

Independent

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Certain things improved due to firm stance; expects progress in PPL affairs: Bringing Balochistan at par of other provinces not possible with limited funds, regrets Chief Minister

Says paucity of funds main reason to poverty, backwardness of Balochistan; We don't receive such funds under the NFC Award that we may resolve the issues of people

Independent Report
QUETTA: The Chief Minister, Mir Abdul Quddus Bizenjo has categorically stated that Balochistan is half of Pakistan, and it is not possible to bring it (Balochistan) at par of other provinces of the country with limited funds.

"We don't receive such funds under the NFC Award that we may resolve the issues of people," the Chief Minister mentioned adding that "whenever there comes new government in the federation, it is talked about removing backwardness of the province,



but unfortunately, practical steps are not taken for the very purpose."

He said that those having authority and rule would have to ponder upon that why Balochistan was

left behind as compared to other provinces.

This and similar views were expressed by the Chief Minister in an official statement issued here on Wednesday.

Mir Abdul Quddus Bizenjo maintained that basic reason behind poverty and backwardness of the province is non-availability of the funds and lack of attention.

He regretfully pointed out that this is the province which is backward too. He said that we get least share in the NFC Award. While on the other hand, 40 percent of our resources are spent on the security, which is a big challenge for us. He said that it is a very big challenge to provide se-

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ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif, Chargé d'affaires of the Chinese Embassy in Islamabad Ms. Pang Chunxue and Federal Ministers cutting a cake marking the 10th anniversary of the signing of the agreement for CPEC



Governor Balochistan Malik Abdul Wali Khan Kakar meeting with President of Balochistan National Party (BNP) Sardar Akhtar Jan Mengal at his residence in Wadh

PTI's own people exposed Panama conspiracy Only Nawaz Shrif can resolve country's problems: Marriyum

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Information and Broadcasting Marriyum Aurangzeb on Wednesday said that Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf's own people had exposed the Panama conspiracy.

Addressing a press conference here, she said that characters behind that conspiracy pushed the country towards multiple crises by imposing an incompetent and inefficient person at the helm of affairs.

The minister said that the solution of Pakistan's problems lied only with Nawaz Sharif who served thrice as Prime Minister.



"During the Nawaz Sharif era, the economy was stabilized, he gave the people a gift of China Pakistan Economic Corridor", she said adding that great injustice was done to the person who had done great service to the country as prime minister.

Taking a jibe at Imran, she said the shadowy figures and characters who were burning the country today, stood on the container to stop the CPEC project in 2013-14.

Marriyum Aurangzeb said on that Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz Quaid Nawaz Sharif was disqualified under a conspiracy when "Panama verdict was changed to Iqama."

During the press conference, she played a video clip of senior Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf leader and legal wizard Hamid Khan

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ISLAMABAD: The outgoing Ambassador of Qatar in Pakistan Sheikh Saoud Abdurrahman Al Thani call on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif

CJP Bandial terms Greece boat tragedy a 'human rights issue'

ISLAMABAD (INP): Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) Umar Ata Bandial said on Wednesday that the boat tragedy on Greek shores — which resulted in the deaths of nearly 300 Pakistanis — was a matter of human rights.

He passed these remarks as a two-member bench, comprising the CJP and Justice Sayyed Mazhar Ali Akbar Naqvi, took up petitions pertaining to the trafficking of minors.

At least 600 migrants, out of possibly 750, on the fishing boat that set off from Libya towards European shores, perished when their vessel capsized in the Mediterranean Sea last month.

The passengers largely comprised Pakistanis, Afghans, Egyptians, Palestinians and Syrians migrating in the overloaded boat. It was a recurring tragedy — with no end in sight as economic, political and climate crises compelled increasingly large numbers of

people to flee their homes. The tragedy of such immense proportions was believed to have taken place in the presence of maritime authorities. It was also believed that Pakistani nationals were forced to stay below the deck by the crew, which maltreated them during the journey.

Referring to the tragedy during the hearing today, Justice Bandial noted that innocent and poor people were tricked into going abroad on the pretext of better jobs.

"Citizens are duped by human traffickers and pay millions of rupees," the top judge said, pointing out that even children and women were becoming victims of human smuggling.

"Does the government have statistics on the number of children being smuggled," the CJP asked. To the query, the director general of the human rights ministry said, "Unfortunately, accurate data is not available."

PM says Pakistan deeply values its ties with USA

ISLAMABAD (INP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Wednesday extended warm greetings to US President Joe Biden and the American people on their Independence Day.

"Pakistan has always deeply valued its relationship with the United States," the prime minister said in a tweet.

He said over the past 75 years, the bilateral ties had continued to expand and deepen. He said the US was one of Pakistan's major trading, defence and economic partners.

"The governments in Islamabad and Washington have demonstrated pragmatism and wisdom to keep the course of our relations steady, which speaks of the dynamism of our partnership", he added.

According to an Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR) press release issued here, Subedar Sahib Khan

Calls for amicable solution to Wadh issue: Balochistan can't afford further tribal clashes, hatred and prejudices: Governor

Malik Abdul Wali Kakar says development and prosperity can only become fate of the peaceful nationalities and tribes

Independent Report
QUETTA: The Governor, Malik Abdul Wali Khan Kakar has categorically stated that a poor and backward province i.e., Balochistan can't afford further tribal clashes, hatred and prejudices, as such there is a dire need to take the existing sensitivity regarding tribes and sects seriously and find sustainable solution to them.

The Governor said that development and prosperity can only become fate of the peaceful nationalities and tribes. He said that Pashtoons and Balochs are among those lucky nations whom political elders give

up the internal conflicts and battles and move ahead by making the collective peace and development the aim of life.

The Governor was speaking to the President of Balochistan National Party (BNP), Sardar Akhtar Mengal during his visit to his residence in Wadh on Wednesday.

The Governor especially went to Wadh to meet Sardar Akhtar Mengal and discussed with him the latest situation of the country, tense situation of Tehsil Wadh besides the changes taking place in the region.

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Last phase of LG elections to be held in 35 districts of Balochistan today

Independent Report

QUETTA: The 5th and last phase of Local Government elections is being held in 35 districts with election of chairman and vice chairman of the district councils in 35 districts of Balochistan today (Thursday).

In all 1266 members would be using their right of franchise for election of chairman and vice chairman of the district councils in 35 districts of the province.

The members are included the chairman of rural union councils of the districts and those elected on the reserved

seats of women, peasants, workers and non-Muslims in the district councils.

While the process of election is due to be started after oath taking of the district council members this morning today, it would conclude with the voting for the election of chairman and vice chairman of the councils.

The process of voting would remain continued till 04:00 PM without any break.

The candidates contesting election on the slot of chairman and vice chairman would submit their nomination papers after the oath taking.

Three soldiers embrace martyrdom in suicide blast in North Waziristan

RAWALPINDI (APP): Three soldiers of Pakistan Army embraced 'Shahadat', while three innocent civilians got critically injured when a vehicle borne suicide bomber exploded himself in general area Miran Shah, North Waziristan District on Wednesday.

According to an Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR) press release issued here, Subedar Sahib Khan

(age 41 years, resident of Mianwali), Naik Muhammad Ibrahim (age 40 years, resident of Dera Ismail Khan) and Sepoy Jehangir Khan (age 24 years, resident of Mardan) embraced shahadat. The suicide bomber intended targeting the security forces' post, however, timely interception of the suicide bomber on suspicion by on-duty soldiers prevented a major catastrophe.

India should benefit from CPEC, avoid creating hurdles: PM

Says CPEC's 10-year, transformed Pakistan's development landscape; Enemies of CPEC enemies of development, peace, prosperity in Pakistan, region

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif, on the completion of 10 years of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), Wednesday asked neighbouring India to take benefit of the mega project instead of creating obstacles in its way.

Highlighting the significance of project, he said Iran, Afghanistan, the Middle East and the whole region would also benefit from it.

"CPEC is a beautiful plan to connect not only regions and areas but also people's hearts," he said in a statement issued by the PM Office.

The prime minister vowed to double the pace of the development as it was not only for improving roads, rail, sea ports and air routes, but it would also help health, education and skill development areas, besides masses' participation in the process.

Terming it a game

changer for the whole region, the prime minister said CPEC would have a positive impacts on the people's living standards in the region.

PM Shehbaz congratulated the leadership and the people of Pakistan and China on 10 years completion of CPEC, which was a new chapter of the ever-green and trusted strategic cooperative partnership between the two iron brothers.

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RAWALPINDI: Advisor to President of Azerbaijan, Khalid Ahadov, along with delegation in a meeting with Federal Minister for Defence Production, Muhammad Israr Tareen and officials of MoDP

Alvi appoints Justice (Retd) Roohul Amin as FST chairman

ISLAMABAD (APP): President Dr Arif Alvi on Wednesday appointed Justice (Retd) Roohul Amin Khan as Chairman of the Federal Service Tribunal (FST).

The president appointed Justice (Retd) Roohul Amin as the FST chairman for a non-extendable term of three years.

Earlier, he had served as the judge of Peshawar High Court.

The president made the appointment under Section 3(IV) of the Service Tribunal Act 1973.

FM Bilawal Bhutto arrives in US on private visit

NEW YORK (INP): After concluding his maiden Japan visit, Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) Chairman and Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari on Wednesday reached USA on a private visit, sources said on Wednesday.

Sources privy to the matter said that the foreign minister will stay in the USA for a period of one week where he will hold important conferences being arranged by the US think tank.

The foreign office is also making efforts to arrange between FM Bilawal Bhutto and US diplomatic officials, say sources.

The foreign minister is visiting USA on a special invitation from US think tank, they say.

Pakistan believes policy of peaceful co-existence: Israr

RAWALPINDI (APP): A high-level defence delegation of Azerbaijan, headed by Khalid Ahadov, Advisor to the President of Azerbaijan called on Minister for Defence Production, Muhammad Israr Tareen in his office at Rawalpindi.

The minister welcomed the delegation and appreciated the brotherly feelings of the Azerbaijan government for Pakistan on all international forums, including the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) and the United Nations.

He said that Pakistan was a peace-loving country, strictly believing in the

policy of peaceful co-existence with all.

He reiterated that Pakistan's commitment to peace was evident through its major contribution to UN peace efforts in war-torn countries in different parts of the world.

The minister also expressed Pakistan's strong desire to broaden and strengthen its partnership with Azerbaijan in all fields.

Khalid Ahadov thanked the Pakistan government for the warm hospitality extended to the delegation and for providing the opportunity to discuss various avenues of cooperation.

Ahsan express satisfaction with recent IMF package

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Planning Development and Special Initiatives, Ahsan Iqbal on Wednesday expressed satisfaction with the recent IMF package, which alleviated concerns of an immediate default.

However, he emphasized that the deal should be considered as a temporary relief and merely a breather, rather than a lasting solution. During the "Beyond IMF Agreement: Challenges and Opportunities for Pakistan" Twitter space organized by the Planning Ministry, the minister conveyed his views to a global audience, said a press release issued here.

In June, Pakistan secured a \$3 billion short-term financial package from the IMF, in recognition of the consistent efforts of the

current government, which took office in April 2022. Minister Iqbal described this as a much-needed respite that restored investor confidence.

However, he stressed the need for structural reforms to ensure long-term sustainability and capitalise on this breathing space.

The minister pointed out that the deal was necessary due to a severe balance of payment crisis in 2022, caused by poor policies of the previous government. He noted that the country experienced its worst deficit of \$50 billion after allowing imports worth \$84 billion.

The minister emphasized the importance of introspection and pursuing development for the country, rather than merely celebrating the deal.



QUETTA: Enraged people are gathered on the call of Balochistan Home and Tribal Affairs Minister Mir Zia Langto to protest against the desecration of Holly Quran in Sweden



KARACHE Leaders and activists of Jamat-e-Islami (JI) are holding protest demonstration to condemn the latest incident of desecration of the Holy Quran in Sweden, held outside Baitul Mukarram Mosque located on Gulshan-e-Iqbal area in Karachi

PTA develops user friendly CMS to check uploading of unlawful online content

ISLAMABAD (APP): In order to address formidable challenges in this era of social and digital media regarding the uploading of unlawful online content, the Pakistan Telecommunication Authority (PTA) has developed a user friendly Complaint Management System (CMS), accessible at its website as well as through mobile app.

The CMS is available through the web link: <http://complaint.pta.gov.pk/RegisterComplaint.aspx> and can be downloaded at Play Store and Appstore.

According to an official written by a senior official of PTA, Muhammad Farooq, "Raising public awareness about the complaint registering mechanism provided by social media platforms, as well as the mechanism provided by PTA, will facilitate the logging of complaints concerning unlawful online content."

The article titled "The Role of Timely Reporting Unlawful Online Content" elaborates that any aggrieved person can lodge the complaint to PTA by selecting a relevant category such as Anti-State, Sectarian, etc while incomplete or wrong information may cause rejection of the complaint or delay in processing complaint.

For public guidance, a

video "How to Report Unlawful Online Content" has been uploaded on PTA's official Youtube channel (@ptaofficialpk).

Social media strive to ensure a safe platform for users through self-regulation, which involves the issuance of community guidelines and standards. It is essential for the public to familiarize themselves with these community standards/guidelines of these platforms.

These guidelines provide a framework of rules aimed at creating a safe environment for users to interact and share information. They also include advice on illegal and prohibited actions that may result in the permanent suspension of user accounts.

Timely reporting of unlawful content that goes against the community guidelines/standards is crucial for its early removal and the permanent banning of repeat offenders. Social Media (SM) platforms actively encourage users to approach them directly to seek missing or additional information needed for the timely resolution of issues.

PTA has provided a list of URLs for major SM platforms where complaints can be lodged that is accessible at (http://www.pta.gov.pk/assets/media/sm_platforms_09032020.pdf).

Additionally, WhatsApp, known for its end-to-end encryption, encourages its users to report unlawful content within the app itself. Users can do so by long-pressing the unlawful message and selecting the 'report' option.

Awareness of unlawful online content and its reporting to SM platforms/PTA will ensure safe, responsible and secure use of cyberspace, the article said.

In the past, broadcasters/telecasters held complete control over the content to be broadcasted or telecasted, ensuring the avoidance of inappropriate or unlawful programs.

However, with the emergence of the internet, this control has shifted to internet users, who can now easily upload and share their content online with just a few clicks. Consequently, the uploaded content becomes instantly accessible to millions of users worldwide.

The advent of this new era has presented formidable challenges, particularly in relation to the uploading and sharing of violent, harmful, and indecent content. Such content has the potential to significantly impact society at large without undergoing essential scrutiny by the concerned regulators.

Commissioner Loralai chairs meeting to review rains situation

Independent report
LORALAI: Under the chairmanship of Commissioner Loralai Division Muhammad Gul Khalji, a meeting of the officers of the concerned departments regarding the ongoing alert of possible monsoon rains and the instructions of NDMA and PDMA was held here on Wednesday.

