

Independent

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Ph: 2841470/2841473 Vol: XVI No. 98, Safar 06, 1445 AH Thursday August 24, 2023, Pages 08, Price Rs.15

Toshakhana case: Prima facie trial court decision in the case was wrong: SC

ISLAMABAD (Online): Supreme Court (SC) declared that decision in Toshakhana case is prima facie wrong.

The Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) Umar Ata Bandial remarked trial court order in Toshakhana case is not correct. The matter is in high court therefore, we are not interfering in it today.

The SC while directing Islamabad High Court (IHC) to hear appeal tomorrow remarked "we will hear the case again at 1 p.m."

Appeal plea filed by chairman PTI against a decision of district election commission Islamabad and IHC in Toshakhana criminal case came up for hearing before a 3-member bench of SC presided over

by CJP Umar Ata Bandial Wednesday.

The other two members of bench are Justice Mazhar Ali Akbar Naqvi and Justice Jamal Khan Mandokhail.

At the inception of hearing Latif Khosa counsel for chairman PTI started his arguments.

The CJP remarked there are three petitions before us. The counsel for chairman PTI explained that the petitioner has filed appeal pleas against different decisions.

Latif Khosa said Imran Khan was elected Member of National Assembly (MNA) from Mianwali in 2018. He was charged with concealing his and his wife's assets in nomination papers.



Chief of Army Staff General Syed Asim Munir interacting with officers and troops deployed in Sherwahi area near Asman Manza in South Waziristan District

Terrorists & affiliates to be hunted down till their surrender to State: COAS

RAWALPINDI (APP): Chief of Army Staff (COAS) General Syed Asim Munir on Wednesday said the terrorists, their affiliates and abettors, who were working on hostile agenda to destabilise the country, would be hunted down until their surrender to the State of Pakistan.

The Army Chief was interacting with the officers and troops deployed in Sherwahi area near Asman Manza in South Waziristan District where six brave soldiers had embraced Shahadat (martyrdom) on Tuesday while fighting gallantly against terrorists, an Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) news release

said. The COAS appreciated the unflinching resolve of army officers and troops in fighting the menace of terrorism.

"Shuhada (martyrs) are our pride and their sacrifices will not go in vain till the return of complete peace and stability in Pakistan," he added.

General Asim Munir was given a detailed briefing on the prevailing security situation, including the ongoing intelligence and counter-terrorism operations.

Earlier on his arrival, the COAS was received by the Commander Peshawar Corps.

Plants sapling of Quetta pine at Governor House: Governor calls for maximum participation of people in tree plantation campaign

QUETTA: The Governor Balochistan, Malik Abdul Wali Khan Kakar has stressed the need to create awareness among the general public about tree plantation as it is crucial for overcoming the environmental pollution.



He also directed to ensure maximum participation of people and concerned departments in the tree plantation campaign.

The Governor was speaking on occasion of beginning of the Monsoon tree plantation campaign here at the Governor House on Wednesday.

The Governor planted a plant of Quetta Pine to mark inauguration of the tree plantation campaign. Also present on the occasion was Secretary Forests, Noor Muhammad Pirkan.

He said that it is need of the hour to create awareness about importance and utility of the trees for overcoming the environmental pollution.

CJP Bandial trying to 'save' Imran, claims Nawaz

LONDON: Nawaz Sharif, the supreme leader of the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N), has said that a former chief justice and his "cronies" within the Supreme Court played an active role in his arrest, disqualification, and dismantling of his government. Moreover, he alleged that the present chief justice, Justice Umar Ata Bandial is providing protection to an individual implicated in embezzling billions of ru-

pees. "The chief justice is well aware that this person [Imran Khan] has wreaked havoc on Pakistan's economy, ethics, and culture. He has propagated violence and repeatedly violated the Constitution," said Nawaz while speaking to journalists outside his Avenfield residence in London on Wednesday.

He said that the chief justice was putting his own future at stake by safeguarding the PTI chief.



KARACHI: Flanked by Governor Sindh and Federal Minister for Information & Broadcasting, Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar addressing a press conference.

Caretaker Federal Minister Communication tells caretaker CM: Completion of Quetta-Karachi, Quetta-Zhob and Quetta-Jacobabad highways topmost priority

Work on construction of Pinjra pull to be started in September this year

INDEPENDENT REPORT QUETTA: The caretaker Federal Minister for Communications, Ashraf Tarar has stated that the completion of different highways connecting Quetta to various parts of the country i.e., Karachi, Zhob and Jacobabad is topmost priority of the interim government. The Federal Minister Communications said that all the projects of highways including Quetta-Karachi, Quetta-Zhob and Quetta-Jacobabad would be put on fast track for early completion.

