomas-Greenfield accused Russia of using the Black Sea as “blackmail” and playing political games, pointing to Moscow’s export of more grain than ever before at higher prices. She called on the Security Council and all 193 U.N. member nations to come together and urge Russia to resume negotiations in good faith.

Several developing countries warned of the impact of the cutoff in Ukrainian grain shipments, which has already led to a rise in wheat prices.

Gabon’s U.N. Ambassador Michel Biang said the grain deal had avoided a spark in grain prices and calmed the risk of food insecurity in the drought-affected Horn of Africa and other regions. He urged talks “to break the current deadlock” and avoid a humanitarian crisis.



Linda Thomas-Greenfield, United States ambassador to the United Nations, left, speaks with Sergiy Kyslytsya, permanent representative of Ukraine to the United Nations at the end of the UN Security Council meeting to discuss the maintenance of peace and security of Ukraine.

UN agency that governs international waters mired in grueling debate over deep sea mining

Monitoring Desk
SAN JUAN: Members of a U.N. agency that governs international waters were locked in a fierce debate over whether to allow deep sea mining and set a new deadline for proposed regulations still stuck in draft mode.

The U.N. International Seabed Authority, which is based in Jamaica, began its two-week conference on the issue July 10 but discussions behind closed doors dragged on during the last day of the meeting.

“It’s quite a marathon,” Michael Lodge, the agency’s secretary general, said at a press briefing Friday. “There are still loose ends to tie up.”

The agency has yet to issue any provisional mining licenses, and it missed a July 9 deadline to approve a set of rules to govern such activity.

Companies and countries can now apply for a mining license as demand surges for precious metals that are found in the deep sea and are used in electric car batteries and other green technology.

The U.N. agency has

issued more than 30 exploration licenses but none for actual mining so far. Most of the exploration is focused in an area between Hawaii and Mexico that spans some 1.7 million square miles (4.5 million square kilometers), with the activity taking place at depths of up to 19,000 feet (6,000 meters).

Members of the International Seabed Authority said they expect to resume work on the proposed regulatory framework at the body’s November meeting, the third one of the year.

North Korea fires cruise missiles into Yellow Sea

Monitoring Desk
SEOUL: North Korea fired several cruise missiles into the Yellow Sea, raising concerns and heightening tensions in the region.

The launch took place early Saturday morning, after the country had fired two ballistic missiles toward Japan. The latest missile tests have put neighboring South Korea and the United States on high alert, prompting the two countries to launch joint military exercises and increased defense cooperation.

“The situation is being closely monitored, and we remain vigilant,” said a spokesperson for South Korea’s Joint Chiefs of Staff.

The missile launches come amidst a standstill in diplomatic efforts between North and South Korea. North Korean leader Kim Jong Un’s

push for advancing weapons development, including tactical nuclear weapons, has further strained relations in the region. “The recent missile launches demonstrate North Korea’s willingness to challenge regional stability,” said an anonymous US official.

North Korea’s defense minister, Kang Sun Nam, added to the unease when he suggested that the deployment of a nuclear-capable submarine to South Korea might meet the criteria for the use of nuclear weapons, as specified in North Korea’s policy.

As the situation unfolds, the US military is also dealing with the case of Private Second Class Travis King, a soldier who is believed to be in North Korea’s custody after breaking away from a tour group visiting the Demilitarized Zone.



Sri Lanka’s President Ranil Wickremesinghe shakes hands with India’s Prime Minister Narendra Modi before their meeting at the Hyderabad House in New Delhi, India.

G7, others ask China to stop North Korea sanctions evasion in its waters

Monitoring Desk
UNITED NATIONS: The Group of Seven, European Union and three other countries plan to appeal to China for help to stop North Korea evading United Nations sanctions by using Chinese territorial waters, according to their letter sent.

“We have concerns regarding the continuing presence of multiple oil tankers ... that use your territorial waters in Sansha Bay as refuge to facilitate their trade of sanctioned petroleum products to the DPRK,” said the letter to be sent to China’s U.N. Ambassador Zhang Jun.