XEN C&W Loralai Mohammad Dawood, XEN PHE Abdul Ghafoor, Deputy Director MMD Jahangir Khan, SDO Irrigation Muhammad Shah, Development Officer Municipal Committee Hayatullah Mardanzai, Chief Officer District Council Kaleemullah, and others participated while Deputy Commissioner Loralai Suban Salim Dashti, Deputy Commissioner Musa Khel Azim Jan Domar, Deputy Commissioner Daki Sahibzada Najibullah, and Deputy Commissioner Barkhan Abdul Hameed Zahri participated through video link.

Addressing the meeting, Commissioner Loralai Division Muhammad Gul Khalji said that severe rains have been predicted for which all relevant departments should keep their available resources, human resources, and machinery ready so that they would use in emergencies.

He further added, "If it is possible to immediately set up a camp office in a government building, then water and food should be provided in it immediately."

Damages were caused by rains last year as well, the areas, dams, bridges, roads should be inspected. He instructed that inform the people living near the rivers and dams to move to a safe place and take precautionary measures. Take action against encroachment in cities. Open the blocked river drains so that the flow of rainwater will not be obstructed. He said that any department that spends more than its resources in an emergency will be paid by the relevant higher authorities.

Deputy Commissioner Musa Khel Azim Jan Domar left the work of the Irrigation Department incomplete in the Khazina Dam and complained about the lack of work on the Spell Way despite the disconnection of Tehsil Droog in the rains and the lack of capacity for an alternative road on the river in Kangri road. The Commissioner directed to take action against any department for negligence and lapses and report them. He also strictly instructed all the Deputy Commissioners to adhere to the time limit during the meeting.

Only Nawaz Shrif can resolve...

Continued from page 1
In 2013 elections, the voters understood that only Nawaz Sharif could resolve the country's problems and they voted him into power.

She said despite launch of Imran's agitation, Nawaz Sharif laid the foundation of political stability within the country and gave a chance to the parties having a majority in the provinces to form governments at provincial level.

The minister said that CPEC was a gift to the region from the leadership of Pakistan and China and it was the vision of PML-N Quaid Muhammad Nawaz Sharif and President Xi Jinping of China.

CPEC project played a role in development of Pakistan in every sector from 2013 to 2018, she said.

As soon as the CPEC project started, she said elements conspiring against Pakistan's development were mobilized.

When the news of President Xi Jinping's visit to Pakistan came, a man stood on the container against the development of the country and the visit had to be postponed. She said the same person on the container called for the civil disobedience movement. Under the CPEC project, energy projects were to be started, employment opportunities were to be created but this person tried to create hurdles in the way of country's progress.

He further warned that strict legal action will be taken.

He further warned that strict legal action will be taken.

Torrential Rains: PM directs Punjab govt to take immediate measures

ISLAMABAD (INP): Amid torrential rains, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Wednesday directed the Punjab government to take immediate measures and mobilise the rescue teams across the province.

Coordinated efforts by the district administration, Rescue 1122, Provincial Disaster Management Authority and other departments should be ensured, he said adding that all possible measures should be taken to protect the citizens' lives, according to a PM Office statement.

Premier Shehbaz

Sharif instructed the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) and other federal departments to extend maximum support to the Punjab government, if required.

All necessary steps must be taken to aware the citizens of any emergency situation, chalk out alternate traffic plans and make arrangements for proper drainage, he maintained.

The prime minister also instructed to take preventive measures in wake of the monsoon rains in other parts of the country, besides asking the NDMA and PDMA to

coordinate for necessary arrangements.

He said the all possible steps should be taken to relocate the people from villages to safe locations besides saving their cattle.

Similarly, he said all necessary measures should be taken to prevent the urban flooding.

PM Shehbaz also directed to mobilise the respective administrations of Gilgit Baltistan, Azad Jammu and Kashmir, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and other hilly areas, besides instructing to keep the PM Office updated on all the measures taken.



QUETTA: Members of Muttahida Tribal Federation are holding protest demonstration against Administration of Qilla Saifullah, at Quetta press club

ADC raids government hydrants in Hub

Independent Report
HUB: Assistant Deputy Commissioner Hub Syed Akhtar Yasir along with the police team and Levies personnel raided the government hydrants established in the Height area. Hub City water was being sold by tankers of Karachi.

The Assistant Deputy Commissioner along with the team sealed the hydrants and said that several tankers were taken into custody. The water of the city will never be allowed to be stolen. They were strongly against selling the water of the city of Karachi in the name of government hydrants and were against it.

India should benefit from CPEC...

Continued from page 1
He said the project was a tremendous example of great Chinese leader Xi Jinping and PML-N Quaid Muhammad Nawaz Sharif's vision of "development for all".

"The Beltand Road initiative is the manifestation of Chinese President Xi's vision of peace, friendship, and economic partnership," he added.

He regretted that during the four years of previous government, hurdles were created in the way of the project, besides leveling baseless allegations against a great friend like China.

"The enemies of CPEC are against peace, development and prosperity in Pakistan and the region, as they do not want to eradicate poverty from the country," he added.

CPEC, he said, also initiated a new era of mutual partnership between Pakistan and China, and fortified their bilateral relationships.

PM Shehbaz said CPEC encompassed multiple projects ranging from provision of water to education, and technical and skilled-based training.

With the construction of nine Special Economic Zones (SEZs), new technology would be transferred to Pakistan, which would ultimately help increase local production, he said.

The prime minister also highlighted the impacts of the project on the effectiveness of the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) and early warning system for natural disasters as they were parts of CPEC.

Similarly, he said, the agriculture related projects had also been included in CPEC to ensure food security.

Meanwhile Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif

on Wednesday said China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) played a key role in transforming the development landscape of Pakistan with the launch of several multi-billion dollar projects.

Addressing a ceremony to mark the decade of signing of CPEC, the prime minister said the mega project helped Pakistan progress in the region and the world.

PM Shehbaz said the country ushered in a new era of development with the completion of hundreds of projects under the umbrella of CPEC, including coal-fired power plants, the Orange Line mass transit project, and road infrastructure.

"The CPEC is all about a story of hard work and untiring commitment between the leadership of Pakistan and China," he said.

He recalled that in July 2013, then-Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif visited Beijing, where he signed an agreement, pledging to develop a long-term plan for the CPEC.

"On July 5, 2013, we witnessed the memorable signing ceremony of CPEC, where President Xi Jinping and PM Nawaz Sharif inked the milestone accord," he said.

Terming CPEC a "very transparent" project, the prime minister said the Chinese government and companies made \$ 25.4 billion investments in multiple projects.

He said thousands of Chinese along with their Pakistani counterparts, worked day and night to create a history of commitment and exuberance of goodwill between the two sides.

He commended Chinese President Xi for his unstinted support of the CPEC for the well-being of the people of Pakistan.



QUETTA: Resident of Quetta, Noor Bibi along with family members holding protest demonstration against high handedness of police

Bringing Balochistan at par of other...

Continued from page 1
curity to half of the country, adding he mentioned, If we didn't maintain that security, then it would also affect other provinces, he maintained.

"These are the facts which can't be overlooked and as such there is a need to look into and resolve them seriously."

He said that we believe in taking all along, and this is why there seemed no protest or opposition in the entire budget session.

He said that every elected representative should get right of development of one's area setting aside the political opposition.

Referring the rights and dues of the province, the Chief Minister said that we are demanding our right remaining in our own limits and that under the constitution and law, and we may not be viewed with wrong perception.

He said that certain things have also been improved because of our firm stance, which we acknowledge as well.

We also do expect development in the matters with PPL, which otherwise were suspended for 2015. He said that lodging protest by the provinces is a matter of routine.

About the development funds, the Chief Minister said that Rs. 120 bil-

ion are available on account of development, and if the funds are increased to Rs. 300 billion then it would be better for the province and its people, he insisted.

In his statement, the Chief Minister particularly referred to the pledge of Rs. 10 billion made by the Prime Minister for relief and rehabilitation of the flood affected people of the province saying that the amount is not received yet.

Although we have less resources, but the donor agencies supported us well in the hard time of floods, he mentioned.

Mir Abdul Quddus Bizenjo also said that he always stands with his friends. He said that if the Allah Almighty has bestowed him rule, he wants to take all along him. This is why, the budget of Awaran and other districts is equal, he added.

About the ruling Balochistan Awami Party (BAP), Mr. Bizenjo said that we had formed BAP just to make decisions of the province right in the province. He said that he is impressed with the political acumen of former President, Asif Ali Zardari and also acknowledges his leadership capabilities.

Mir Abdul Quddus Bizenjo said that "I accept it that it was my intention to join Pakistan Peoples Party, but few of my friends

advises me to serve province remaining in BAP."

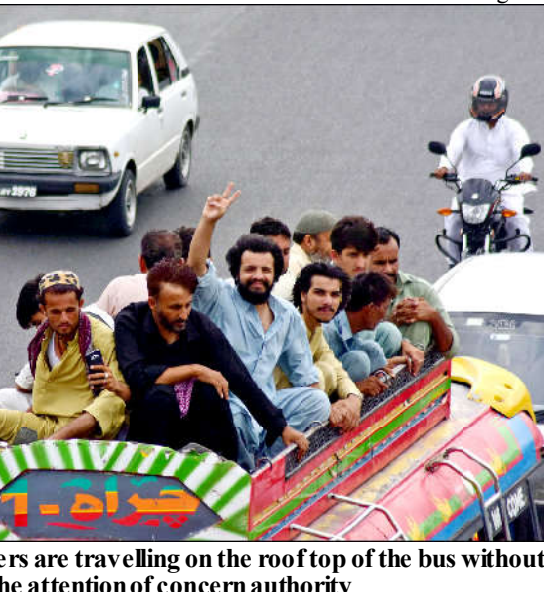
He said that he has decided to speak about rights of Balochistan from the platform of BAP. He said that nothing can be said about the government to be formed after next general elections at this stage. The time would tell that who would be rule and who would sit in the opposition?

Moreover, the Chief Minister also referred certain achievements made by his government i.e., Reddick agreement, peaceful elections of local bodies, digital housing and population census and other ones.

He said that these achievements are on our credit. He said that though people make criticism on him, but they should also mention our successes demonstrating high moral values. He said that it is the job of Chief Minister to make big decisions instead of mere photo sessions. He on the occasion also referred to the business of Iranian diesel and petrol saying that the restrictions are being eased at border as our objective is to protect source of income of the people. He justified the step by saying that we did it just because we don't want to deprive the people of their livelihood until and unless we provide them alternative source of income.

tariq tahriri nisbat

اے ایس ایم اے اور اے ایس ایم اے کے طالب علموں نے جو اعلان کیا ہے اسے ہم نے تسلیم نہیں کیا ہے۔ ہمیں اس پر کوئی توجہ نہیں دینی ہے۔ ہمیں اس پر کوئی توجہ نہیں دینی ہے۔ ہمیں اس پر کوئی توجہ نہیں دینی ہے۔



ISLAMABAD: Passengers are travelling on the rooftop of the bus without any safety, which needs the attention of concern authority

نام ایس ایم اے	مقام	تاریخ	نیمت وقت
اسٹیشن میٹر بیڑ (B-12)	BUITEMS Quetta	15-07-2023	صبح 9:00 بجے
کیئر لیجر (B-11)	BUITEMS Quetta	15-07-2023	صبح 11:30 بجے
چوٹی ماہ (B-12)	BUITEMS Quetta	15-07-2023	صبح 11:30 بجے
ڈیپارٹمنٹل ٹیسٹس (B-12)			
شیفت نمبر	سیریل نمبر	مقام	نیمت وقت
1	120 t 01	HBL Lab-1	11:00 صبح
2	240 t 121	HBL Lab-2	11:00 صبح
3	360 t 241	HBL Lab-3	11:00 صبح
4	480 t 361	HBL Lab-4	11:00 صبح
5	600 t 481	CISCO Lab	دوپہر 02:00 بجے
6	709 t 601	Software Lab	دوپہر 02:00 بجے

Ahsan Iqbal to attend 12th JCC to mark 10-year celebrations of CPEC

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Planning and Special Initiatives Ahsan Iqbal is set to attend a special commemorative 12th Joint Co-operation Committee (JCC) to mark the 10-year celebrations of China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). The minister is set to embark on a four-day official visit to China from July 8 to attend a special commemorative 12th Joint Co-operation Committee (JCC) to mark the 10-year celebrations of China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), said a press release issued here on Wednesday. The CPEC enters a

significant milestone as it celebrates a decade of remarkable achievements in fostering economic growth, infrastructure development and regional connectivity. Under the 10-year celebrations, several events are being conducted by the CPEC Secretariat in collaboration with the Planning Ministry which includes international Conferences, academic sessions, cultural shows and others across the country. Planning Minister Ahsan Iqbal reviewed progress over the special 12th JCC to be held on July 11. The meeting was attended by Secretary Ministry of Planning and De-

velopment Syed Zafar Ali Shah, Chief Economist of Pakistan, who is also the Executive Director of the CPEC, Dr Nadeem Javaid and representatives from all the relevant ministries and divisions were also present. The upcoming visit of the planning minister will underscore the importance of Pakistan and China's relationship and their commitment to further strengthening their strategic partnership. During the visit, the minister will hold meetings with key Chinese officials which include China's National Development and Reform Commission NDRC and others. The 10th year celebration. It is noted that since

the government came into power in April last year, CPEC has been revived which remained halted by the previous government. Several projects of power, infrastructure, water and others have been completed in Gwadar which are ready for the groundbreaking. While chairing the meeting to review progress over the special 12th JCC, the planning minister directed the relevant stakeholders to finalize the arrangements for the event. The minister also asked the relevant ministries to share their pending issues so that they can be taken with Chinese authorities during the visit.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Human Rights Mian Riaz Hussain Pirzada cutting the cake along with the Ambassador of Republic of Belarus to Pakistan Andrei Metelitsa and others on the occasion of the celebrations of the Independence Day of Republic of Belarus, at Serena Hotel in Federal Capital.



ISLAMABAD: Mir Shah Mazar Baloch, Director General (COORD/PDU), Senate attending the meeting between Senate Parliamentary Development Unit (PDU) and the team of United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), at Parliament House.

Relations with Pak span centuries: Envoy

ISLAMABAD (Online): While expressing his views at the opening ceremony of Supreme Court Bar Room, Ambassador of Türkiye Dr Mehmet Pecaci has said that Pakistan and Türkiye relations span centuries. Both countries stand together in every difficult time. Turkish Ambassador has said that they are having relations with Pakistan even earlier than 16th century. In the devastating earthquake of 2005, people of Türkiye stood with the people of Pakistan. Pakistan had also supported Türkiye in the dev-

astating earthquake of February 6. When the earthquake occurred in Türkiye, a Turkish ship had reached Pakistan with aid to the flood victims in Karachi. The very next day after the devastating earthquake, relief supplies arrived in Türkiye from Pakistan. Turkish Coordinating and Operation Agency has always been actively involved in welfare work in Pakistan. Kudos to Türkiye Coordination and Co-Operation Agency for renovating the Supreme Court Bar Room.