The work on construction of Pinjra pull (bridge) would be started in September this year while the pace of work on the ongoing western bypass project has been accelerated.

This and similar other details were shared by the caretaker Federal Minister while speaking to the caretaker Chief Minister, Mir Ali Mardan Khan Domki who called on him here at the CM's secretariat on Wednesday.

During the course of meeting, the matters about reconstruction as well as repair and expansion of the roads and highways were discussed.

Speaking on the occasion, the caretaker Federal Minister said that he is visiting Balochistan on directives of the caretaker Prime Minister, Anwarul Haq Kakar.

He said that it is directive of the Prime Minister to complete the projects of highways on priority basis.

The Federal Minister informed that the PC-I of

dualization of Quetta-Jacobabad road has been approved. He said that the National Highway Authority (NHA) would spend major portion of its resources in Balochistan.

The caretaker Chief Minister on the occasion noted with pleasure that the federal government has started paying attention to the province on directives of caretaker Prime Minister. He said that the immediate rehabilitation of the bridges located on the Quetta-Karachi highway is very important as the people are facing severe problems due to the damaged bridges.

The Federal Minister directed the Member NHA to take steps on emergent basis for rehabilitation of the damaged bridges.



ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Federal Minister for Interior and Narcotics Control, Sarfraz Ahmad Bugti chairing a briefing session, at Ministry of Narcotics Control in Islamabad.

Jamal Shah announces to work without salary

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Federal Minister for National Heritage and Culture Jamal Shah announced that he would not take a salary for his role as the Caretaker Federal Minister for National Heritage and Culture.

"The minister has decided to work without remuneration, under the national spirit," said a press release issued here on Wednesday.

The ministers' practice to work without drawing salaries is unprecedented in the country's history.

Jamal Shah will work on an honorary basis as Federal Minister for National Heritage and Culture with an aim to contribute to the progress and prosperity of the nation.

PTI Chairman approaches SC against CJ IHC

ISLAMABAD (INP): Chairman Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) on Wednesday approached the Supreme Court against Islamabad High Court (IHC) Chief Justice Aamer Farooq.

A petition has been filed on behalf of the PTI Chairman by Latif Khosa in the apex court under Article 186-A today.

"My cases should be transferred to the Lahore or Peshawar high courts from the Islamabad High Court (IHC)," petitioner pleaded.

Petitioner also sought restraining IHC Chief Justice Aamer Farooq from hearing the cases against him.

Interior Minister says Nation united against terrorism, extremism

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Interior Minister Sarfraz Bugti on Wednesday said that the entire nation was united against the menace of terrorism and extremism. National Coordinator, National Counter Terrorism Authority (NACTA) Inspector General Tahir Ray briefed the minister on his visit to the authority's headquarters.

The minister reviewing the National Action Plan said that the terrorism would be completely eliminated from the society and Pakistan would be made peaceful country for all.

He said Pakistan's narrative against terrorism and extremism provided complete guideline which needed to be promoted further.

'No political friends, enemies'; says Solangi

Says caretaker govt has no role in fixing election date

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Murtaza Solangi Wednesday reiterated that the interim dispensation had "No political friends and no political enemies".

While talking to a private television talkshow, he said all political parties had the freedom to present their viewpoint.

"Criticism is their democratic right, we cannot take this right from them. We are not in favour of or against any political party," Murtaza Solangi said.

The minister said the caretaker government had no intention to interfere in any activity under the constitution and law of the country.

He said, "If the constitution, law, and courts take any action against someone, the government cannot stop the process."



QUETTA: Caretaker Information Minister Jan Achakzai meeting with Senator Saeed Ahmed Hashmi at his residence

Surrender not an option: PM Kakar vows to continue fight against terrorists

Praises sacrifices of martyrs for nation; says wars are not fought by individuals, but nations; Strongly abhorred terrorist acts and suicide attacks.

KARACHI (APP): Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar Wednesday categorically said that Pakistan would never surrender to radicalization, extremism and intolerance but rather would fight without falling prey to war fatigue.

"Those who think we will fall prey to war fatigue should clear their misunderstanding."