The letter - signed by G7 members the United States, Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan and Britain, plus Australia, New Zealand, South Korea and the European Union - will provide satellite images that

“clearly indicates these practices continued to occur within China’s jurisdiction in 2022 and have continued in 2023.”

North Korea, formally named Democratic People’s Republic of Korea (DPRK), has been under U.N. sanctions for its missiles and nuclear programs since 2006. This includes an annual cap of its imports of refined petroleum and crude oil, imposed in 2017.

U.N. sanctions monitors have also long accused North Korea of evading the measures, including by continuing illicit imports of refined petroleum and exports of coal.

The Security Council has also blacklisted several ships for sanctions busting. The satellite images to be provided to China show some of those ships using its territorial waters.

India and Sri Lanka plan land link

Monitoring Desk
NEW DELHI: India and Sri Lanka agreed to consider building a land link between them, they said during President Ranil Wickremesinghe’s first visit to the regional powerhouse, as Chinese influence grows on his island.

Establishing “land connectivity” across the Palk Strait, which in places is only around 25 kilometres wide, would give India access to the key ports of Trincomalee and Colombo and strengthen a “millennia-old relationship”, the neighbours said in a strategic document. Feasibility studies on a land bridge and a petroleum pipeline will be carried out, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi said after their talks. Wickremesinghe’s two-day visit came a year after he became president following the toppling of his predecessor during an unprecedented economic crisis.

Biden picks Franchetti as first woman to lead Navy

Monitoring Desk
WASHINGTON: President Joe Biden nominated Admiral Lisa Franchetti to lead the US Navy, a historic step that would break a gender barrier in the military by making her the first woman to command the service and to become a member of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

The decision by Biden is a surprise. Pentagon officials had widely expected the nomination to go to Admiral Samuel Paparo, who leads the navy in the Pacific and who has experience grappling with the growing challenge from China.

Still, Franchetti, who is currently the vice chief of operations for the navy, was among the candidates believed to be in the running for the position, is widely respected and counts broad experience, including as commander of US naval forces in Korea, officials said.

USS Canberra: US commissions first Navy warship in foreign port

Monitoring Desk
SYDNEY: The United States commissioned a warship in Sydney, Australia, on Saturday, the first time a U.S. Navy vessel joined active service at a foreign port, as the two close allies step up their military ties in response to China’s expanding regional reach.

The Independence-class littoral combat ship - named after a Royal Australian Navy cruiser that was sunk while supporting the U.S. Marine landings on Guadalcanal in 1942.

Latin American migrants holding informal jobs hamper their integration - report

Monitoring Desk
MEXICO CITY: Migrants in Latin America are more likely to work in informal jobs despite having higher qualifications compared to native workers, hindering their integration, a joint report by three international organizations showed on Friday.

Over 50% of migrants in the region are likely to find informal work, the study by the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) showed.

That trend has been registered in at least half

of the 12 countries analyzed.

Migrants tend to end up with more temporary contracts and longer shifts, working 50 hours or more per week, than native laborers, 45% are whom work informally on average, the report added.

The poor quality of jobs found by migrants reveal a failure to take advantage of the opportunities that migration can bring to these countries, the report said.

It noted that in the last 10 years, only Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru and the Dominican Republic have implemented special permits and visas to regulate the situation of immigrants.

Israeli gunfire kills a 17-year-old boy in the West Bank, Palestinian health officials say

Monitoring Desk
JERUSALEM: Israeli forces shot and killed a 17-year-old Palestinian boy in the occupied West Bank Friday, Palestinian health officials said, the latest bloodshed in a more than year-long cycle of violence that has gripped the region.

The boy — whom Palestinian health officials identified as Muhammad Fouad Atta al-Bayed — was shot in the head by Israeli forces during unrest in the village of Umm Safa, north of Ramallah. The village has been a target of attacks by Jewish settlers in recent weeks. The Palestinian news agency Wafa reported that Israeli forces had fired live ammunition, tear gas and stun grenades during confrontations with local residents.



Burqa-clad women stage a protest for their rights at a beauty salon in the Shahr-i-Naw area of Kabul.