Chairman CDA reviews dengue prevention arrangements in ICT

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chairman, CDA / Chief Commissioner, ICT Noor ul Ameen Mangal on Wednesday reviewed the arrangements for dengue prevention preparedness and dengue prevention activities to keep vigilance and proper check on dengue larva from rural and urban area of ICT. Chairman CDA reviewed these arrangements during a meeting held here, was also attended by the Commissioner Rawalpindi Liaqat Ali Chhatra. Member Environment, Member Finance, DC ICT, DC Rawalpindi DG Health Services, DG Environment, DDG Civic Management, and relevant staff of the DHO, ICT attended

the meeting. Chairman, CDA / Chief Commissioner, ICT directed the relevant formation heads to ensure consistent surveillance of potential dengue breeding spaces and persistent liaison with other departments. He further directed to Director Health Services, MCI to hire additional 200 personal / work force for a period of three months on daily paid labour for reinforcement of existing work force. Chairman, CDA / Chief Commissioner, ICT directed the Deputy Commissioner, ICT to engage a team for the training of existing and newly hired staff to tackle any dengue related situation.



ISLAMABAD: Children are enjoying the swings at Park in Sector G-6 during pleasant weather of evening in Federal Capital

ICCPO says: Enquiry ordered, Incharge of 3 police stations removed over poor performance

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad Capital City Police Officer (ICCPO) Dr. Akbar Nasir Khan has removed Incharges of three police stations over poor performance and ordered departmental enquiry against them, a police public relations officer said. He said that the ICCPO issued these orders during a high level meeting at Central Police Office, today. The meeting was attended by CPO Headquarters Malik Awais Ahmed, SSP Operations Malik Jameel Zafar, AIG Operations Saud Khan, zonal DPOs, SDPOs and Incharge of all police stations. The ICCPO Dr Akbar Nasir Khan reviewed the

performance of all divisions thoroughly and emphasized the significance of proactive measures to prevent crime. Those officers who exhibited poor performance were strongly reprimanded, underlining the commitment to ensuring efficiency and effectiveness within the police force. He directed that, all senior officers will monitor the investigation while all investigation process will be done under direct supervision of concerned Divisional Police Officer adding that law officer are posted with all DPOs for effective prosecution and conviction of the criminal. He said that targets have been set for all Incharge police stations after the establishment of Police Bureau of Investigation.

Court summons Imran Khan in toshakhana case

ISLAMABAD (APP): A local court of Islamabad on Wednesday fixed toshakhana criminal case for hearing tomorrow and also served notice to Chairman Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) for appearance in personal capacity. Additional District and Session Judge Hamayun Dilawar would take up the case for hearing on Thursday. Previously, the Islamabad High Court (IHC) had directed the trial court to re-decide the maintainability of the toshakhana case within seven days after hearing chairman PTI. Imran Khan had challenged the admissibility of the toshakhana case before the IHC which set aside the verdict of the trial court. The IHC bench had dismissed the petition of former prime minister on weak grounds. The bench asked the lower court to consider the petition of Imran Khan as pending.

IHC issues written order regarding protective bail of Imran Khan

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Islamabad High Court (IHC) on Wednesday issued written order regarding the 14-day protective bail of PTI's Chairman Imran Khan in a case pertaining killing of a lawyer in Quetta. A division bench comprising Chief Justice Aamer Farooq and Justice Mangul Hassan Aurangzeb issued the written order in the said case. It said that the court had been told that there was risk of arrest of the petitioner in reaching the concerned court. It said that the court had accepted the protective bail of the petitioner against surety bonds worth Rs 50,000 and stopped the police from arresting him till July 17. The court asked the ex-prime minister to approach the relevant trial court during the given time period.

One person killed as speedy tractor-trolley struck

ISLAMABAD (APP): One person was killed while two people including a child, were injured after being hit by a tractor-trolley in Muzaffargarh on Wednesday. According to police sources, a tragic accident occurred when a high-speed tractor-trolley hit a motor-cycle at Khanpur Baga Sher on the outskirts of Muzaffargarh. As a result, one person was killed on the spot while two others sustained critical injuries. The deceased, identified as Ashiq Chaudhary, is said to be a resident of Khanpur Baga Sher. The driver managed to escape from the spot.

COP28 President to visit Pakistan on Sherry Rehman's invitation

ISLAMABAD (INP): The incumbent government will welcome the President of COP28 and UAE's Minister of Industry and Advanced Technology H.E. Sultan Ahmed Al Jaber, on July 6 as a distinguished state guest for a day-long official visit. This is the outcome of an official invitation extended by Senator, Federal Minister for Climate Change & Environmental Coordination Sherry Rehman aimed to share the country's progress on climate and environmental goals ahead of the COP28 conference in UAE, and build common ground for the global stock-take ahead in the context of Pakistan's accelerated climate stress, said a press release on Wednesday. Minister Al Jaber will call upon Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif during the official

meeting. The meeting will focus on Pakistan's climate adaptation challenges, specifically its vulnerability to climate-induced disasters, and the need for enabling greater international cooperation at the upcoming COP28 in UAE. Sherry Rehman and the accompanying delegation for a bilateral meeting at the Ministry for Climate Change & Environmental Coordination, and bring attention to Pakistan's programmes and initiatives to prevent environmental degradation and building resilience through policy action. Energy transition cooperation will also be on the agenda. Sherry Rehman will also share Pakistan's vulnerability to accelerated climate impacts, and the need for a global reset that enhances support for developing countries on the frontline of climate emergencies.

PM pays tributes to Captain Karnal Sher Khan Shaheed

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Wednesday paid tributes to Captain Karnal Sher Khan Shaheed Nishani-Haider on his 24th martyrdom day. He said the nation salutes to all the martyrs including Captain Karnal Sher Khan Shaheed. The prime minister said Karnal Sher Khan Shaheed was such a brave son of Pakistan whose courage, valour and bravery were confessed by the enemy itself. Captain Karnal Sher Khan turned into a lion like his name and pounced on the enemy chasing it away from the borders of the motherland, he said in a statement issued by the PM office. PM Shehbaz said Captain Sher Khan paid his duty of safeguarding the country at 17000 feet height and sacrificed his life for the sake of the country. The nation is indebted

to its martyrs and it will continue to pray for the elevation of ranks of their souls, he said. Captain Karnal Sher Khan along with his soldiers defended the border of Pakistan despite being outnumbered by the enemy, the prime minister added. He deplored that on May 9, black history was written by desecrating the memorials and statues of Captain Karnal Sher Khan and other martyrs. He asked the young generation to get full awareness of the martyrs' great sacrifices, bravery and undying love for the motherland. The prime minister said the 9th May incidents conveyed the message, particularly to the enemy that we did not respect our martyrs. "The wholenation will protect the sanctity and honour of the martyr who sacrifices his life while defending the country, and will punish the criminals." The prime minister said Captain Karnal Sher Khan was the first Nishani-Haider who belonged to Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province. He also prayed for the martyred and grant of courage to the bereaved family to bear the loss.

Govt vows to promote religious tourism across country: Dr Ramesh

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister of State and Chairman of Prime Minister's Task Force on Gandhara Tourism Dr Ramesh Kumar Vankwani on Wednesday said the government was committed to promoting religious tourism across the country. Presiding over the 'Round Table Conference' under the auspices of Prime Minister's Task Force for Gandhara Tourism in honour of ambassadors of various countries here, the minister said that a three-day international conference will be held next week from July 11. The arrangements for holding the Gandhara Symposium in Islamabad have been finalized.

He apprised that the chief guest of the conference would be Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif and Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari while participants from Buddhist-majority countries including Korea, China, Sri Lanka and Thailand will be present on the occasions. Dr Ramesh Kumar said the colorful cultural event of Gandhara Media Awards will be held on next week on July 12 (Wednesday) at the Pakistan National Council of Arts (PNCA) auditorium, which is also a part of the global conference.

Interns in Islamabad capital police call Dr. Akbar

ISLAMABAD: Interns of Islamabad Capital Police Youth Internship Program met with Islamabad Capital City Police Officer

meeting. During the meeting, the interns informed the ICCPO Islamabad about their experiences of working in different divisions and branches.

ICCPO Dr. Akbar Nasir Khan said that the purpose of Islamabad Capital Police Youth Internship Program is to provide professional training to young



(ICCPO) Dr. Akbar Nasir Khan at Safe City Islamabad, a police public relations officer said. He said that, the interns working in Safe City Islamabad, Training and Human Resource Wings participated in the

The interns gave their suggestions to further improve the infrastructure of Police Training College, curriculum, maintain transparency and efficiency of police by using modern technology.

students from different departments and to develop their skills as per aptitude so that these young people can work in every field of life in future. Such programs will also continue in future as well, he maintained.

Omar Abdullah says: No expectation that rights snatched on 5 Aug 2019 be restored under BJP rule

ISLAMABAD (APP): National Conference vice-president, Omar Abdullah, has said that there is no expectation that the rights that were snatched from the people of Indian illegally occupied Jammu and Kashmir on August 5, 2019 will be restored under the BJP rule.

According to Kashmir Media Service, the NC leader said, we have been saying from day one that whatever has been snatched from us, we have no expectations that it will be restored by the incumbent Indian government. He said, we want our rights back through legal procedure, we hope that the hearing in this regard in the Indian Supreme Court will be held frequently.

BISP disburses over Rs 51 bln among beneficiary women

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP) has so far disbursed over Rs 51 billion among more than 5.7 million beneficiary women under Benazir Kafaalat. The disbursement of the fourth quarterly tranche of Benazir Kafaalat for the Financial Year-2022-23 is continued after Eid-ul-Azha holidays through banks' retailers. Under Benazir Kafaalat, 9 million registered beneficiary families are entitled to a quarterly instalment of Rs 9,000 per household. The BISP has already released over Rs 81 billion to its partner banks, that is, Bank Alfalah and Habib Bank Limited (HBL) for disbursement among the beneficiaries through their retail distribution network.

Executive says: Democracy 'not radically worse' in EU than year ago

ISLAMABAD (Online): The European Union's latest democracy health check showed there was no significant deterioration across the 27-nation bloc in areas like media and court freedoms or efforts to tackle corruption over the last year, a top official said on Wednesday. The assessment came as the EU executive released its latest rule of law report, which includes tips for democratic improvements across EU member states. Last year's snapshot highlighted serious concerns about the rule of law

in Poland and Hungary. Both governments lost access to billions of euros in EU aid over related disputes. "This rule of law report shows that there is no radical worsening or backsliding in any member state," said EU Commissioner Vera Jourova. "I will never be satisfied, in general, because there are a lot of things to be improved," she continued. She noted some improvements to the independence of the judiciary in Hungary, as Budapest sought to unlock access to EU grants.

PTI leaders Habib, Irfan Kundi quit party

ISLAMABAD (APP): Former provincial minister and district Tank Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) president Habibullah Kundi along with Irfan Kundi while strongly condemning May 9 riots on Wednesday announced to quit the party. Addressing a press conference here, Habibullah Kundi said that May 9 was the darkest chapter in the country's history as monuments of martyrs were attacked by the protesters. Personnel of our armed forces rendered supreme sacrifices for defend-

ing the country' he added. He said PTI did irreparable damage to the country through its agitation and he did not wish to remain in the PTI. "Today I announce to quit party district president seat besides basic membership," he said. Kundi said his family was in active politics before the partition of sub-continent and he started his political career in 1985 and came to the parliament with the support of the people. Pervaiz Khattak approached them at PTI in 2018, he added.

PDM-led govt striving hard to stabilize economy: Afzal

ISLAMABAD (APP): Coordinator to Prime Minister of Commerce and Industries Rana Ihsan Afzal Khan Wednesday said that Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM) led government was striving hard to stabilize the economy and leaving a responsible platform for the next government. Talking to PTV news channel, he said that under the IMF agreement, the overall uncertainty was covered after a successful IMF agreement, adding, the

government had to take unpopular and strict decisions, but these were necessary to save the country from the risk of default. He further mentioned that it was very important for Pakistan to get the IMF programme as it would help achieve financial discipline and keep the country afloat. Replying to a question, he said the Pakistani rupee also experiencing a significant gain against the US dollar in the interbank market, adding, the first IMF instalment of \$1.1 billion from IMF.



ISLAMABAD: A large number of people visiting Rawal Lake View Park in a pleasant day in the city.

Thursday July 06, 2023

Flash in the pan?

The sceptics may have their doubts about a 'miracle turnaround' in Pakistan's fortunes after the government grabbed a last-minute stand-by loan from the IMF, but the markets have been quick this week to cash in on the euphoria.

The dollar fell sharply once trading resumed after the holidays, collapsing like a punctured balloon; stock market activity heated up like it had not in years, with speculative investors eager to get their hands on whatever they could; gold prices registered a sharp decline; and fresh inflation readings — although unrelated to the IMF deal announcement — indicated that the pressures that had built up within the economy might finally be showing signs of easing. Had Pakistan really stumbled back onto the path to prosperity over the course of a long weekend thanks to just one loan deal? That's what the government, at least, would have us believe.

Experts and analysts, on the other hand, are still warning of the underlying risks imperilling Pakistan's economic prosperity. Global credit ratings agencies Moody's and Fitch on Monday reminded the world that Islamabad still needs to pay back \$25bn to creditors this fiscal year — a sum which is more than seven times what it officially has in its pocket at the moment and much more than the \$3bn the IMF has grudgingly agreed to lend it over the course of the next nine months (which remains subject to approval by its board as well as Islamabad meeting the stringent conditions that will likely be laid out before it as a prerequisite for loan disbursements).

The same day, data released by the Bureau of Statistics showed that exports had dropped 19pc in the month of June compared to the previous year, marking the 10th straight month of a drop in export proceeds. The trend, if it persists, will only worsen difficulties in financing the current account.

Therefore, the question: are we celebrating too early? The smart money seems to think so. While the 'positive trigger' from the IMF deal has been welcomed by the stock and foreign exchange markets, the high spirits will not last.

Both forex and stock analysts have warned that what we are seeing is a temporary bonanza, not a turnaround in their respective markets' fortunes. There is now a broad consensus that till the fundamentals are fixed — ie, till Pakistan embarks on a structured plan to reform the economy and fix its underlying imbalances — nobody can breathe easy.

And how long must we remain in this purgatory? With an election coming up, the most painful measures will likely be put off for another few months for the new government to inherit. It is a shame that, with so much at stake, we are still not sure of what comes next.



Zahid Hussain

The meeting between the chiefs and scions of the two most powerful political dynasties in Dubai last week, where a consensus was reportedly reached on the composition of the forthcoming caretaker set-up as well as the future coalition, provides a glimpse into Pakistan's family-dominated power politics. Nawaz Sharif and Asif Zardari virtually carved out the post-election power structure.

With the dismantling of the PTI underway, the road is now deemed to have been cleared for the elections, though there is still no understanding on the time frame.

The Dubai rendezvous was certainly not meant for signing a new charter of democracy; the main objective seems to have been to chart

a strategy to consolidate the existing power structure dominated by the two dynasties.

It is a sad commentary on our so-called democratic system. There is hardly any other example of political leaders of a democracy meeting in a third country to discuss critical political issues instead of deliberating these at home and in parliament. This happens when political parties are reduced to family enterprises. Elected democratic forums become irrelevant when politics becomes a family affair. It's all in the family.