This war is not fought by individuals... This war is fought by nation... Surrendering is not an option. We will fight no matter what," he said during a press conference during his visit here.

Referring to the martyrdom of soldiers in South Waziristan on Tuesday, he said that Pakistan was not a power that would return

5,000 kilometers away from here.

"This is our home. We are here. We will run our home in our own way," he said.

The prime minister said those trying to undermine the morale of the Pakistani nation should clear their misunderstanding as Pakistan would never forget the sacrifices of its martyrs.

He said Pakistan was not fighting this war on alms but rather spending our own taxpayers' money.

He said the Pakistani soldiers were not rendering sacrifices in return for the salaries.

"Their service is not in return for salaries, rather respect and dignity is their salary. Salary is just meant to suffice their needs. The

nation pays them in the form of respect," he remarked.

Prime Minister Kakar said that those who were trying to create chaos in the name of religion were actually miscalculating and misreading.

"This is a clear message. They can fight for a limited time, but not for long. They are miscalculating and misreading whom they are faced with. We are not afraid of suicide attackers," he said.

Referring to the rescue operation of trapped eight passengers of a cable car in Battagram, the prime minister said the country's infrastructure was becoming a threat to human lives. "We were overwhelmingly over the moon as we heard the rescue of the last kid..."



QUETTA: Caretaker Federal Minister for Communication Ashraf Tarar meeting with Chief Minister Balochistan Mir Ali Mardan Khan Domki

China, UAE envoys call on foreign minister

ISLAMABAD (APP): Ambassador of the United Arab Emirates Hamad Alzaabi and Chinese Charge d' Affaires Pang Chunxue on Wednesday separately called on Caretaker Foreign Minister Jalil Abbas Jilani here.

In the meeting with the UAE envoy, the two sides discussed bilateral, regional as well as multilateral issues of mutual interest and the potential of enhancing trade and investment ties between the two countries, a Foreign Office statement said.

During the meeting with Chinese Charge d' Affaires, the two countries reaffirmed their resolve to further strengthen the All-Weather Strategic Cooperative Partnership between Pakistan and China.

Three bullet riddled bodies found in Mand area of Kech

QUETTA: The bullet riddled and handcuffed bodies of three persons were found in Mand area of Kech on Wednesday.

According to the reports reaching here, the levies force recovered bodies of three persons from the road side in Mula chat area.

The bodies were removed to the civil hospital Mand for identification and necessary action. Later, they were identified as Dr. Hamid Buledi, his son Behroz and his nephew namely Abdul Basit. The reports suggested that all the three persons were shot dead by unknown persons.

They had gone to the Iranian province of Balochistan about one and half year back.

Blast leaves one injured in Lehri

QUETTA (APP): A blast in ancestral town of Interim Chief Minister Balochistan Ali Mardan Domki left one person injured, police said on Wednesday.

They said that a land mine planted by unknown miscreants exploded in Kach area of Lehri Tehsil of Sibi when a motorbike hit the landmine. The injured identified as Sikandar Talani was shifted to district headquarters' hospital.

President invites CEC to fix date for general elections

In letter to CEC, Alvi cites constitutional requirement for president to decide date for elections within 90 days of NA dissolution; ECP decides to consult all political parties, including PTI, for elections schedule

ISLAMABAD (APP): President Dr Arif Alvi on Wednesday invited Chief Election Commissioner Sikandar Sultan Raja for a meeting by Thursday to fix an appropriate date for the general elections.

Dr Arif Alvi, in a letter to the Chief Election Commissioner, said since the National Assembly was dissolved on August 9, 2023, therefore under Article 48 (5) of the Constitution, he (as the president) was obliged to appoint a date not later than 90 days from the date of dissolution for the holding of general election of National Assembly.

"Forgoing in view, the

Chief Election Commissioner is invited for a meeting with the President today or tomorrow to fix an appropriate date," the letter noted.

INP adds: The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) has decided to consult all major political parties, including the PTI, about upcoming general elections and its date. The elections are expected early next year. Sources said the ECP would consult all political parties separately regarding the elections schedule and its date. During the consultation, the electoral watchdog will also talk about a road map of the upcoming general elections.

Green bus service to be started on more routes as well: Domki

QUETTA: The caretaker Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Ali Mardan Khan Domki has appreciated the previous provincial government for launching the Green bus service project and stated that this bus service would be started on more routes in Quetta.



The caretaker Chief Minister was speaking to the passengers during his travel on a Green bus on Wednesday.