Chinese hackers breached US ambassador's emails, says WSJ; Beijing rebuts claim

Monitoring Desk
WASHINGTON: Former President Donald Trump’s trial over his alleged mishandling of classified documents will begin on May 20 next year, according to a US court order on Friday.

Trump’s lawyers had resisted setting a date but said any trial should take place after the November 2024 US presidential election, in which he is front-runner for the Republican nomination. A Trump spokesperson said the trial schedule “allows president Trump and his legal team to continue fighting” the criminal case.

attacks and cyber theft in all forms. This position is consistent and clear,” spokesperson Liu Pengyu said in an emailed.

US Commerce Secretary Gina Raimondo said on Friday that US authorities are still investigating a hack reported by Microsoft involving her emails and she would not speculate on whether China was behind it. Raimondo was among a group of senior US officials whose emails were hacked earlier this year by a group Microsoft (MSFT) said was based in China, according to a person briefed on the matter.

Trump's trial in papers case to begin next year

Monitoring Desk
WASHINGTON: Former President Donald Trump’s trial over his alleged mishandling of classified documents will begin on May 20 next year, according to a US court order on Friday.

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Beauty salon ban in Afghanistan a blow to women's financial freedom

Monitoring Desk
KABUL: For the last eight years, Marzia Reyazee has supported her family with the earnings from her female-only beauty salon in Afghanistan, a business she spent more than \$18,000 setting up.

But the 34-year-old mother of two is likely to find herself without her business, and with few other prospects for a livelihood, when the Taliban administration’s order to shutter women’s beauty salons comes into effect on July 25.

“We can’t work here, we can’t feed our family, we need to work,” she said. Like many women in Afghanistan’s beauty services sector, Reyazee is the main breadwinner in the family.

The ban on beauty salons is the latest in a series of restrictions imposed by the Taliban on women in Afghanistan since taking control of the country two years ago during the chaotic withdrawal of US troops.

More than 60,000 women are likely to lose their jobs, and 12,000 beauty businesses are likely to shutter, according to industry estimates, putting further strain on an economy already in crisis.

“It will disproportionately impact female entrepreneurs, which is a setback for resilience, poverty reduction, and economic recovery,” Roza Otunbayeva, the UN Secretary General’s special representative in Afghanistan, told Reuters.

A spokesperson for the Taliban administration did not respond to request for comment.

The ban will also create a “significant” decrease in women employment, the International Labour Organization (ILO) told Reuters. During the rule of Afghanistan’s foreign-backed government, female participation in the formal work force was only around 23 percent, according to the ILO.

Bullet train designed for Hangzhou Asian Games unveiled in China

Monitoring Desk
BEIJING: A Fuxing bullet train specially designed for the Hangzhou Asian Games rolled off the production line in Changchun, northeast China’s Jilin Province.

It will run between Hangzhou, the host city of the 19th Asian Games, and the five co-host cities of Ningbo, Wenzhou, Jinhua, Shaoxing, and Huzhou in east China’s Zhejiang Province during the event, CGTN reported on Saturday. The Asian Games-themed Fuxing intelligent electric multiple unit (EMU) consists of eight cars with a capacity of 578 passengers and can reach a speed of 350 kilometers per hour.

It is coated in Rainbow Purple, a dominant color for the event, and decorated with patterns of the emblem, slogan, and sports pictograms.

Full 5G+Wi-Fi network coverage is offered on the EMU and intelligent interactive terminals are available in some carriages, which provide high-speed rail recreation, wireless

screen projection, operation information, and other services for passengers during the journey.

To facilitate the travel of passengers with special needs, the train also has barrier-free carriages, which have been equipped with 90-centimeter-wide passage doors, barrier-free toilets and wheelchair storage areas.

Braille signs have been installed at multiple service points, such as seats, wheelchair storage areas and toilets, making it easy for visually impaired passengers to use.

The EMU has been optimized for an overall improved passenger experience. Dozens of test runs have been conducted to improve its smooth operation, and the seats have been adjusted based on ergonomics. An automatic air pressure and temperature adjustment system has been installed, which can effectively relieve the discomfort of tinnitus caused by changes in air pressure when passing through a tunnel.