What is most disturbing is the reported agreement between the two families' bigwigs on the composition of the interim administration. It is contrary to the constitutional provision which says that the caretaker administration should be neutral and be named with consultation between the leader of the house and leader of the opposition.

It may be true that the current leader of the opposition in a truncated National Assembly has hardly any credibility, but still one has to go by the book. But who cares about the Constitution in this game of

thrones?

The whole episode also raises question about the fairness of the coming election, with a handpicked interim set-up of doubtful neutrality. It is almost a repeat of the situation of the Punjab caretaker government, which is virtually being run by the PML-N-led coalition in Islamabad.

Meanwhile, the ongoing political engineering has tainted the entire election process. It is tantamount to pre-poll rigging, which we have seen many times in the past. The PTI's disintegration in the face of state oppression and the formation of a new king's party backed by the security establishment has made a mockery of the whole democratic process.

Indeed, this much is not new in Pakistan's troubled political journey. But the severity of the repression is rare. Hundreds of PTI workers are languishing in jails and facing terrorism charges. Some of them will be tried by military courts.

Surely those who were involved in attacks on military installations must be punished, but the indiscriminate crackdown has reinforced the view that it is part

of the plan to keep the PTI out of the election process or at least weaken it so that it does not present any serious challenge to the PML-N in Punjab, which has become the major battleground.

There is certainly a newfound confidence in the ruling alliance with the dismantling of the PTI, but in a fair and free election, the party, with its mass support base remaining intact, could give the PML-N a run for its money.

What is most interesting is former prime minister Nawaz Sharif's having taken full command of the PML-N. He may have been guiding the coalition government and his party from his home in London since the installation of the PDM set-up, but his meeting with the PPP leaders in Dubai has left no room for ambiguity about his ambition to become prime minister for the fourth time. The recent statement from senior PML-N leaders has reinforced speculations.

The passage of two new bills by parliament, reducing his disqualification to five years and allowing him the right to appeal against his conviction by the Supreme Court, has paved the

way for his return to the country to lead his party's election campaign. Last week's meeting with the PPP chieftain seems to be part of the plan for him to return home in the next few months.

Meanwhile, Nawaz Sharif is now visiting Saudi Arabia, where he went recently. He plans to meet the top Saudi leaders. These visits have assumed greater significance for his plan to bid for the top office for a fourth term.

In a recent statement, he was quoted as saying that his first priority would be to contain the spiralling inflation at home if he returned to power. Some observers believe that it is not power but his wish to be vindicated which is the main reason for his endeavour.

He is perhaps waiting for the court to drop his conviction before returning. The return of the three-time former prime minister would give an interesting twist to Pakistan's chequered political history. He was removed each time halfway through his term. There is still a long way to go before he can get the coveted post for the fourth term. Until a few weeks ago,

it looked improbable that general elections would be held before the end of this year, with the country facing the prospect of an economic meltdown and defaulting on its external debt repayment. But with the IMF deal coming through, the country has been given some much-needed breathing space. The development has drastically changed the political landscape. It is the right moment for the ruling coalition to agree to elections.

The date for the polls would depend on whether the ruling coalition dissolves the National Assembly a few days before the end of its term on Aug 13 or wait until then. In either case, polls cannot go beyond mid-November. There seems to be no possibility of prolonging the term of the caretaker set-up.

It is certainly a good idea not to postpone the general elections. There are no two views that elections are the only way out of the present political turmoil. Any pre-poll rigging and manipulation that is attempted to change the outcome will be disastrous for national stability. -- Courtesy Dawn

What should VCs be worried about?

Dr Ayesha Razzaque

Today's university vice-chancellors (VCs) are facing a number of challenges. The number one challenge by far that universities are grappling with, particularly after the presentation of the 2023-24 federal budget and subsequent tweaks, is financial sustainability and affordability.

Financial sustainability of universities has always been a challenge but the cost of an education at public universities remained within the reach of many Pakistanis. However, lately the contribution of public funds per institution has been drying up. Meanwhile, parliamentarians continue to lobby for the establishment of new universities in the remotest tehsils without consideration to whether they will be able to attract and retain the quality talent needed to staff it.

Public funds are no longer keeping up with the growth in the number of universities. Factor in the rate of inflation over the last few years, and the funding picture for public higher education institutions (HEIs) has turned dire.

Education provided by public HEIs remains heavily subsidized. In 2022-23, public funds subsidized the cost of education at a prestigious public university in Islamabad by approximately 50 per cent. When that funding dries up, universities will have to make up the shortfall immediately, and the quickest and easiest way is by raising tuition fees. Thus, a version of the higher-ed affordability crisis that has been plaguing North America for the last two decades (tuition rates doubled from 2000 to 2019) has come for us in Pakistan.

While accurate figures for annual budget shortfalls of universities are hard to come by, conversations with some VCs put those numbers at around Rs1 billion for large, Rs500 million for medium, and Rs200 million for new/small universities.

Even against this backdrop, most VCs today remain unaware of what their

average per-student cost is, much less the per-student cost broken down by departments and programs, and with it, unaware of which programmes/departments are the greatest contributors to expenses.

Once middle-class families were able to cover the cost of public higher education from their running family budget. However, the recent ballooning cost means those same families will have to plan ahead and start saving for their children's higher education long before they graduate high school.

The college affordability crisis has disproportionately affected students from low-income backgrounds, thus limiting opportunities and perpetuating socio-economic inequality. Those who have the option are forced to take on substantial debt or are deterred from pursuing higher education altogether. All this makes access to higher education a pressing concern, threatening principles of equal opportunity and social mobility central to the mission of public universities.

Many universities up and down the country are already unable to meet their

payroll and pension obligations to staff and retirees. Quaid-e-Azam University is reportedly 1-2 years behind paying visiting faculty. Its Management Sciences department alone relies on visiting faculty to deliver about 100 courses every semester. In this environment of simultaneously rising costs and shrinking public support, VCs' highest priority is (or ought to be) finding sustainable solutions that ensure both affordability and educational quality, an ongoing and complex task.

So far, those efforts have remained confined to appealing for public funds at the federal and provincial levels and raising tuition fees — but this will no longer suffice. Given that there is nothing new under the sun, let us once again look at common approaches taken by universities elsewhere in the world when faced with similar pressures.

In the long term, following in the footsteps of their peers abroad, universities need to develop their own endowment funds managed by professionals — diversified portfolios of investments that generate profits that can be de-

ployed to meet operating expenses and subsidize education for those who have a need in the form of scholarships and financial aid.

For example, according to 2021 figures, at \$53 billion, Harvard University maintains the largest endowment of all US universities, followed by Yale (\$43 billion), Stanford (\$38 billion), and Princeton (\$37 billion). The average of the 10 largest endowment funds is \$28 billion. My own alma mater, a public university, maintains an endowment of \$4 billion, the 12th largest of public universities in North America, and publishes its performance (<https://givingto.msu.edu/endowments/performance.cfm>) for all to see. The earned returns allow universities to ride out rough periods in the economy. Unfortunately, very few universities in Pakistan today have endowments (IBA went as far as sharing the size of its endowment fund: Rs2.2 billion) or are moving in the direction of establishing one.

University endowments are fueled in large part by alumni donations in addition to reinvested re-

turns, grants, and philanthropic donations. The first is requisite on having an alumni network, tracking, and maintaining connections, and that alumni had a positive student experience that motivates them to stay connected with their alma mater. All of that requires a dedicated student and alumni affairs office.

Attracting and soliciting philanthropic donations is an important and almost routine task of university presidents and heads of constituent schools and colleges. Some VCs consider it beneath their dignity to fundraise in this manner, but the fact is that the ability to fundraise is an important consideration when universities fill leadership positions.

In the medium term, universities are simultaneously trying to create new lines of revenue while meeting the demand for education outside of traditional multi-year residential degree programs. Micro-credentials and MOOCs (Massive Open Online Courses) are one avenue universities have been exploring since the arrival of MOOC providers like Coursera, edX, and others like them. -- Courtesy TheNews

Banyan tree's future

Marvi Mazhar

Environmental displacement can hardly be quantified; however, the severity of the crisis can be grasped by glancing at some staggering statistical figures.

For instance, according to the Ecological Threat Register, a 2020 report published by the Institute for Economics and Peace, a Sydney-based international think tank, ecological disasters displace an average of 24 million people per year, and if the current rate continues, there would be at least 1.2 billion people displaced globally by the end of 2050.

Karachi's natural heritage ranges from shorelines, backwaters, rivers and nullahs, to old gardens, parks, private lawns, migratory birds' routes, and, most importantly, the historical trees indigenous to the city, which include the neem, peepal, keekar and especially the banyan tree for its sacred memories.

These trees are located mostly in old neighbourhoods, which preserve the memories of this city. In 2019, along with other activists, the Natural Heritage Association of Karachi lobbied for the designation of the centuries-old banyan trees as 'protected heritage' in partnership with the local government. Then administrator Murtaza Wahab declared the Old Clifton banyan trees and others in Karachi 'heritage protected' under a legal framework.

Around 30 trees out of 64 were pruned, registered, and preserved. And the rest of the mapped banyan trees of Old Clifton

were left for the next phase — to be part of the next project — as a complete annexure; they were declared the 'Banyan Trees of Old Clifton' on a signboard next to Do Talwar. The non-preserved, neglected trees are still waiting for their preservation plan.

Over the years, banyan trees have witnessed moments of transformation and resilience. In recent times, the regrowth and maintenance of these trees have lessened because of Karachi's worsening air quality and the lack of governance in maintaining the natural heritage. But the main reason is the real estate boom, which has been invasively uprooting the foliage of the city and replacing it with concrete pavers and trees that are merely beautifying elements.

The latter include date palms, which are meant to be a part of the Dubai-esque development that the authorities aspire to, the conocarpus, and aggressively grown green barriers meant to conceal informal settlements or a non-picturesque view in the vicinity of a new development.

Natural heritage foliage is mostly found in old neighbourhoods of the city, where generations of mohalla dari have taken ownership through care management, and where self-elected neighbourhood associations have nurtured these large natural markers. But it's unfortunate to see how much neighbourhoods like PECHS, PIB Colony, Tariq Road, Garden East and West, KDA Scheme No 1 and Soldier Bazaar have suffered at the hands of low-grade developers and the corrupt government organisational management.

Karachi's fractured infrastructure and constant expansion and development have resulted in unequally distributed planning powers. A very large city — 40.69 billion square feet (3.8bn square metres)

— Karachi expanded continuously during 2000-2020, recording an average annual growth rate of 4.7 per cent — an unmanageable scale.

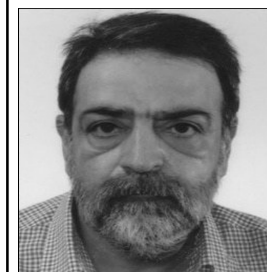
It is critical that we protect natural heritage even while expanding the city, as we see some of these trees being cut down in order to construct buildings, or being neglected. This is leading to the destruction of the natural environment and habitat.

These developers, following unethical architectural practices, have contributed to a humanitarian crisis, where malpractice, easy turnkey projects, and industrial material for mass construction have altered climatic conditions, resulting in high temperatures and heated corridors of circulation. This has made walking or waiting for public transport unbearable.

The city provides an opportunity for co-learning, and making a difference through the collective power of advocacy and association. Learning matters: the process of learning — from cities and within them — is a fundamental right.

We know the city from historical referencing, but as cities change because of daily interventions and use, learnings transform and evolve. Learnings also have the potential to challenge and transform ways of knowing and looking at urbanism, a shift from inherited knowledge which is taken for granted.

It is absolutely critical to explore the material understanding of construction as well as include the existing natural landscape within the urban infrastructure to celebrate the inherited ecology and combat heat islands through a constant care management plan.



Mahir Ali

Almost 80 years ago, after the tide had turned against Germany in World War II, the dictator in Berlin wanted the Nazi-occupied capital of France to be destroyed before it fell to the Allies. Hitler reportedly asked his generals, "Is Paris burning?"

It wasn't in 1944, but Paris has frequently been seared by flames, metaphorically or otherwise, in the ensuing decades. It is an intriguing coincidence that the epicentre of the latest bout of mass rioting was also the cradle of the student revolt that, in 1968, rocked the foundations of the Fifth Republic just a decade after it had been founded by Charles de Gaulle.

Back then, de Gaulle actually fled to West Germany, driven by the fear that the uprising, in which the working class eventually joined the students, might actually succeed. Emmanuel Macron, 55 years later, cancelled a visit to Germany after last week's protests spread across France, even reaching the remaining French colonies in the Caribbean and beyond.

Macron was quick to describe last week's murder of 17-year-old Nahel Merzouk by Parisian traffic police as "inexplicable and inexcusable". Macron was only half right, though. The killing was undoubtedly inexcusable, and the police officer who pulled the trigger faces the charge of "voluntary homicide". But it certainly wasn't inexplicable. Since 2017, police officers have been authorised to use lethal violence at traffic stops. The death toll last

France in flames

year was 13. The victims were mainly of North African origin.

Macron and his acolytes are keen to emphasise that Nahel's misfortune lay in being confronted by a 'bad apple', and that systemic racism in the police force is not an issue. That's similar to the authorities' response in countries like the UK and US, where instances of racial targeting often tend to be treated as individual excesses. What has occurred in cities across France over the past week has been described as the equivalent of the 'George Floyd moment' that reinvigorated the Black Lives Matter movement in America and found its echoes across the West.

The parallel is not absurd. The rage in both the US and France was not sudden, but cumulative. The difference, perhaps, lies in the fact that France does not officially recognise differences of race, ethnicity or religion. That sounds wonderful — and such a system would be ideal if it worked. It has long been obvious, though, that it doesn't.

One needn't go back to 1961, when a Paris police chief, eventually acknowledged as a former Nazi collaborator, supervised a massacre of peaceful Algerian demonstrators. It wasn't until 1998 that the French state admitted 40 deaths. Nobody appears to have counted the corpses dumped in the River Seine — up to 300, by some estimates.

A great deal has changed since then, but much remains the same. The reprehensible Islamist terrorist attacks of 2015 are often cited as a reason for the subsequent reinforcement of racism — which is precisely what the perpetrators would have wished — but the Seine-Saint-Denis electrocution of two teenagers being chased by police, and the consequent eruption of popular rage, preceded the atrocities in Bataclan and elsewhere by

a decade. The murder of Nahel was the reinforcement of a long-standing trend rather than an unusual occurrence.

The days of rage over the past week were, even in the context of this year, not so much an aberration as a return to business as usual for a segment of the public — albeit to some extent a different section of the citizenry than the gilets-jaunes of yesteryears and those militating more recently in response to the Macron regime's det-ermination to shift the retirement age up by two years, from 62 to 64.

A reasonable case could possibly be made for that change, but within the neoliberal context it obviously comes across as yet another way of shafting the working class and enriching the bourgeoisie — a conflict that stretches back to the 1789 French Revolution. At the same time, the aspiration to liberty, equality, fraternity excludes all too many French citizens in the 21st century, and the concept of turning a blind eye to ethnicity, religion and skin colour has repeatedly been exposed as a farce.