Also accompanied with him were the caretaker Information Minister, Jan Achakzai, Principal Secretary, Lal Jan Jaffar and other concerned high ups.

The passengers riding the Green bus were happily surprised to see the caretaker Chief Minister among them.

They appreciated the initiative of the provincial government about starting the Green bus service in Quetta. They also expressed the desire to expand the route of Green bus on more routes in the metropolis.

Ali Mardan Domki on the occasion said that the launching of Green bus service was an excellent initiative of the previous government.

He directed the Secretary Transport to prepare plan for expansion on route of the Green bus.

He said that it is right of the citizens to have safe travels in pleasant environment.

He announced to extend one hour in timing of the Green bus service. He directed to make arrangement for running the Green buses till 08:00 PM instead of 07:00 PM.

Daily Voice of Masses
Independent

Thursday August 24, 2023

Persisting doubts

As the debate over the controversial amendments to the Army Act and Official Secrets Act and their current legal status continues, dark clouds are gathering over the Aiwan-i-Sadr.

On Monday, following President Arif Alvi's allegation a day earlier that he had been undermined by his staff, the presidency dismissed its top secretary. While the presidency itself did not really specify why the secretary was dismissed, the contents of a 'confidential' letter penned by the officer and leaked to the media suggested that the secretary at least considered the two events to be directly related. Considering the officer's proposal to take the matter to court to clear his name, the issue could turn very messy for the president if it continues to hang.

According to the leaked letter, the secretary says the president never gave him any 'written decision' to either assent to or return the bills to parliament, so he should not be held responsible for 'delaying' them. On the other hand, the president had previously claimed that he had asked for both bills to be returned within the stipulated time and was assured during follow-ups that they were.

Considering these contrasting versions, a high-level inquiry into the matter has become necessary. That it does not seem to have been initiated yet makes it all the more intriguing. It also ought to be noted that whatever his position may have been, the president seems not to have put his reasons for opposing the two bills in writing. This would suggest that his own hands are less than clean. His rather laid-back approach is also perplexing. So far, he has only posted a half-baked apology and fired a staff member without assigning any explicit reason.

The question is: what was the president thinking? Had he always wished to play his hand at the last minute, scuttling the laws only when his decision would be difficult to reverse? These two bills appeared to have had some very powerful sponsors backing them. Despite repeated opportunities, our parliamentarians ultimately found them rather difficult to resist despite their earlier protestations. Was the president's dillydallying followed by a public denial, therefore, a considered strategy to carefully outmanoeuvre those who would have done anything to see these bills enacted?

Alternatively, was it simply that he took a massive U-turn after facing criticism from his party for providing the state with a noose to hang its leaders with? Or, finally, was it that he genuinely opposed these bills and wanted them reviewed but was undermined by his subordinates, who may have been acting on somebody else's orders? It is critical that the nation gets to the bottom of this fiasco, and it is the president's responsibility to have the record set straight.



Zahid Hussain

Curiously, it was through X (formerly Twitter) that President Arif Alvi chose to deny that he had assented to the bills amending the Official Secrets Act and the Army Act, plunging the country into yet another constitutional crisis. The two disputed bills passed by parliament earlier this month were enacted after the president was deemed to have given his consent. But his tweet two days after the notification has opened a new Pandora's box.

While the president's delayed denial, and that too through social media, is inexplicable, it has nevertheless rendered the validity of these Acts controversial. The entire episode has further widened the cracks within the country's power structure, amplifying the

existing chaos. The president's statement blaming bureaucratic foul play has made the matter more complex.

It has also exposed the president's own predicament as he desperately tries to defend his position under fire. The demand for his resignation has certainly put pressure on him, with just a few weeks left for the end of his term in the top office. Meanwhile, the debate over the validity of the enacted laws has given a new twist to the ongoing political battle. The matter is now likely to go to the Supreme Court.

But the controversy surrounding the disputed Acts that provide sweeping powers to the security agencies is certainly not going to go away whatever the outcome of the legal battle. The way the two bills were pushed through parliament, just days before the dissolution of the National Assembly ignoring the voices of dissent, has raised questions about the intention behind the move.

It is apparent that the former ruling coalition deliberately passed the bills that provide sweeping powers to the security

agencies, undermining civil rights. The latest controversy over the legal status of the enacted laws has also brought into the question the political cost of strengthening the powers of the security apparatus. The PDM coalition's shameful capitulation will have long-term consequences for the democratic process. The draconian laws that are currently being used against its political opponent could come back to haunt it. It is a lesson of history that our political leaders conveniently ignore for short-term political gains.