Gunmen riding on a motorcycle open fire, killing a worker for the World Food Program in Yemen

Monitoring Desk
SANAA: Gunmen shot and killed the head of one of the World Food Program’s offices in southwestern Yemen, the humanitarian organization said. No militant group immediately claimed responsibility for the attack.

In a statement, WFP said that Moayad Hameidi, a Jordanian, was shot by gunmen in the city of Taiz not long after he arrived in the country to assume the role as head of its office in that city. It added he died shortly after reaching a hospital.

Hameidi was shot by two armed assailants on a motorbike, according to a statement issued by a local security committee on Friday. No further information was given.

Al-Qaida in the Arabian Peninsula, also known by its acronym AQAP and believed to be one of the more dangerous branches of the al-Qaida terror network, is active in several regions in Yemen. Years of the country’s civil war have allowed the militants to maintain a presence in several areas around Yemen.



SAG-AFTRA union President Fran Drescher and Duncan Crabtree-Ireland, SAG-AFTRA National Executive Director and Chief Negotiator, demonstrate as SAG-AFTRA actors join the Writers Guild of America (WGA) in a strike against the Hollywood studios, on the picket line outside of Netflix offices in Los Angeles, California, U.S.

Urges PM to hold special session of cabinet in Quetta: Institutions meant for accountability need own accountability, asserts Siraj ul Haq

Independent Report
QUETTA: The Ameer Jama'at-e-Islami, Sirajul Haq has categorically stated that the institutions which have been established for doing accountability of others in the country need their own accountability.

He said that we have to make realize the issues being confronted by Balochistan. He said that there is highest level of poverty in the province, which otherwise is blessed with rich mineral and natural resources.

The JI Ameer urged the Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif to hold special meeting of federal cabinet in Quetta to ponder over the issues.

He said that the issues of the province can be heard by inviting some 700 people. If Shehbaz Sharif could not do so then the history would never forgive him. If the government did not do so, then JI would call peace Jirga in Islamabad. This is high time to make joint struggle for resolution of the issues together.

This and similar other

views were expressed by Sirajul Haq while addressing a peace Jirga in Quetta on Saturday. A large number of leaders from different political and religious parties participated in the Jirga. The tribal elders and notables were also present.

Ameer JI said that the people of Balochistan are loving and we have to come them closer. He said that Balochistan is important not only for Pakistan, but for the whole Islamic world. He said that everyone is eyeing at Balochistan and Gwadar. But, if there

are issues at the front gate then how it would progress, adding he questioned.

Sirajul Haq said that the people of province are patriotic and as such they did never speak about the breaking of country.

He regretfully pointed out that while the world has reached the moon, but people of the province are forced to drink sewer water.

The JI Ameer also said that the influential people are safe in the province, but the common citizens are unsafe.



QUETTA: Central Amir Jamaat-e-Islami Sirajul Haq, Nawab Ghaus Bakhsh Barozai, Maulana Abdul Haq Hashmi, Sheikh Jaffar Mandokhail and others sitting on stage during Qaumi Aman Jirga organized by Jamaat-e-Islami



LAHORE: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif in a group photo with high-achievers of Danish schools on the ceremony of merit-based distribution of laptops among high-achievers under the Prime Minister's Laptop initiative.

People to vote those who saved Pakistan from default: Ahsan

LAHORE (APP): Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Engr. Prof. Ahsan Iqbal said on Saturday that present coalition government has again turned the country's economy towards rehabilitation by taking difficult decisions and laid the foundation of economic recovery and those who had jeopardized the economy should scare of the elections.

Talking to media after addressing as chief guest the Lifetime Achievement National Engineering Excellence Award ceremony organized in his honour by Institution of Engineers Pakistan (IEP) at a local hotel, he said, "We have the pride to save the country from default. I am sure the nation will vote for those who ensured continuation of Pakistan's economic recovery policies." He added that coalition government

would quit on completion of its constitutional term, and after that a caretaker government would be at the helm of affairs, asserting



that Election Commission of Pakistan would conduct the general election in the country so that a new elected government come soon. The country would definitely go towards real democracy as authority rested with the people.