And then there's the broader European context of a far-right resurgence a century after Hitler, accompanied by the fear that France could go the same way under someone like Marine Le Pen or Eric Zemmour after the next election.

Some years ago, staying at a hotel in La Defense towards the north of Paris, we found ourselves in proximity to Nanterre. It deserved a stroll. And although it did not offer up the architectural or culinary delights common in many other arrondissements, the place and street names were charming, from Mandela, Picasso and Neruda to Gorky, redolent of the suburb's recent history — as well as the wider world's shattered dreams. -- Courtesy Dawn

HEC, China Window arranges seminar to mark ten years of CPEC, BRI

PESHAWAR (APP): Higher Education Commission (HEC) and China Window on Wednesday organized an international seminar titled "Decade of CPEC and BRI" to mark the ten-year completion of the project.

The event among others was attended by international delegates, investors, stakeholders, businessmen and people from a cross-section of society.

Speaking on the occasion, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Governor, Haji Gulam Ali paid tributes to Amjad Aziz Malik for organizing the event and said that we should analyze the factors that made China one of the growing economy of the world.

He said that we must revisit our policies and planning that negatively impacted the country's progress and development.

"We must work in cohesion to lead the country on the way of progress", he said and added that "political parties of the country should also work to attain the goal of progress and prosperity".

KP Governor said that the business community should devise a comprehensive plan to benefit from CPEC and tap the potential of our talented youngsters for promoting business activities. He said that we must venture into new fields of emerging technologies and explore the opportunities in existing global scenarios.

Provincial Caretaker Minister for Information Barrister Feroze Jamal Shah Kakakhel on Wednesday said that China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) was providing employment opportunities to youth of

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, enabling them to find sustainable livelihoods.

Addressing an international seminar, he said that it was aimed to highlight the significance of the project.

The seminar which was attended by Chinese delegates and investors, the minister said that the speakers highlighted the importance of CPEC and the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) during the event.

Feroze Jamal emphasized the enduring friendship between Pakistan and China, adding that CPEC's first glimpse was evident in the Silk Route.

Feroze Jamal Kakakhel said that six major projects had been initiated in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and highlighted that in the past government's tenure, several CPEC projects faced delays.



PESHAWAR: MOU signing ceremony between KP-BOIT and Castle Shepherd Gilgour during the International Seminar on the DECADE of CPEC & BRI.

Punjab Governor says: Making Pakistan strong, prosperous and stable is priority of government

Independent Report

LAHORE: Pakhtoonkhwa Milli Awami Party, Punjab President, Ayaz Khan Achakzai and Deputy Secretary General Punjab, Mubeen Khan Mohmand, along with a delegation met Governor Punjab Balighur Rehman here today at Governor House Lahore.

In the meeting, the current political situation in the country and the problems faced by the Pakhtun community were discussed. Speaking on this occasion, Governor Punjab Muhammad Balighur Rehman said that making Pakistan strong, prosperous and stable is the priority of the government. He said that economically self-sufficient Pakistan is our destination for which the incumbent government is using all its resources. He said that the people of Pakhtun community living in Punjab are playing a positive role in the development of the province. Governor Punjab said that the role of the Pakhtun community in the development and defense

of the country is commendable. He said that we all have to play positive role to make the country prosperous and developed.

On this occasion, Pakhtunkhwa Milli Awami Party Punjab, President Ayaz Khan Achakzai, said that a large number of Pakhtuns are permanently residing in Punjab who are facing the problem of identity card and passport. Governor Punjab assured the delegation that the problems the Pakhtun community will be conveyed to the relevant departments. The Deputy Secretary General Punjab, Mubeen Kham Mohmand strongly condemned the incident of violent protest and attack on army installations on May 09. The delegation comprised Abdullah Khan Achakzai, Brijal Agha, Haji Khaliqdad Tareen, Gulab Khan, Gul Mohammad Regwal, Tehsil Khan, Rahmat Khel, Saheb Noor and Khan Qasim Khel.

Later, Governor Punjab Muhammad Balighur Rehman visited Sundus Foundation where

he visited the children suffering from thalassemia.

Speaking on this occasion, the Governor of Punjab said that serving people suffering from life-threatening diseases is no less than worship. He said that Sundus Foundation is doing great work for Thalassaemia patients. He said that those people who dedicate their lives to the service of humanity are great. He said that Sundus Foundation and other such charitable organizations which are serving humanity should be encouraged and supported at all levels. On this occasion, Governor Punjab Muhammad Balighur Rahman also distributed gifts among the children suffering from thalassemia.

Director Sundus Foundation, Khalid Abbas Dar, while giving a briefing on the care and treatment facilities of the children affected by Thalassaemia said that since the establishment of Sundus Foundation, blood donations and medical facilities have been given to more than 30 lakh children.



KARACHI: Sindh Chief Minister, Syed Murad Ali Shah inspects the Guard of Honor during the passing out parade ceremony held at Shahid Hayat Police Training College Saecabad in Karachi.

CJ GB postpones election for CM

GILGIT (INP): Chief Justice (CJ) Supreme Appellate Court Gilgit-Baltistan, Sardar Muhammad Shamim Khan Wednesday postponed the election for Chief Minister Gilgit-Baltistan which was scheduled to be held on today.

According to a press release issued by the spokesperson Supreme Appellate Court, the CJ GB hearing of the case titled "Haji Shah Baig" postponed the election.

The court also stated that according to Gilgit-Baltistan Assembly Rule (3) of Procedure and Conduct of Business, 2017, it was necessary to advertise the election

schedule through television, newspapers, radio and gazette publications.

In addition, it is also necessary to notify the members by post.

Arguing on behalf of Haji Shah Baig, Advocate, Amjad Hussain said that even if there was an election in emergency, it was necessary to issue an election schedule of 72 hours.

After hearing the arguments of both sides, the court issued an order to postpone the elections for the chief minister and ordered the Speaker GB Assembly to submit the new election schedule to the court by tomorrow.

SACM expresses grief over demise of Liaquat Shabab

PESHAWAR (APP): Expressing deep sorrow and grief over the sad demise of Liaquat Shabab, Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) Peshawar Division president and former provincial minister, the Special Assistant to caretaker Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa on Prisons Hidayat Ullah Khan Afridi has said that the services rendered by late for the KP people will always be remembered.

He said that Shabab was a veteran and experienced politician, saying Liaquat did politics aimed at serving the people, with his demise the province lost a well-experienced politician which created a vacuum in political field that will take a long time to fill.

"May the deceased be granted a high place in Jannat and may the bereaved family be blessed with patience" he prayed.

Two rescuers martyred in road mishap

LAHORE (APP): Two Rescuers of the Punjab Emergency Service Department were martyred in a tragic road traffic accident that occurred near Kot Mithan in Rajanpur.

The accident occurred when the ambulance, which had been transporting a critically ill patient from Rajanpur to Sheikh Zaid Hospital, RY Khan, collided with an over-speeding truck on its way back. Unfortunately, the collision resulted in the deaths of the rescue driver, Muhammad Asif, and his companion rescuer, Yousuf Bukhari. Both rescuers sustained serious injuries and despite efforts to save them, they succumbed to their injuries.

PTI nominates Raja Azam for CM GB slot

GILGIT-BALTISTAN (Online): PTI has nominated Raja Azam for the slot of Chief Minister (CM) Gilgit-Baltistan (GB).

PTI Parliamentary party proposed name of Raja Azam for the position of CM GB.

PTI spokesperson has said party chairman Imran Khan has accorded approval to the nomination of Raja Azam.

Raja Azam is consensus PTI candidate for the position of CM GB.



LAHORE: A view of the flooded roads after very first rain fall of the moon Soon spell, which needs the action of concern authority to protect the citizens from any trouble during the whole spell of Moon Soon, in Provincial Capital.

Pakistan, a valuable partner of the USA: William K. Makaneole

RAWALPINDI (APP): expand the diplomatic, commercial, mutual and cultural relations between the two countries.

He said that culture plays an important role in the mutual relations of countries which includes the country's formation, history, language, customs, music, arts, literature, architecture, food, clothing and other cultural factors.

"This cultural duality separates one country from another because of individuality, distinction and differentiation," he added.

William K. Makaneole visited various departments of the college on his arrival at the college. The college, Principal gave a detailed briefing and highlighted the long history of the college.

Prof Majid Bhatti said that the region was rich in terms of Potohar culture while different nations have ruled in this region in different eras.

"Potohar is the name of the overall culture of different nations", he added.



LAHORE: Pakhtoonkhwa Milli Awami Party, Punjab President, Ayaz Khan Achakzai and Deputy Secretary General Punjab, Mubeen Khan Mohmand, along with a delegation in a group photo Governor Punjab Balighur Rehman.

Amir Mir inspects water drainage, cleanliness operation in city

Independent Report

LAHORE: Provincial Minister for Information, Culture and Local Government Amir Mir conducted an extensive visit to various areas of the provincial metropolis on Wednesday to closely monitor the cleanliness arrangements, water drainage, and restoration of the sewerage system in response to the ongoing heavy rainfall in the city.

During the visit, the minister issued instructions to the local government staff, who were diligently working on the bustling streets of the city, to ensure the swift drainage of rainwater and the restoration of the sewerage system. He emphasized that Lahore has witnessed the highest amount of rainfall during the first week of July in recent years. The recorded

rainfall was initially estimated to be 285 mm on Wednesday, which later increased to 291 mm. Despite the challenging weather conditions, the local government department's staff remained resolute and actively engaged throughout the day.

Specific directives were issued to the line departments to ensure the timely drainage of water and the restoration of normal traffic flow on busy roads, to facilitate commuters.

The implementation of effective drainage measures, utilizing appropriate machinery, was emphasized to control the accumulation of rainwater and enable the smooth movement of citizens in low-lying areas while maintaining their daily routines.

8 killed, 1161 injured in 1122 RTCs in Punjab

LAHORE (APP): At least eight persons were killed and 1161 injured in 1122 Road Traffic Crashes (RTCs) in all 37 districts of Punjab during the last 24 hours.

Out of these, 634 people with serious injuries were shifted to different hospitals, while 527 victims with minor injuries were treated at the incident site by Rescue Medical Teams thus reducing the burden of hospitals.

Furthermore, the analysis showed that 564 drivers, 33 underage drivers, 135 pedestrians, and 470 passengers were among the victims of road traffic crashes. The statistics showed that 267 RTCs were reported in Lahore which affected 252 persons placing the Provincial Capital at top of the list followed by 84 in Multan with 85 victims and at third Faisalabad with 72 RTCs and 78.

NAB Lahore proceeds for Rs. 440 mln recovery in corruption reference

LAHORE (APP): National Accountability Bureau (NAB), Lahore has made possible a major recovery to the tune of Rs 440 million in a corruption Reference No. 60/2019 titled State vs Farhan Cheema & others in which land measuring 22 kanal was freed by the Regional Bureau during the course of inquiry/investigation.

The Accountability Court, Lahore has accepted the purchase application of said property in Rs440 million, however, an amount of Rs 50 million is being submitted in the name of Chairman NAB, whereas, rest of the Rs390 million be received within 7 days, as per the court orders.

As per details, NAB Lahore had filed a corruption reference against an accused namely Farhan Cheema (owner of Model Housing Enclave and Projects) in a case of cheating public at large and

freed his 22 kanal land at Mouza Jhulkay present in accused name. However, during the course of Inquiry/Investigation, around 275 affectees submitted their claims for recovery of looted money from accused Farhan Cheema & others. NAB-L after concluding the investigation against said accused filed a corruption reference in AC, Lahore during 2019 nominating Farhan Cheema as the prime accused of the case.

For recovery of plundered money from the accused person, the AC Lahore has permitted to sale the freed property for Rs440 million so the same may be disbursed among 275 affectees of the case.

Talking about the recovery, the Director General (DG), NAB Lahore, Amjad Majeed Aulakh has stated that NAB Lahore would continue to materialize the vision of Chairman NAB.



LARKANA: Peoples Party (PPP) Sindh President, Senator Nisar Ahmed Khuhro addresses to gathering during ceremony to mark the 5th July 1977 as Black Day, held in Larkana.

KP Industries' Minister inaugurates new building of TEVTA

PESHAWAR (APP): Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Caretaker Minister for Industries, Commerce and Technical Education, Muhammad Adnan Jalil inaugurated the new building of Technical Education and Vocational Training Authority (TEVTA) in Hayatabad here on Wednesday.

The office of TEVTA established in a rented building and now after shifting to its own building of the authority will help benefit the authority up to Rs.1.8 million on monthly basis. Beside, the Managing Director (MD) TEVTA, Abdul Ghaffar, Director Finance (TEVTA) Munir Gul, Director (HR) Abid Nawaz, Economic Advisor Department of Industry Abdul Rehman, Coordinator Federation of Pakistan Chamber of Commerce and Industry (FPCCI), Sartaj Ahmed Khan and other officers and staffers of the authority were also present.

The provincial minister inspected the various sections of the new office of TEVTA and expressed his satisfaction on the availability of all necessary facilities in the building.

He said that strengthening and equipping TEVTA with facilities is of higher importance, saying with improvement in the system and structure will enable the institution to bring improvement in the quality of training and its professional approach.

He said that efforts are being made to put TEVTA on the right track to make possible the preparation of market-oriented skilled workforce. He further said that a comprehensive action plan is being evolved to enable TEVTA to impart technical skills to the youth of the province.

The initiative, he said, could help the institute to prepare such skilled persons, which will get the best means of employment in the industry and market of the province. He said that beside contemporary education, the promotion of technical and vocational training is also essential for eradication of unemployment.



SIALKOT: Director Hajj Operation Punjab Iqar Ahmed, Incharge Hajj Operation Sialkot Mueeb Akbar Shah and other welcome the pilgrims of the first flight returning after performing the duty of Hajj.

LHC gives police till July 25 to find anchorperson Imran

LAHORE (Online): The Lahore High Court on Wednesday gave the police until July 25 to find anchorperson Imran Riaz Khan, whose whereabouts remain unknown since his arrest on May 11.

The order was passed by LHC Chief Justice Muhammad Ameer Bhatti as he resumed hearing a plea seeking to find the anchorperson, who was among the individuals apprehended in the wake of protest that erupted in the country after the arrest of PTI chairman Imran Khan. A first information report (FIR) pertaining to the matter was registered with Civil Lines police on May 16 on the complaint of the anchorperson's father, Muhammad Riaz.

The FIR was registered against "unidentified persons" and police officials for allegedly kidnapping Imran, invoking Section 365 (kidnapping or abducting with intent secretly and wrongfully to confine person) of the Pakistan Penal Code.

At the previous hearing, the LHC was told there had been some positive development in the case and it was expected that the anchorperson would be safely recovered within the next few days.

Justice Bhatti presided over today's hearing which was attended by the additional inspector general of Punjab, officials of the Ministry of Defence and the district police officer of Sialkot.