While demanding the president's resignation over the assent controversy, the PDM parties have come together to defend the black laws. Interestingly, it's the PML-N whose leaders now — as opposed to when they were in the opposition where they were never tired of talking about civilian supremacy — are the biggest exponents of the laws strengthening the establishment's stranglehold.

While the debate over the legality of the two Acts rages on, the authorities have set up a special court

under the amended Official Secrets Act to try PTI leaders in the cipher case. Among the accused are former prime minister Imran Khan and former foreign minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi. There are also several other PTI leaders and supporters who are likely to face trial under the Army Act.

What we are witnessing is arguably the most ruthless crackdown against a political party in recent times. Hundreds of PTI supporters are languishing in jail without trial; many of them are believed to have been held on trumped-up charges. Some PTI women supporters have been detained for over three months without being produced before a trial court and having been denied bail. All that has made a mockery of justice and the rule of law. The newly enacted amended laws enhancing the powers of the security agencies will make things worse.

All this is happening as the country prepares for elections, raising doubts about prospects of a democratic transition. What is most alarming is the intensification in crackdown on the political opposition

under the military-backed interim government whose impartiality is questionable. There is a strong perception of the interim administration being just an extension of the security establishment.

Moreover, the prevailing uncertainty over the election schedule has reinforced suspicions about the country moving towards a prolonged period of interim rule with all the powers to take policy decisions. The PML-N and most other PDM parties now favour delaying elections beyond the constitutional limit of 90 days. The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) has already announced that delimitation of the constituencies as required under the new census will take at least four months to complete before poll arrangements, requiring another three months, can begin.

It may be a valid point, yet there is no clear time frame given by the ECP for the polls. There is also a strong view that there is no need for fresh delimitation of constituencies. There appears a clear division within the former ruling coalition over the matter.

What is most intriguing is the ambiguous position taken by the PML-N leadership on the poll delay. The confusion also reflects the power tussle within the Sharif family and the party's diminishing electoral prospects in the face of PTI's strong challenge, despite the crack-down against it and efforts to dismantle the party. In its 16 months of rule, the PML-N-led coalition has little to show by way of performance, especially on the economic front; this has further eroded its support base.

The PML-N also seems to have lost a lot of political capital because of its opportunistic alignment with the security establishment.

Instead of debating the veracity or otherwise of the president's statement, the political parties should focus on mitigating the damage done to the democratic process because of these draconian laws. The ongoing political persecution will only worsen the situation. The only way out of this predicament is to hold fair and free elections within the stipulated time frame. -- Courtesy Dawn

Presidential indiscretion

How to combat terror financing



Dr Maqsood Ahmed

Pakistan has faced significant challenges in combating terrorism financing due to its complex geopolitical landscape, porous borders, and historical links to extremist groups. Terror financing involves the provision of funds or financial support to terrorist organizations and individuals involved in extremist activities. These funds are utilized to sustain the operational capabilities of such groups, including recruitment, training, and carrying out acts of terror. Terror financing poses a significant threat to global security as it allows terrorist organizations to maintain their infrastructure and expand their reach.

Pakistan shares borders with Afghanistan, a region plagued by decades of conflict and instability; the porous nature of the

border has made it challenging to monitor and regulate the movement of funds, weapons, and individuals associated with terrorism.

Pakistan's large informal economy provides ample opportunities for illicit financial activities, including money laundering and terrorism financing. Cash transactions and 'Hawala' networks, an alternative remittance system, further complicate efforts to track and trace suspicious financial flows.

Pakistan has witnessed the presence of non-state actors and extremist groups within its territory. The existence of these groups has posed challenges in dismantling their financial networks effectively. But the country has made significant strides in strengthening its legal framework to counter terrorism financing and enacted laws specifically targeting money laundering and terrorism financing, such as the Anti-Money Laundering Act and the Anti-Terrorism Act. These laws aim to criminalize terrorism financing activities and enhance penalties for offenders.

Pakistan has established its financial monitor-

ing unit (FMU) to serve as the central authority responsible for receiving, analyzing, and disseminating suspicious transaction reports. The FMU collaborates with international counterparts to share intelligence and investigate terrorism financing networks.