Prof. Ahsan Iqbal said that country's economy could never be strengthened and development could not be ensured unless the loss

making public entities were privatized and the power sector's circular debt was terminated.

Earlier addressing the

PM lays foundation stones of various development projects in Sharaqpur

ISLAMABAD (Online): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif says development projects are linked with welfare of people.

Prime Minister was addressing the ceremony in Sharaqpur after the inaugurating various development projects including laying the foundation stone of the 19 km long Lahore Bypass connecting Kala Shah Kaku to Lahore- Karachi Motorway.

He said that inauguration of the expansion project of Lahore Karachi Motorway up to Sigian Road and Main Ravi Bridge will facilitate the traffic of Lahore, save fuel and create employment opportu-

nities. Shehbaz Sharif said campus of Quaid e Azam University is also being established in the Lahore. He said that route of metro bus will be extended from Shahdra to Kala Shah Kaku.

He said approximately fifty billion rupees is the cost of these development projects.

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif informed that he also laid foundation stone of Scout College in Sheikhupura.

He said that this is the era of Information Technology and the government is taking concrete measures for promotion of IT culture in the country.

8 killed as heavy rain lashes parts of Punjab, spell to continue

Monitoring Desk
LAHORE: Low-level flood of 109,000 cuses in Chenab at Marala Barrage Sialkot; River Chitral sees extremely high flood in history.

Heavy rain with thunderstorm is being witnessed in different parts of Lahore, while the weather Division has forecast intermittent rain in the city throughout the day.

Two boys have been killed due to the excessive rainfall in Lahore. A 17-year-old boy drowned in rainwater under the Do

Moria Pull, while a 12-year-old boy drowned near Thokar Niaz Baig.

Lahore Deputy Commissioner Raafia Haider has taken notice of the deaths, and has instructed the assistant commissioner concerned to reach the spot. She has requested citizens to keep children away from water. In Mansehra, roofs of three dilapidated houses caved in due to the heavy rain in the city and its adjacent spots since last night, killing three people, including two children and a woman.



QUETTA: Balochistan Home Secretary Saleh Nasir, Abdul Rahim Kakar, Hadi Askari and others are addressing during the Tradesmen Aman Conference organized by Central Association of Balochistan Tradesmen.

Alem Khan says: Impartial caretaker govt and timely elections are in interest of country

LAHORE (Online): President IPP Abdul Alem Khan said that an impartial caretaker government and timely elections are in the interest of country.

He said that he will field candidates against all parties in the general elections.

It is in interest of country that an impartial caretaker government should be established and power should be transferred to new government by conducting elections on time.

In an interview he said that whatever happened in Prime Minister (PM) house

during PTI regime was done by will of Azam Khan.

He was real Prime Minister (PM).

Gang of Five was running the country.

He said that Former Chief Minister Punjab Usman Buzdar was the main character of corruption.

If he is caught he will tell everything.

President IPP further added that General Faiz Hameed wanted to become Army Chief.

He and Chairman PTI had fixed each other for the next 5 to 6 years.

Former federal minister Moonis Elahi declared proclaimed offender

LAHORE (Online): Lahore Sessions Court has declared former federal minister Moonis Elahi proclaimed offender being involved in money laundering and corruption circle cases.

The court has declared Moonis Elahi proclaimed offender due to fleeing from country.

The court said two cases of money laundering are registered against Moonis Elahi. One among them is shifting billion of rupees illegally outside the

country. Second case has been registered against him in anti corruption circle Punjab.

Challan has been filed in the court against 3 other accused including Moonis Elahi.

The court has sought travel history and details of bank accounts of Moonis Elahi.

The court has started the proceedings of freezing passport, national identity card, bank account and property of Moonis Elahi.

President Alvi says: Govt taking measures to facilitate special persons

ISLAMABAD (INP): President Dr Arif Alvi on Saturday said the government was taking measures to make persons with disabilities productive citizens of the society.

In a video message for special persons with disabilities, he said in Pakistan 10 to 12 persons were disabled who needed to be facilitated by society.

He said those with mental and physical deficiencies and those who could not see, hear and speak should be given admission to regular schools where they could be not denied admission legally.