HYDERABAD: Activists of Sunni Tehreek (PST) are burn tires as they are holding protest demonstration against desecration of Holy Quran in Sweden, at Hyder Chowk in Hyderabad

Pak, US discuss ways to enhance economic cooperation

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar and Ambassador of the United States of America to Pakistan, Donald Blome here on Wednesday exchanged views about areas of common interest and enhancing existing bilateral relations between the two countries.

According to a statement issued by the finance ministry the discussion was made during the call on the meeting of the US Ambassador with

the finance minister. The finance minister appreciated the deep-rooted historic and durable bilateral relations with the United States on economic and trade fronts.

He updated the Ambassador about successfully reaching the staff-level agreement with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and communicated about the economic policies and priorities of the government in order to set the economy on the path from stability to growth.

Dar appreciated the support and cooperation of the US and reiterated the desire of the government to further deepen bilateral economic and trade ties with the US.

On the occasion, Donald Blome expressed confidence in the policies and programmes of the government for bringing economic sustainability to the country. He also extended his support to further promote bilateral economic, investment and trade relations between the two countries.



ISLAMABAD: Donald Blome, Ambassador of the United States of America to Pakistan called on Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar.

FAO Launches DVI Pilot: Bridging the Technological Divide in Rural Pakistan

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), in collaboration with the Government of Punjab, launched a Digital Village Initiative (DVI) pilot site, in a ceremony organized at the Food Security & Agriculture Centre of Excellence (FACE) in Rahim Yar Khan.

This pilot launch is the FAO's global initiative under the 1000 Digital Village Initiative in Asia and the Pacific to bridge the technological divide and empower rural communities with access to digital resources, education, and opportunities.

necessary equipment installed at training halls of both sites for virtual training of farmers. The stations will provide customized weather advisory, forecast pest & disease models and other information to farmers of 10 kilometres range from its vicinity. Both weather station facilities are also equipped to arrange online trainings for farmers on the latest innovations in agriculture. Male and female farmers of selected pilot sites received training on different features of the weather station. Through these stations, farmers will be able to get customized and specific information to their farmland, accurate data and information which will help them in reducing costs related to inputs and taking measures for crop protection.

Two sites: one in Rahim Yar Khan and another in Sargodha, were launched after a detailed assessment conducted in 7 districts of Punjab and Sindh with the support of the provincial governments of both provinces.

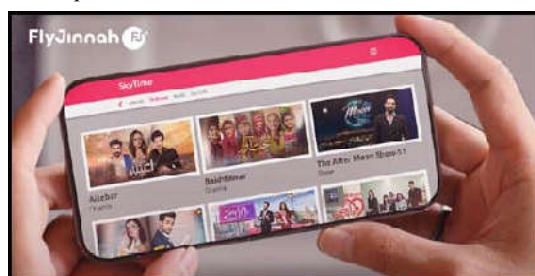
During the ceremony, female lead farmers from the pilot site villages also received 10 tablets to use the agriculture-related applications on which they were already trained by FAO. A ribbon-cutting ceremony at the Hyper Localized Weather Station pilot site was also organized along with a briefing on the digital monitoring and forecasting function of the weather station. The stations were installed on both pilot sites along with the provision of

Government officials, community leaders, researchers, male and female farmers, the private sector, and other key stakeholders were present at the launching event.

Fly Jinnah's SkyTime will now feature content from HUM TV

Independent Report KARACHI: Fly Jinnah, Pakistan's new low-cost carrier (LCC), has collaborated with HUM TV to provide content for

Karachi, Lahore, Islamabad, Peshawar, and Quetta. The carrier currently operates a fleet of three modern Airbus A320 aircraft. In addition



its in-flight entertainment system "SkyTime". All Fly Jinnah aircraft are equipped with "SkyTime", a free in-flight streaming service that allows passengers to stream a wide selection of entertainment directly to their devices and right after takeoff. By collaborating with HUM TV, Fly Jinnah customers can now enjoy a wider selection of content that includes HUM TV leading dramas, Telefilms, Award Shows and celebrity shows.

to extra comfort provided by the most generous seat-pitch of any economy cabin, the carrier offers customized and affordable travel experiences to its passengers through "SkyCafe" onboard menu where passengers can enjoy a wide variety of delicacies between snacks, sandwiches, and meals at affordable prices.

At present, Fly Jinnah connects five major cities of Pakistan including

Customers can now book their flights by visiting Fly Jinnah's website (www.flyjinnah.com), by calling the call center (021-3565096) or through travel agencies.

Business leader stresses need to adopt culture of savings

Says lack of savings prevents investment, opens door for loans

KARACHI (INP): Chairman of National Business Group Pakistan, President Pakistan Businessmen and Intellectuals Forum, and All Karachi Industrial Alliance, and former provincial minister Mian Zahid Hussain stressed the need to adopt culture of savings said that lack of savings prevent investments and opened doors of loans.

Mian Zahid Hussain said that it is necessary to foster a culture of exports and savings in the country to ensure development without current account deficit.

He said that GDP growth on a sustainable basis is impossible until the current savings rate is doubled. The savings rate in Congo is 61.4 percent, in Singapore it is 53.8 percent, in the United Arab Emirates the savings rate is 47.8 percent, in China it is almost 44.9 percent and in India and Bangladesh it is between 30 and 31 percent, he informed.

In a statement issued here on Wednesday, he said that the former government's efforts to develop the economy resulted in a payment crisis and this will happen again in the future.

However, in Pakistan this rate is only twelve percent which is rapidly decreasing due to current inflation and unemployment, he said.

The business leader said that in 2007-2008,

Our growth depends entirely on imports rather than exports, always leading to an unsustainable current account deficit, he said.

Sharmila calls for introducing reforms in taxation system

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan Peoples Party's Sindh MPA, Sharmila Farooqui Wednesday called for bringing big fishes into the tax net and for introducing reforms in the taxation system to achieve durable economic progress.

adding, Pakistan had to take some tough economic decisions to comply with the conditions of IMF, but the programme was necessary for Pakistan's economy and growth.

"Pakistan's survival is linked to tax collection as no nation that relies on loans can maintain its pride," she said while talking to PTV news channel.

Under the IMF programme, the record stock exchange, decrease rate of the dollar and down gold rates were witnessed in the market which bring further financial discipline to the economy.

She appreciated that the PDM-led government was making hectic efforts to revive the economy, adding, the signing of a staff-level agreement with IMF was a great success of government policy and measures.

Sharmila Farooqui said that the IMF programme would now open financing of multilateral financial institutions as well as from bilateral creditors.

She said political stability and the end of polarization in the country were the need of hour,

Replying to a question, she urged that we need to work positively for the welfare of the state instead of politics and we need to control expenditure as well.



QUETTA: Roadside vendor puts dates on display to attract the customer.

Directs flights needed to commence at once for economic revival: Ahsan

ISLAMABAD (INP): President Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari has said that Pakistan is lagging far behind the world in the race of development, which is mainly due to the lack of connectivity at the regional and international level.

and regions and this is the main source of economic development. Regions like the European Union and ASEAN are great examples in this regard. These regions have accelerated economic growth by improving connectivity through rail, direct air links and road.

In a statement on Wednesday, he said, "Pakistan needs to be connected to the region through rail, road and direct air links. PIA has failed to connect Pakistan to the world, the government should announce a fast-track privatization program without wasting more money and capital. Despite its effective presence in various regional and international blocs, Pakistan has not yet been able to benefit at the commercial level. Work is required on an emergency basis to start direct flights."

He said that Pakistan is an important member of several regional and international groups including SAARC, D-8, ECO, SCO, and OIC. Due to the lack of railway, road and direct air links of Pakistan with all these countries, despite political activity, Pakistan has not been able to benefit from these groups at the commercial level. He said that in order to advance the current debt-ridden economy of Pakistan, the series of direct flights with different countries of the world should be carried forward rapidly. Recently, Ethiopia has started a series of direct flights. Similarly, Kazakhstan, an important country in Central Asia, is also starting direct flights from July 8. This is important news for Pakistan's regional connectivity.

Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari said that Pakistan has lagged far behind in the race of development at which the world is moving forward. In today's world, no country can develop alone, but now interests can be protected through blocs



KARACHI: A large number of the people holds protest against the shedding of Gas, Electricity and Water at Liyari, in Provincial Capital.

Gold prices up by Rs.1,000

ISLAMABAD (APP): The per tola price of 24 karat gold increased by Rs.1,000 and was sold at Rs.206,000 on Wednesday against its sale at Rs.205,000 the previous day.

Services' trade deficit narrows by 88 percent

ISLAMABAD (APP): The services' trade deficit shrank by 88.26 percent during the first eleven months of the fiscal year 2022-23 as compared to the corresponding period of previous year, Pakistan Bureau of Statistics has reported.

\$11,613.57 million to \$7,263.49 million in FY2023, showing negative growth of 37.46 percent.

The services trade deficit was recorded at \$607.67 million during July-May (2022-23) against the deficit of \$5,175.24 million during July-May (2021-22).

Meanwhile, on year-on-year basis, the export of services increased by 19.77 percent by growing from 515.14 million in May 2022 to \$ 616.96 million in May 2023.

The exports of services during the period increased by 3.38 percent by going up from \$6,438.33 million in 2021-22 to \$6,655.82 million in the first eleven months of FY2022-23, according to PBS data.

However, services imports into the country decreased by 11.84 percent, from \$977.85 million to \$862.11 million.

On month-on-month basis, the export of services increased by 19.78 percent in May 2023 when compared to the imports of 515.08 million in April 2023.

The imports of services also grew by 31.60 percent in May 2023 compared to imports of \$655.10 million in April 2023, PBS reported.



KARACHI: GCB, PTCL and Ufone 4G, Zarrar Hasham Khan, Group Chief IT and CTO of NBP, Amin Manji, GTO PTCL and Ufone 4G, Jaffar Khalid, EVP of NBP Noman Muzaffar and others senior officials in a group photo during the signing ceremony of provision of primary Data Center Colocation Service, held at PTCL's Tier-III Data Center to support NBP's digital transformation, in Karachi.

Training workshops for cotton growers organized

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Ministry of National Food Security and Research in collaboration with Central Cotton Research Institute Multan organized pesticide management workshops for cotton growers in order to avoid their harmful impact on human health and the environment.

this major cash crop of the country. Besides, the government was also working to ensure the availability of certified seeds for different crops including cotton, wheat, rice, maize and other major and minor crops to enhance crop output to achieve sustainable agriculture growth and social development in the country.

Meanwhile, about 25 master trainers were also trained for further disseminating training to growers on innovative crop sowing techniques, fertilizers and pesticide management to enhance the per-acre output of cotton during the current season, said an official.

In this regard, the track and traceability of certified seed was launched and the traceability data revealed that total cotton seed requirements were estimated at 41,048 metric tons, whereas seed availability was registered at 25,986 metric tons.

Talking to APP he said that over 100 farmers from different crop-producing areas were also trained on the latest production technology, which was aiming to attain higher per-acre cotton output to enhance local production of

The wheat seed availability was recorded at 511,378 metric tons before the processing stage, out of which companies processed 462,048 metric tons and certified seed tags



FAISALABAD: An Iron smith are busy in their work at shop at Dajkot Road in City.

LCCI invites political parties to discuss charter of economy

LAHORE (APP): Lahore Chamber of Commerce & Industry (LCCI) has taken a proactive step in addressing Pakistan's economic challenges by sending invitations to the heads of all political parties. The invitation, sent in the form of a letter, requesting their presence at the LCCI to participate in a comprehensive discussion on the crucial topic of the Charter of Economy (CoE), according to LCCI spokesman here on Wednesday.

transitioning towards sustainable economic growth, said Kashif Anwar, adding that in order to address these concerns, LCCI has formulated a draft of the Charter of Economy, which serves as a guiding framework for economic governance. The aim of this charter is to establish a minimum agenda that all political parties can include in their respective manifestos. By doing so, it ensures a level of consistency and continuity in economic policies, regardless of which party forms the government, he added.

In the letter, the LCCI President Kashif Anwar highlighted the daunting economic challenges facing the nation and underscored the need for consistency in economic policies.

President LCCI said the Charter of Economy is designed to create a working consensus among political parties on key economic issues. It provides a set of guidelines for policy formation.

LCCI firmly believes that a unified approach is imperative for dealing with these challenges and



ISLAMABAD: Senator Zeeshan Khanzada, Chairman Senate Standing Committee on Commerce presiding over a meeting of the Committee at Parliament House.

Israel launches air strikes on Gaza as troops withdraw from Jenin

Monitoring Desk
WEST BANK: Israel carried out air strikes on the Gaza Strip on Wednesday in response to rocket fire from the coastal enclave, as the military began withdrawing forces from Jenin in the occupied West Bank after a major two-day operation in the area.

Twelve Palestinians and an Israeli soldier have been killed during the assault on a Jenin refugee camp, launched early on Monday under Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's hard-right government.

The raid, Israel's biggest military operation in years in the West Bank, employed hundreds of troops as well as drone strikes and army bulldozers that ripped up streets.

Elsewhere, a car ramming and stabbing attack in Tel Aviv on Tuesday wounded seven people before the suspect was shot

dead. The large-scale Israeli army assault on Jenin camp had so far killed 12 Palestinians, the Palestinian health ministry said. During the operation, an Israeli soldier was also killed by "five fire" late on Tuesday, the army announced.

Early on Wednesday, the army said it carried out air strikes on the Gaza Strip after it intercepted five rockets fired at Israeli territory.

A Palestinian security source said the attack hit a military site of the militant group Hamas in northern Gaza but caused no injuries.

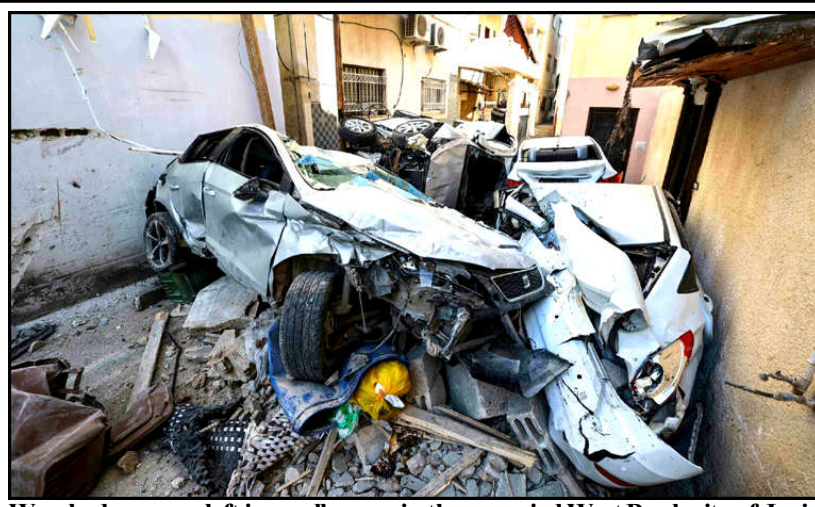
Late on Tuesday, an Israeli army spokesman said troops "have started withdrawing from Jenin camp". During the raid, the army said it had uncovered militant hideouts, arms depots and an underground shaft used to store explosives. "In the last five years, this is the worst raid," said

Qasem Benighader, a nurse at a hospital morgue.