Recognizing the transnational nature of terrorism financing, Pakistan has actively engaged in international cooperation initiatives. It has worked closely with the Financial Action Task Force (FATF), an intergovernmental body combatting money laundering and terrorism financing, to implement recommended measures and improve its compliance with international standards.

Pakistan has also undertaken reforms to strengthen its financial sector's resilience against terrorism financing. Banks and financial institutions have implemented the robust know your customer (KYC) and customer due diligence (CDD) procedures to identify and report suspicious transactions promptly. The Pakistani government, in collaboration with civil society organizations, has launched awareness campaigns to

educate people about the dangers of terrorism financing. These initiatives aim to encourage citizens to report suspicious activities and discourage them from unknowingly contributing to terrorism financing.

Through legislative measures, international cooperation, financial-sector reforms and public awareness campaigns, Pakistan is striving to dismantle terrorism financing networks and improve its overall security situation. Addressing terrorism financing requires a comprehensive and multi-faceted approach. It is significant to continuously review and update the existing laws related to terrorism financing to ensure they are robust, comprehensive, and in line with international standards. Implementing strict penalties for offenders and streamlining the prosecution process is required to ensure swift and effective legal action.

Strengthening border security measures by employing advanced technology, such as biometric systems and surveillance equipment, to monitor and control the movement of individuals, funds, and goods across borders are also significant steps to be

taken in collaboration with neighboring countries to share intelligence and coordinate efforts.

It is also essential to invest in training and capacity-building programmes for financial intelligence units (FIUs) to enhance their ability to identify, analyze and act upon suspicious financial transactions and ensure effective coordination and information sharing among FIUs, law-enforcement agencies and financial institutions.

There is a need also to address the informal economy by promoting financial inclusion and encouraging the use of formal banking channels and regulating informal money transfer systems, such as 'Hawala', to minimize their potential for exploitation by terrorist financiers.

By strengthening collaboration with international partners, including intelligence agencies, financial institutions, and organizations like the FATF, sharing information, intelligence, and best practices to identify and dismantle cross-border terrorism financing networks, a robust mechanism may be devised and continue to enhance anti-money laundering

(AML) and counter-terrorism financing (CTF) measures within the financial sector.

It is also important to establish effective communication channels and mechanisms for sharing intelligence among law-enforcement agencies, financial institutions, and FIUs, encourage timely reporting of suspicious activities and facilitate cooperation to track and disrupt terrorism financing flows.

Besides prioritizing the enactment and implementation of comprehensive legislation targeting terrorism financing, it is also recommended to strengthen penalties and legal mechanisms to expedite prosecutions and address any legislative gaps or weaknesses identified through regular evaluations.

It is important to note that short-term solutions should be implemented in parallel with long-term strategies to address the root cause of terrorism financing. A comprehensive approach that combines immediate actions with sustained efforts will help combat terrorism financing in Pakistan. -- Courtesy TheNews

A split world



Rafia Zakaria

For three long decades, the world appeared to be moving towards greater interconnectedness. Trade ties between countries increased and pointed towards improved political stability. If emerging powers needed the consumer markets of existing superpowers in order to survive, it suggested that neither could afford a protracted war. This status quo of an integrated world now appears to be dissolving before our very eyes.

This time, the alarm was sounded by IMF chief Kristalina Georgieva. She would know; not only does she have an inside view of the cumulative health of the world's struggling economies, her own experience, too, makes her particularly sensitive to early signs of want. Georgieva, who is 70 now, grew up behind the iron curtain in Sofia, Bulgaria. While neither of her parents belonged to the Communist Party, they were still caught up in the extremely restricted world that existed at that time under the shadow of the Soviet Union over East Europe. According to her, "things were cheap but not available". Her latest remarks came just after US President Biden announced a partial ban on American investment in China in sectors that could be used for military applications.

While the strained ties between the US and China is one indicator of a world moving farther apart, so too is the war in Ukraine. Recent US intelligence estimates, along

with expert analysis, suggest that Ukraine, whom the US and Nato have championed, is unlikely to recover all the territory that it had prior to the Russian invasion. The fact that this is true despite the billions of dollars in weaponry and training that the US has provided is likely to affect the future of American aid to the country. In the meantime, not only can Vladimir Putin declare this a victory, he is also unlikely to withdraw from the country until after the results of the US election of 2024 are known. If former US president Donald Trump is the Republican Party's nominee (as it appears he will likely be), then Putin has a 50 per cent chance of a friend in the White House and an opportunity to not only keep whatever bits of Ukraine he has captured but also to likely grab much more than that.