The President said the legislation had been enacted at the Federal and provincial levels to provide spe-

cial persons with job opportunities in public and private sectors so that these people could become self-sufficient and take benefit from their skills.

He said National Vocational and Technical Training Commission and Vocational Training Authority were arranging for the training of persons with disabilities in 140 fields so that they could improve their skills and get suitable jobs.

It should be determined that the persons with disabilities could get what kind of jobs in different institutions and companies so that they could get benefited in finding employment. President Alvi said these special persons were

also getting free education in universities, medical facilities and relaxation in fares for travelling.

The disabled persons needed a certificate and identity card from the National Database and Registration Authority (NADRA) to avail of these facilities, he said adding NADRA was issuing a certificate to youth aged 9 to 18, in which his disability was mentioned.

The President said the certificate from NADRA would help special persons in getting jobs, loans from banks and facilities available in the public sector.

He appealed to the business community to follow the law and provide job opportunities to people with disabilities.

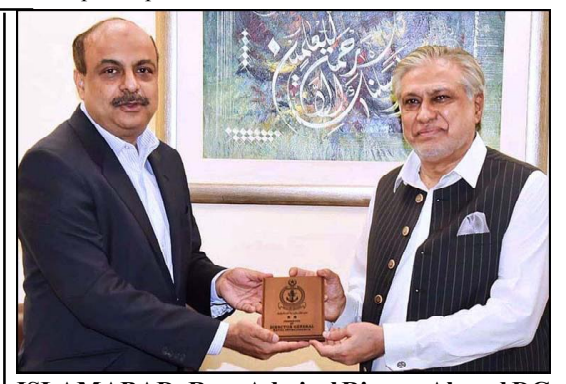
DIG Shariq Jamal died mysteriously

LAHORE (Online): Deputy Inspector General of Punjab Police Shariq Jamal died mysteriously.

According to police sources, it has been told that the body of DIG Shariq Jamal was found in a flat located in the limits of Nishtar police station.

Police have detained a man and a woman and started the investigation.

Later police have released the arrested lady Quratulain and her husband. It has been reported that Punjab Police DIG Shariq Jamal died mysteriously in a flat located in Nishtar police station between Friday and Saturday night.



ISLAMABAD: Rear Admiral Rizwan Ahmed DG Naval Intelligence called on Finance Minister Shehbaz Sharif and presented memento to the Finance Minister at Finance Division.

Ukraine desires to strengthen ties with Pakistan: Kuleba

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Ukrainian Foreign Minister Dmytro Kuleba said that his government desires to further strengthen ties with Pakistan in all fields of mutual interests and seeks the Pakistani government's help for a peaceful solution to the Russian-Ukraine war.

In an exclusive interview on a private news channel, he reaffirmed the commitment of the people and the government of Ukraine to work closely with Pakistan to further strengthen their bilateral relations, especially in the field of defence in which Pakistan's defence capabilities are supposed to improve. Minister further hailed Pakistan for maintaining a neutral stance on the Russia-Ukraine conflict despite pressure from the West to take sides.

He also emphasized the importance of peaceful resolution of disputes and conflicts through dialogue.

Replied to a query, he explained that war will not be the reason to bury relations with neighbouring countries, adding, we want to enhance our friendship and visits to Pakistan and other neighbouring countries with an aim to bring stability to the region.

To another query, he explained before the start of the Ukraine and Russia crises thousands of Pakistani students were studying in Ukraine, adding, two years back Ukraine traders sought the help of Pakistan for ending flour and food-related crises.

He also emphasized the importance of peaceful resolution of disputes and conflicts through dialogue.

QUETTA: Secretary Colleges & Higher Education Lal Jan Jaffar meeting with Vice Chancellor BUTITEMS Dr. Khalid Hafeez

Russian crude oil cargo is \$4.209 million cheaper in international market

ISLAMABAD (Online): Russian oil is only ten rupee cheaper in international market, this was said in report prepared by petroleum ministry.

Authorities told that 100,000 metric ton crude oil was imported whose volume was 715000 barrel.