The army said its forces had dismantled six explosives manufacturing facilities and three operational situation rooms in Jenin, and confiscated large quantities of weapons.

"The weapons were located in hideouts, a mosque, pits concealed in civilian areas, operational situation rooms, and in vehicles," it said. The Palestinian foreign ministry labelled the escalation "open war against the people of Jenin".

Medical charity Doctors Without Borders also condemned Israeli forces for firing tear gas inside Khalil Suleiman hospital in Jenin, calling it "unacceptable". Palestinian health minister Mai al-Kaila even accused the army of shooting at Palestinians in a courtyard of the Jenin public hospital.



Wrecked cars are left in an alleyway in the occupied West Bank city of Jenin after the Israeli army declared the end of a two-day military operation in the area.

World headed for climate disaster without urgent action: UN chief

Monitoring Desk
UNITED NATIONS: UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres has said that the world has the power to "seek and unite for solutions" — even when beset by growing divisions and rising geopolitical tensions — to deal with three major challenges, including climate change, facing the humanity.

The UN has had a cooperation agreement with the Asia-focused SCO since 2010, which also partners with multiple UN agencies. This year the summit is being hosted via videoconference by India.

Pakistan Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif was among the world leaders who addressed the summit on Tuesday. In his remarks, the UN chief told Member States the growing divisions had been aggravated by different national and reasonable responses to global crises, differences over security threats, and the consequences of COVID and Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

The secretary-general was addressing the Council of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), the world's largest regional security body in terms of landmass and population which currently includes China, Pakistan, India, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan and new member Iran.

But today's global challenges, from the climate crisis to growing inequality and the governance of new technology, can only be resolved through dialogue and cooperation. And the only way that can happen is together. He said there were three main areas where he believes "we can and must seek and unite for solutions. First, the climate crisis. Unless humanity acts together, we are heading for disaster. We need to team up — and speed up", he added.

Guterres cited his Climate Solidarity Pact aimed at big carbon emitters and developing countries, backing support for emerging economies. "Climate action is the fight of our lives, and SCO members have an important role to play".



King Charles III greets guests during a Garden Party at the Palace of Holyroodhouse in Edinburgh, Scotland, Britain, as part of the first Holyrood Week since the King's coronation.

Scotland to mark coronation of King Charles and Queen Camilla

Monitoring Desk
LONDON: Scotland will mark the coronation of King Charles and his wife Camilla on Wednesday with a grand procession, a fly-past and a service of thanksgiving. Charles and Camilla were crowned in London's Westminster Abbey in May in front of about 100 world leaders in Britain's biggest ceremonial event for seven decades.

The 74-year-old succeeded his mother as king of the United Kingdom and 14 other realms when Queen Elizabeth died in September. But in a nod to the historical fact that England and Scotland had different monarchs until the crowns were united in 1603, there will be separate Scottish celebrations to mark his coronation on Wednesday. A People's Procession, involving about 100 people representing various aspects of Scottish life, and a Royal Procession, featuring hundreds of service personnel, will be held along the Royal Mile in Edinburgh.

At a thanksgiving service in the city's St Giles' Cathedral, Charles will be presented with the Honours of Scotland — the Scottish crown jewels — including the new Elizabeth Sword, named after his mother and made to replace the one gifted to Scotland's James IV by Pope Julius in 1507 but now too fragile to use. "The Honours of Scotland have immense historical significance, having been present at many major ceremonial events over the past 500 years," Scotland's First Minister Humza Yousaf said.

Designed and crafted with care by some of Scotland's finest artisans, the Elizabeth Sword is a fitting tribute to the late queen as Scotland prepares to welcome the new king and queen.

Thai parliament to vote for prime minister on July 13

Monitoring Desk
BANGKOK: Thailand's parliament will vote for a new prime minister on July 13, house speaker Wan Muhamad Noor Matha said on Wednesday.

The announcement comes a day after Wan Noor was endorsed as house speaker, a role in which he is able to call for a joint sitting of the country's bicameral legislature to vote on the next prime minister. The election-winning Move Forward party and populist Pheu Thai trounced conservative rivals in a May ballot, securing 151 and 141 seats in the 500-member lower house, respectively.

US judge restricts Biden officials from contact with social media firms

Monitoring Desk
WASHINGTON: A U.S. federal judge on Tuesday restricted some agencies and officials of the administration of President Joe Biden from meeting and communicating with social media companies to moderate their content, according to a court filing.

The injunction came in response to a lawsuit brought by Republican attorneys general in Louisiana and Missouri, who alleged that U.S. government officials went too far in efforts to encourage social media companies to address posts they worried could contribute to vaccine hesitancy during the COVID-19 pandemic or upend elections.

The ruling said government agencies like the Department of Health and Human Services and the FBI could not talk to social media companies for "the purpose of urging, encour-

ing in any manner the removal, deletion, suppression, or reduction of content containing protected free speech" under the Free Speech Clause of the First Amendment to the United States Constitution. A White House official said the Justice Department was reviewing the order and will evaluate its options. The litigation was originally filed by former Missouri Attorney General Eric Schmitt and Louisiana Attorney General Jeff Landry. Schmitt, who was elected to the U.S. Senate in November, used Twitter to welcome the injunction and called it a win for free speech. The order also mentioned by name officials including Department of Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas and Jen Easterly, who heads the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency, in its restrictions.

Turkiye seeks severed head of ancient statue from Danish museum

Monitoring Desk
COPENHAGEN: A bronze head of Emperor Septimius Severus on display at a Copenhagen museum has become a bone of contention between the Danish museum and Turkey, which claims it was looted during an archaeological dig in the 1960s and wants it back.

After decades in the United States as part of a private collection that loaned it to New York's Metropolitan Museum, a statue of the Roman emperor, who lived from AD 145 to 211, was recently sent back to Turkey — minus the head. The statue was believed to have been stolen from a site in Turkey.

Rain kills 15 in southwest China as Xi urges better defences

Monitoring Desk
BEIJING: Torrential rain has killed 15 people in the southwestern Chinese city of Chongqing, media reported on Wednesday, as President Xi Jinping called for greater efforts to protect the public from extreme weather.

Heavy downpours have unleashed devastating floods and deadly mudslides in recent weeks, while hail storms and unusually high temperatures, which many people suspect is the result of global warming, have brought misery to many parts of the country.

In the sprawling city of Chongqing, floods have forced thousands from their homes, bridges have been destroyed, and homes and cars washed away. As well as the 15 people killed over recent days, four were missing as of early Wednesday, the state-run Xinhua news agency reported, citing authorities.

The latest round of heavy rain has disrupted the lives of more than 130,000 people and damaged more than 7,500 hectares of crops. Xinhua reported.

In Wanzhou district, northeast of Chongqing, floods have caused 227.8 million yuan (\$31.5 million) worth of economic losses, state broadcaster CCTV said.

Australia PM says Hong Kong bounty on overseas activists 'unacceptable'

Monitoring Desk
SYDNEY: Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese said on Wednesday it was "unacceptable" that Hong Kong has put bounties on two Australian residents who are among eight overseas democracy activists wanted under a national security law. Hong Kong Chief Executive John Lee said on Tuesday eight overseas-based Hong Kong activists who were issued with arrest warrants for alleged national security offences would be "pursued for life".

Hong Kong police have offered rewards of HK\$1 million (\$127,656) for information leading to the arrest of the eight.



Paramilitary policemen search an area after it was flooded by heavy rains in China's southwestern Chongqing.

North Korean satellite wasn't advanced enough to conduct reconnaissance from space, Seoul says

Monitoring Desk
SEOUL: The satellite North Korea failed to put into orbit wasn't advanced enough to conduct military reconnaissance from space as it claimed, South Korea's military said Wednesday after retrieving and studying the wreckage.

North Korea had tried to launch its first spy satellite in late May, but the long-range rocket carrying it plunged into the waters off the Korean Peninsula's west coast soon after liftoff. The satellite was to be part of a space-based reconnaissance system North Korea says it needs to counter escalating security threats from South Korea and the United States. South Korea mobilized navy ships, aircraft and divers to recover debris from the rocket and satellite in a 36-day operation that ended Wednesday, the South's Joint Chiefs of Staff said in a statement.

"Numerous" and "key" parts of the rocket and the satellite were recovered and the South Korean and U.S. experts who jointly examined them concluded the satellite wasn't capable of conducting military reconnaissance works at all, the statement said.

Americans across US brave heat, rain to celebrate their Independence Day

Monitoring Desk
WASHINGTON: Americans turned out across the U.S. Tuesday to mark the 247th anniversary of the United States' Declaration of Independence despite heavy rains and searing heat disrupting celebrations in some cities. There were parades in many cities, fireworks and barbecue parties at a time of lingering political divisions and concerns about the country's future. President Joe Biden hosted a barbecue for military families at the White House.

China places curbs on chip material export, stumps suppliers

Monitoring Desk
BEIJING: Companies caught out by China's decision to restrict exports of two metals widely used in semiconductors and electric vehicles were racing to secure supplies on Tuesday as some industry suppliers worried that curbs on rare earth exports could follow. Monday's abrupt announcement of controls from Aug 1 on exports of some gallium and germanium products has ramped up a trade war with the United States and could potentially cause more disruption to global supply chains.

UN warns world to prepare for El Nino impact

Monitoring Desk
GENEVA: The United Nations on Tuesday warned the world to prepare for the effects of El Nino, saying the weather phenomenon which triggers higher global temperatures is set to persist throughout 2023. El Nino is a naturally occurring climate pattern typically associated with increased heat worldwide, as well as drought in some parts of the world and heavy rains elsewhere. The phenomenon occurs on average every two to seven years, and episodes typically last nine to 12 months. The UN's World Meteorological Organ-

isation declared El Nino was already under way and said there was a 90-per cent chance that it would continue during the second half of 2023. "The onset of El Nino will greatly increase the likelihood of breaking temperature records and triggering more extreme heat in many parts of the world and in the ocean," warned WMO secretary-general Petteri Taalas. "The declaration of an El Nino by WMO is the signal to governments around the world to mobilise preparations to limit the impacts on our health.

Ten dead, 38 wounded in three US mass shootings on eve of Independence Day

Monitoring Desk
WASHINGTON: Ten people were killed and 38 wounded in mass shootings in Philadelphia, Baltimore and Fort Worth ahead of the Fourth of July holiday, officials said, prompting a fresh call from President Joe Biden to pass gun control legislation.

In Fort Worth, three people were killed and eight wounded in a mass shooting after a local festival to mark the U.S. Independence Day holiday, police said on Tuesday.

In a separate mass shooting in Philadelphia on Monday evening, five people were killed and two were wounded, including a 2-year-old boy and 13-year-old boy, both of whom were shot in the legs, when a suspect in body armor and armed with an AR-15

opened fire on strangers, according to local police. The Monday night shootings came a day after two people were shot dead and 28 others injured, about half of them children, in a hail of gunfire at a neighborhood block party in Baltimore. The motives in all three recent shootings remained unclear.

In Fort Worth, three people were killed and eight wounded in a mass shooting following a local festival, police said on Tuesday. In a separate mass shooting incident in Philadelphia on Monday evening, five people were killed and two were injured when a suspect in a bullet-proof vest opened fire on apparent strangers, according to local police. A toddler and a teenager were among the wounded.

IAEA chief visits Fukushima before radioactive water is released

Monitoring Desk
TOMIOKA: The United Nations nuclear chief was to visit Japan's tsunami-wrecked nuclear power plant Wednesday after the agency affirmed the safety of a contentious plan to release treated radioactive water into the sea. On his way to the Fukushima Daiichi plant, a highlight of his four-day Japan visit, International Atomic Energy Agency chief Rafael Mariano Grossi

joined a meeting of government and utility officials, as well as local mayors and fishing association leaders, and stressed the continuous presence of this agency throughout the water discharge to ensure safety and address the residents' concerns.

"What is happening is not something exceptional, some strange plan that has been devised only to be applied here, and sold to you," Grossi said in his opening remarks in Iwaki (25 miles) south of the plant. "This is, as certified by the IAEA, the general practice

that is agreed by and observed in many, many places all over the world." For people's doubts and concerns, "I must admit I don't have a magic wand... but we do have one thing," Grossi said. "We are going to stay here with you for decades to come until the last drop of the water which is accumulated around the reactor has been safely discharged."

That means IAEA will be reviewing, inspecting, checking the validity of the plan in the decades to come, he said. The IAEA, in its final report released Tuesday, concluded the plan to release the wastewater — which would be significantly diluted but still have some radioactivity — meets international standards, and its environmental and health impact would be negligible. But local fishing organizations have rejected the plan because they worry that their reputation will be damaged even if their catch isn't contaminated. It is also opposed by groups in South Korea.

Taiwan presidential front-runner says he can keep peace with China

Monitoring Desk
TAIPEI: Leading Taiwan presidential candidate William Lai wrote in the Wall Street Journal on Wednesday that he could keep the peace with China if elected, reiterating his willingness for talks without preconditions and a pledge to boost defenses.

Lai said he would continue with Tsai's plan to boost Taiwan's defenses, such as spending more on the military, adding that these measures reduce the risk of war by raising the stakes and costs for Beijing. "I will seek greater cooperation with partners and allies, particularly in training, force restructuring, civil defence and information sharing," he wrote.

Lai, Taiwan's vice president and the candidate for the ruling Democratic Progressive Party (DPP), has consistently led the majority of opinion polls ahead of the January election. President Tsai Ingwen cannot run again after two terms in office.

In a commentary piece, Lai said that despite the military and economic challenges from China, including China's almost daily aerial incursions near the island, his top priorities remained pragmatism and consistency. "I will support the cross-strait status quo

which is in the best interests of both the Republic of China, as Taiwan is formally known, and the international community. I will never rule out the possibility of dialogue without preconditions, based on the principles of reciprocity and dignity," he added.

Syrian regime organised feared ghost militias, war crimes researchers say

Monitoring Desk
THE HAGUE: In the early years of Syria's brutal conflict, top government officials established and directed paramilitary groups known as shabbiha to help the state crack down on opponents, war crimes investigators have documented.

In a report shared with Reuters, the Commission for International Justice and Accountability (CIJA) published seven documents its investigators said showed that the highest levels of Syria's government "planned, organised, instigated and deployed" the shabbiha from the start of the war in 2011. U.N. investigators in 2012 concluded there were reasonable grounds to believe shabbiha militias committed crimes against humanity, including murder and torture, and war crimes such as arbitrary arrest and detention, sexual violence and pillaging. CIJA's cache does not contain direct written orders to commit atrocities. The Syrian govern-

ment did not respond to a request for comment from Reuters. It has previously blamed opposition fighters for several mass killings studied by CIJA in the report. The government has not publicly commented on the shabbiha, which means ghosts in Arabic, or whether it had any role in organising the groups. Dating from as early as January 2011 — the first days of the protests against Syrian President Bashar al-Assad's rule — the documents detail the creation of so-called Popular Committees, groups that incorporated regime supporters already known as shabbiha into the security apparatus, and trained, instructed and armed them, the report said. The documents include instructions on March 2, 2011 from military intelligence to local authorities via Security Committees run by Assad's Baath party leaders to "mobilise" informers, grassroots organisations and so-called friends of the Assad government.