It is unlikely to happen but that result, while terrible for Ukraine, would suggest a less fragmented future for the world. The more likely outcome is pockets of the world finding themselves forced to choose loyalties between the US and China. This will be terrible for countries like Pakistan who would like good relations with both. Failure to listen and act on what Washington wants will expose it to the risk of losing access to funds that Pakistan and other developing economies need in order to function.

At the end, this is a reminder of the adage that beggars cannot be choosers. A lot of political debate in Pakistan suggests that the choice of allies is a product of ideological allegiances. Many think that turning away from the US suggests a greater commitment to decolonisation and au-

tonomy. However, the fact is that the global economy makes it nearly impossible for struggling economies with high levels of debt to make very many independent choices.

Aid makes countries like Pakistan dependent for as long as Western countries make it impossible for them to compete fairly in the global market. Independent decisions by struggling economies will only be possible if Western countries stop subsidising their industries to protect their own companies. When American wheat sells for less than Pakistani wheat because the American farmer is protected by subsidies and can sell below the market price, the premise that the world functions along the lines of free market capitalism is exposed as a lie.

The prospect of darker times to come seems almost unbearable in times that already appear dismal. And yet, that is just where the world appears to be headed. If the poor in US cities are taking to looting expensive stores and shoplifting complaints have risen exponentially, imagine the fate of the poor struggling Pakistani aghast at the insane rate of inflation in the country.

The split world is materialising before our eyes and it threatens to tear up lives, countries and much more. The perilous economic condition in which Pakistan finds itself is going to make it even more dependent on international financial institutions like the IMF as the already squeezed populace suffers ever greater privations. The most dangerous people are those with nothing left to lose, and it appears more and more that Pakistanis might end up in that category. -- Courtesy Dawn

Made for each other



Mahir Ali

Late last week, Joe Biden hosted the leaders of South Korea and Japan at Camp David to nudge them towards increased economic and "security" cooperation, as part of the US administration's aggressive pushback against Chinese ambitions. Living memories of Japan's brutal rule in Korea have stood in the way of bonhomie between the two staunch American allies. The push for closer coordination coincides with a US-endorsed resurgence in Japanese militarism, which plagued the region in the early 20th century.

A similar impetus is behind a parallel US push for a formal diplomatic deal between a repressive monarchy and a diminishing democracy in the Middle East. Saudi Arabia enjoys reasonably cordial relations with China. Its de facto ruler, Mohammed bin Salman (MBS), knows that this — not least the Beijing-sponsored rapprochement between Riyadh and Tehran — irritates Washington, and is leveraging it.

The Saudis are not shy of implying they could shift their source of military imports to China, even Russia, if America falls short. The conditions for a deal with Israel reportedly include a mutual defence pact, a civilian nuclear plan involving the enrichment of uranium, and Israeli 'concessions' to Palestinians that would preserve the possibility — rather, the fiction — of a two-state solution.

Many of Israel's traditional friends among the American commentariat have been critical of the regime's aggressive attempts to subjugate the judiciary, some even arguing that the US should curtail aid to Israel. A recent open letter from over 750 Israeli intellectuals to the American Jewish community urges it to stop supporting apartheid.

The judiciary's future and the brutal occupation of Palestinian territories tend to be viewed as distinct issues. Mass mobilisations in Israel in defence of its discriminatory democracy have largely ignored the redoubled efforts towards ethnic 'cleansing'. Israeli courts may have acted to restrict government excesses, but they are a part and parcel of the oppression since the 1940s, when the horrific Shoah segued into the Nakba.

Both words mean the same: catastrophe. The first, among the biggest crimes against humanity, ended in 1945. The second is ongoing, and it is almost inconceivable that the present regime would agree to ameliorate it, given its commitment to annexation of the West Bank by subterfuge. That, anyhow, is not something the Saudis demand as part of the price for a diplomatic deal.

Most Arab leaders have never cared much about the fate of the Palestinians, despite leveraging the occupation for political purposes. The Palestinian Authority falls into the same category, serving as a puppet dispensation for an administration that ignores it. No wonder it has lost the allegiance of most Palestinians. Back when the Abraham Accords were announced, the UAE claimed they had forestalled the annexation of the West Bank by the Netanyahu regime; under the current variant of the same disease, the transgressions have only gathered momentum.