Both Russian cargo costed almost \$52.9 million and if same amount of volume was imported from international market it would have costed \$57.2 million.

According to report

both Russian cargo were almost \$4.209 million cheaper.

Russian oil is under refining in PRL refinery.

It is said in report that during refining process 50% furnace oil, 50% petrol and diesel will be extracted.

Due to lesser ratio of petrol and diesel will also affect the price. Authorities told that 100,000 metric ton crude oil was imported whose volume was 715000 barrel.

People should repose confidence in PML-N to overcome crises: Rana

FAISALABAD (APP): Federal Interior Minister Rana Sana Ullah Khan has said that the people should repose confidence in Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) in upcoming general elections to overcome multifaceted crises prevalent in the country.

Addressing a gas inauguration ceremony in Chak No.31-JB Khan Pur near Aminpur Bungalow here on Saturday night, he said that PML-N was the only party which had the ability to drag Pakistan out of crises and put it on road to progress and prosperity.

He said that in 1998, the entire nation was under extreme stress when India had made atomic explosions whereas its minister was intimidated the neighboring country. In this circumstance, the PML-N supreme Mian Nawaz

Sharif who was the then Prime Minister of Pakistan despite severe foreign pressure and threats had conducted six atomic explosions in response of five Indian explosions for equalizing the balance of power in the region.

Similarly, in 2013, Pakistan was facing acute shortage of electricity and the people were experiencing unprecedented loadshedding of 20 hours daily whereas rampant incidents of terrorism had further aggravated the situation and choked the entire economic activities in the country. He said that the nation had posed confidence in PML-N which under dynamic leadership of Mian Nawaz Sharif not only overcome the menace of terrorism and load shedding within four years but also put the country on road to progress and prosperity.



ISLAMABAD: President National Party and former Chief Minister Balochistan Dr. Abdul Malik Baloch attending National Dialogue on New Charter of Democracy at Islamabad Press Club

Mission in contact with Pakistani origin detainees in Libya: FO

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Foreign Office Spokesperson said on Saturday that Pakistan's mission was in contact with Pakistani origin detainees in Libya and was interacting with the United Nations for their medical check-ups and provision of medicines.

In response to media queries regarding Pakistani nationals detained in Benghazi, Libya, the Spokesperson, Mumtaz Zahra Baloch, said, "At the instructions of the Foreign

Minister, our Charge d'affaires in Tripoli, Mr. Ashiq Ali, visited the detention center in Benghazi and met with detainees of Pakistani origin. Food and basic necessities have been provided to them."

"Our mission is in contact with the United Nations medical team for routine medical check-ups and provision of medicines to the detainees. The mission also remains in contact with IOM for their early repatriation," she added.

DG Naval Intelligence calls on Dar

ISLAMABAD (Online): Rear Admiral Rizwan Ahmad, Director General Naval Intelligence called on Finance Minister Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar in Islamabad on Saturday.

He extended invitation on behalf of Naval Chief to the Finance Minister to visit Naval Headquarters which he accepted.

Rear Admiral commended the efforts of Finance Minister in getting the country out of economic difficulties and setting it again on the growth path.

Finance Minister also lauded the role of Pakistan Navy in safeguarding the maritime interests of Pakistan.

Greece Boat accident, 4 more dead bodies brought to Lahore

LAHORE (Online): Dead bodies of 4 more Pakistanis who died in Greece Boat accident were brought to Lahore Airport.

The representatives of overseas Pakistanis Foundation received the dead bodies and handed them over to the heirs.

The dead bodies have been sent to their native towns by ambulances.

Dead bodies of Arsalan and Abu Bakar have been sent to Nowshera while dead body of Adnan has been sent to Gujarat and dead body of Ali Ejaz has been sent to Mandi Bahauddin.

Three of a family killed in exchange of firing

PESHAWAR (APP): As many as three persons of a family were killed in an exchange of fire between two parties in Mirakhel area of Parrang Police Station, Charsadda on Saturday.

Police said that father and son are also among the dead. The bodies were shifted to Charsadda Hospital for the autopsy and legal proceedings.



QUETTA: Written tests conducted for different positions in Directorate of Public Relations Balochistan