Indians gathering outside the Indian consulate in San Francisco.

Seven dead as record breaking rain wreaks havoc in Lahore

LAHORE (Online): At least seven people were reported dead in Lahore as the provincial capital saw its heaviest rainfall in 30 years on Wednesday causing significant urban flooding and power outages.

Taking note of the unfolding situation, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has directed the Punjab government to take urgent measures and mobilise the rescue teams amidst heavy rains in the province.

The prime minister called for coordinated efforts by the district administration, Rescue 1122, Provincial Disaster Management Authority, and municipal and other depart-

ments, saying that all possible measures should be taken to protect the citizens' lives, according to a PM Office statement.

He instructed the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) and other federal departments to extend maximum support to the Punjab government if required.

PM Shehbaz said that the necessary steps should be taken to alert the citizens of any emergency situation, chalk out alternate traffic plans and make arrangements for proper drainage.

He also instructed authorities to take preventive measures in the wake of the monsoon rains in other

parts of the country, besides asking the NDMA and PDMA to coordinate necessary arrangements.

The premier further stressed that all possible steps should be taken to relocate the people from villages to safe locations besides saving their cattle and livestock. Similarly, he said all necessary measures should be taken to prevent urban flooding. The prime minister also directed to mobilise the respective administrations of Gilgit Baltistan, Azad Jammu and Kashmir, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and other hilly areas, besides instructing to keep the PMO updated on all measures taken.

The rain began around 4am this morning, leaving large portions of the city submerged and wreaking havoc in all low-lying and posh areas of the city.

According to the data, the highest amount of rainfall was recorded at the heart of Lahore in the area of Lakshmi Chowk where 291 mm rain fell in 10 hours.

Meanwhile, Jail Road recorded 147 mm, while in the Airport area it stood at 130 mm, at Head Office Gulberg the rain was recorded at 210mm, Upper Mall at 199mm, in Mughalpur at 220mm, in Tapura at 249mm, in Nishtar Town at 280mm and in Chowk Nakhuda 205 at mm.



LAHORE: Commuters are facing difficulties in transportation due to stagnant rainwater due to poor sewerage system caused by heavy downpour of monsoon season, at Queens road in Lahore.



HYDERABAD: Activists of Sunni Tehreek (PST) are burn tires as they are holding protest demonstration against desecration of Holy Quran in Sweden.

APC on political harmony: Consensus developed among major parties

ISLAMABAD (INP): All major political parties of the country in a significant step towards fostering a peaceful and violence-free electoral process have reached a consensus on organizing an All Parties Conference (APC) to address the growing problem of politically motivated extremist language that may incite hatred and violence.

The consensus was reached at a dialogue titled "Common Resolve for Political Harmony," organized by Communications Research Strategies (CRS), a pioneer in strategic communications and research-based interventions in Pakistan.

Senior parliamentarians and politicians representing seven prominent political parties, including PML (N), PPP, PTI, ANP,

NDM, and MQM, emphasized the need for an all-parties conference (APC) or any other mechanism that would enable constructive dialogue among political forces.

The dialogue was moderated by Advisor to the Prime Minister, Qamar Zaman Kaira, Senator Afrasiab Khattak, Senator Pervaiz Rashid, Information Secretary PTI Raouf Hassan, Senator Anwar ul Haq Kakar, SAPM Romina Khurshid Alam, MNA Sabir Qaimkhani, Chaudhry Manzoor Ahmad, member CEC PPP, and Information Secretary ANP (Punjab), Nadeem Sarwar represented their parties. Zafarullah Khan former Executive Director Pakistan Institute of Parliamentary Affairs and constitutional literacy advocate.



QUETTA: Activists of Pashtunkhwa Milli Awami Party (PKMAP) are holding protest demonstration for acceptance of their demands, at QPC.

Interim govt to hold election within maximum period of 90 days: Malik

ISLAMABAD (Online): State Minister Musadiq Malik has said the interim government will hold election within maximum period of 90 days and minimum period of 60 days.

"Levy on petrol can go up further by Rs 5 to Rs 7. However we will try to afford relief in prices of oil, he said this while talking to a private TV channel here Wednesday.

He went on to say government will complete its tenure and later the election will take place in time. The decision to forge political alliance will be taken when time of election comes.

"Who will be part of caretaker government, no decision has been taken on

the names so far in this regard, he added.

More steps will have to be taken after IMF agreement for revival of national economy, he remarked. We have been provided relief for 9 months due to IMF agreement. The coming government will face no problem due to IMF agreement.

The production potential of agriculture, industry and other sectors will have to be enhanced.

He indicated that 80 percent electricity is stolen on some feeders in Punjab, Sindh and KP. Smart meters are being installed to prevent power theft. There is need to bring reforms in the electricity transmission system.

Balochistan govt initiates multiple projects to boost livestock sector

QUETTA (APP): The Balochistan government has initiated multiple projects in livestock sector including the establishment of meat processing units and modern slaughter houses aimed to boost sector in the province.

According to official sources, a veterinary institute has been proposed in Turbat at a cost of Rs 750 million to promote veterinary education among the youth and create trained work force in the sector.

The government has initiated the establishment of research centre to put the

livestock sector on modern lines for improving the living standards of local people.

The government has chalked out a comprehensive plan to upgrade the Dairy and Livestock sectors to exploit their full potential and generate economic activities across the province.

The government has also allocated budget for veterinary medicines and provision of vaccines.

He said the government had also planned to establish new veterinary hospitals and dispensaries

PM files acquittal plea in money laundering reference

LAHORE (Online): Prime Minister (PM) Shehbaz Sharif has filed acquittal plea in money laundering reference.

Amjad Pervez advocate submitted acquittal plea on behalf of PM Shehbaz Sharif and his son Hamza Shehbaz in Accountability Court (AC) Lahore in money laundering reference.

The petitioners have taken plea in the acquittal plea NAB made false and fabricated money laundering reference. The assets are as per law which have been declared in FBR and Election Commission (EC). NAB has no evidence of any kind in this regard.

It has been further said in the acquittal plea filed by PM and Hamza Shehbaz that any possibility of proving the case against them stands ruled out.

The court was requested to acquit Shehbaz Sharif and Hamza Shehbaz from the reference.

Pak, Turkiye engage in 6th round of bilateral Consultations

ISLAMABAD (APP): The 6th round of Bilateral Political Consultations between Pakistan and Turkiye is being held in Ankara on Wednesday (July 5).

Foreign Secretary Dr Asad Majeed Khan will lead the Pakistan delegation while the Turkish side will be led by Deputy Foreign Minister Burak Akcapar, according to a spokesperson of the Foreign Office.

The two sides will review the entire gamut of bilateral relations encompassing the political, economic, security, social and cultural dimensions.

Review of various institutional mechanisms, including the High-Level Strategic Cooperation Council (HLSCC) and the Strategic Economic Framework (SEF) will also be undertaken.

Developments in the region and cooperation at the multilateral fora will also come for discussion.

PM praises President Xi, Nawaz for augmenting 'Iron Brotherhood'

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Wednesday said that the last ten years were an inspirational story of how President Xi Jinping's vision of "Iron Brotherhood" converted into the completion of projects under the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) framework.

On his Twitter handle, the prime minister also praised the leadership role of his Quaid (former prime minister) Mian Nawaz Sharif in this regard.

"I am witness to how he oversaw the project implementation in energy & infrastructure sectors, spending hours on fine-tuning the details, reviewing progress & ensuring timelines," he added.

Without his (NS) supervision, he said they would not have completed the CPEC projects with the speed and efficiency that they did. The prime minister further said, today, Pakistan celebrated the completion of the Decade of China-Pakistan Economic Corridor, a transformational project that had been pivotal to Pakistan's socio-economic development.

"However, in my view, we are still far from fully tapping the potential of CPEC, a worthy goal that has my personal & government's staunch commitment," he added.

BAKU: Federal Minister for Overseas Pakistanis and Human Resources Development, Sajid Hussain Turi meets with Chairman of Azerbaijan's State Tourism Agency, Fuad Naghiyev.

SC allows PIA to make 205 new professional appointments

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Supreme Court on Wednesday allowed the Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) to make 205 new professional appointments while postponing the recruitment of 45 others.

A two-member SC bench comprising Justice Ijaz Ul Ahsan and Justice Ayesha A Malik heard the case filed by PIA seeking permission for 250 recruitments of pilots, cabin crew, IT specialists, finance and management officials.

In its verdict today, the apex court allowed the recruitment of pilots, cabin

crew and IT specialists.

During the course of proceedings, the court also directed the PIA's administration to make the recruitment process clear and transparent.

Justice Ayesha Malik asked why PIA was not able to pay its dues and why did it had to recruit more people?

Justice Ijaz said that the quality of services of the PIA was not up to the mark. The new recruitments would burden the organisation by more than Rs 90 million annually, he added.



QUETTA: Parliamentary Secretary for Minority Affairs, Khalil George addresses to media persons during press conference, at Quetta press club.

CM urged to find solution on land issue of Walizai tribe

QUETTA (APP): The tribal elders of the Walizai tribe warned the closure of Loralai-Dera Ghazi Khan road against what they called illegal encroachment of their ancestral land by the officials of the mine and mineral department.

In a press conference held on Wednesday, they alleged that the officials of the mines and minerals department in the limits of Tahsil Mekhtar, Torla police station, have illegally encroached, 9000 thousand acres of mountain with the

connivance of the district administration.

We have repeatedly informed the divisional and district administration of Loralai in this regard, but they did not pay heed to our issue.

"In 2003, Sharia decisions were also made in our favour," they said and urged chief minister Balochistan Mir Abdul Qudus Bizenjo, home minister Mir Ziaullah Longo, chief secretary Abdul Aziz Uqaili and the district administration Loralai to find a solution to the issue.

President upholds penalties, enhances fines upon sexual harassers

ISLAMABAD (APP): After the charges of blackmailing and sexually harassing a female employee at MEPCO were proven, President Dr Arif Alvi has upheld the penalty of "dismissal from service" imposed upon Khizer Hayat, Assistant Director and enhanced the amount of the fine from Rs 500,000 to Rs 1 million.

He also upheld the penalty of "reduction to lower post" imposed upon Mian Sohail Afzal, Director (Admin), for three years and increased the fine from Rs 1 million to Rs 1.1 million to be paid as compensation to the victim, a President House press release said.

He also upheld the exoneration of Sohail Abbas, Deputy Director, and Jamshed Ahmed Niazi, Director, as no cogent evidence or substance was available against them to prove them guilty of the charge beyond any shadow of a doubt. The president gave these orders while rejecting two representations filed separately by Khizer Hayat and Mian Sohail Afzal against the orders of the Federal Ombudsman for Protection against Harassment of Women at Workplace (FOSPWH) imposing fines and major penalties upon the two officers.

A female Commercial Assistant at Multan Electric Power Company (MEPCO) had filed a complaint before FOSPWH against four employees stating that they hacked her mobile data, made sexual demands, got published false news items against her, and demanded Rs 500,000 from her to stop the series of news from its further publication. In his decision, President Alvi stated that a good message had to be sent to society that we would ensure the protection of women against harassment so that our women feel safe in the working environment of the country and our families.

LG polls: Control room sets up in ECP Secretariat Islamabad

QUETTA: A control room has been established at the Election Commission of Pakistan Secretariat Islamabad on Wednesday.

According to an announcement made here, the control room has been set up to monitor the election of chairman and vice chairman of district councils in 35 districts of the province being held today (Thursday).

The control room would operate from 08:00 AM till 12:00 midnight. The senior officers of ECP would monitor the election process. The general public has been asked to contact the control room of ECP on telephone No. 051-9204402/051-9204403, in case of any complaint, the announcement said.

Price of leading cooking oil brands reduce at USC

ISLAMABAD (APP): The price of cooking oil of leading brands has been drastically reduced at all utility stores across the country.

The price of cooking oil of leading brands has been reduced by Rs 85 per litre, said a press release issued by Utility Stores Corporation here on Wednesday.

This will be available at Rs 495 per liter instead of Rs 580 per liter.

Case registered against 8 Pak, 5 arrested for doing job in Israel

ISLAMABAD (Online): FIA Mir Pur Khas circle has registered case against 8 Pakistanis and arrested 5 among them for doing job in Israel.

According to FIA these accused reached Israel via different countries and they did jobs therein. 5 cases have been registered against 8 accused. These accused worked as helpers and car washer in Tel Aviv.

The arrested accused include Noman Siddiqui, Kamil Anwar, Kamran Siddiqui, Muhammad Zeeshan and Muhammad Anwar. These accused stayed in Tel-Aviv for the period ranging between 4 to 7 years.

MPA submits adjournment motion against cut in academies' grant

QUETTA (APP): Member of Balochistan Assembly and leader Pakhtunkhwa Milli Awami Party Nasrullah Zairay has submitted an adjournment motion against a cut in the grant of Pashto and Brahvi languages academies.

"Grant has not been increased for the Pashto, Brahvi and other languages' academies in the fiscal budget of the year 2023-24," MPA contended in a calling

notice submitted in the provincial assembly.

In previous regimes, Rs 10 million were allocated for all academies of the regional languages every year, however, Pashto and Brahvi academies have been totally ignored by the incumbent provincial government. He deplored that the government has increased the grant of only one academy from Rs 10 million to Rs 500 million.



QUETTA: Deputy Commissioner Ayesha Zehri presiding over a meeting of officers regarding security and other arrangements for election of District Chairman

All parties should sit together to find a solution of Wadh problem: Sanaullah Zehri

Independent Report

QUETTA: The central leader of the People's Party, former Chief Minister of Balochistan, Nawab Sanaullah Khan Zahri, has said that the youth of Balochistan should be mobilized and united to represent their respective areas.

Balochistan is strengthening its fort and in the next general elections, it will field its strong candidate from every constituency and will win in the next general elections.

He further added that all parties should together find a solution to solve the issue of Wadh. He said that the people of the constituency will get all possible support from him, Sanaullah Khan Zahri expressed these views in a meeting with the senior tribal leader. Khalq Jhalwan Khuzdar in Karachi that Ghowa Khepar is his constituency.

He will consider it his duty to provide facilities.

NA Speaker strongly condemns Israeli attack on Palestinians in Jenin

ISLAMABAD (Online): Speaker National Assembly (NA) Raja Pervez Ashraf has vehemently condemned the deadly airstrikes and raids carried out by Israeli occupation forces on a Palestinian refugee camp in Jenin.

He also deplored that the dispossession and displacement of Palestinians from their homes by the aggressive Israeli forces are unacceptable.

Speaker said that the

recurring instances of unlawful raids and assault on the innocent Palestinian men, women and children raises serious concerns on the international laws prohibiting such hate-fueled incidents.

The freedom of expression has also been tarnished by the Israeli forces and such blatant violations exposed the dark character of the Zionist reign of Israel, Speaker remarked.



QUETTA: Secretary Finance Zahid Saleem being briefed about departmental affairs. Chairman Balochistan Revenue Authority Noorul Haq Baloch is also present