None of this likely to faze MBS, whose mission to turn the nation named after his family into a sporting superpower is going gangbusters, with golf in the bag and men's football almost in the net. Underlying patterns of repression remain intact despite dramatic superficial changes. Ravages in the desert and concerts by scantily clad Western performers — alongside the latest Hollywood movies, professional wrestling tournaments and horse racing — are no longer verboten. But even mild dissent on social media can earn you a decades-long prison term.

This week's horrific revelations from Human Rights Watch about Saudi massacres of hundreds, and quite possibly thousands, of Ethiopian refugees on the Yemeni border — children, women and men — help flesh out a more complete picture of the regime's nature. All too many European nations have a ruthlessly inhuman attitude towards would-be immigrants, including ignoring mass drownings in the Mediterranean. But none of them has thus far resorted to mass killings by gunshots.

On various other levels, the Saudis have been dealing with Israel for several years, although the collaboration has undoubtedly been stepped up in the past decade or so. And perhaps Benjamin Netanyahu missed an opportunity by failing to frame his judicial 'reforms' as a means of conforming with the Middle Eastern norm — after all, right across the region, judges tend to take their instructions from the powers that be.

There are numerous hurdles to an Israeli-Saudi conjugal union. But if and when it occurs, it's less likely to be a shotgun wedding than a marriage made in heaven. -- Courtesy Dawn

Governor highlights sacrifices of tribal people, assures cooperation in addressing problems

PESHAWAR (APP): Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Haji Ghulam Ali here Wednesday highlighted the sacrifices of tribal people for country's sovereignty and said that peace is a prerequisite for the development and prosperity of an area.

He was talking to a 45-member delegation of tribal elders of Tehsil Shagai, South Waziristan. The delegation was led by a former member provincial assembly, Adnan Wazir and Chairman Tehsil Wana, Moulana Saleh.

The delegation apprised the KP Governor about their problems and said that Shagai was given tehsil status in 2012 but proper notification has not been issued yet. They urged the governor to play his role and said that it would help address the concerns of people living in that area.

They also highlighted issues including the establishment of the NADRA Office in the area, rehabilitation of infrastructure, blacktopping of roads in Mantoai and Santoi, construction of a hospital in Shagai area and completion of projects relating to water supply and sanitation. Speaking on the occasion, the governor assured his cooperation to resolve these problems and said that the development of tribal areas is among the topmost priorities of the government.

He said that the availability of all the needed basic amenities would be ensured to tribal people and added that funds would be released to local government representatives aiming for the initiation of developmental work at the grassroots level.

Haji Ghulam Ali said that NADRA officials would be contacted to provide a mobile registration van for Shagai till the establishment of a proper NADRA office in that area. He also urged tribal elders to focus education of their children including girls and added that students of merged districts were being provided scholarships to get higher education and to play a due role in the development of their areas.

Later, the KP Governor also chaired a meeting to decide matters about land demarcation between Agriculture University Peshawar and the University of Engineering and Technology Mardan.

The meeting was also attended by the Vice Chancellor of Agriculture University, Professor Dr. Bakhat Jehan and Professor Dr. Imran Khan of Engineering University.



KARACHI: Caretaker Chief Minister of Sindh Maqbool Baqar called on caretaker Prime Minister Anwar-ul-Haq Kakar.

Punjab Governor says: Jaranwala incident is very painful and reprehensible

Independent Report
LAHORE: A delegation led by Bishop of Lahore, Nadeem Kamran met Governor Punjab Muhammad Balighur Rehman heretoday at Governor House Lahore. Bishop Nadeem Kamran thanked the government, Prime Minister, and Governor Punjab for expressing solidarity with the Christian community.

Speaking on this occasion, Punjab Governor Muhammad Balighur Rehman said that Jaranwala incident is very painful and reprehensible. He said that all minorities including the Christian community are

equal citizens of Pakistan. Governor Punjab said that the Constitution of Pakistan does not allow hurting religious sentiments or harming anyone's life or property. He said that there is a need to promote tolerance and empathy in society, adding that it is very important to inculcate positive thinking, tolerance, understanding other's point of view and high moral values among school children.

He further said that tolerance and respect for each other's point of view is very important for coexistence in a society. On this occasion, the

Governor Punjab said that he appreciates the Punjab government as some churches have been restored in a short time, and the rest of the churches will also be restored soon. The Governor of Punjab said that the role of the Christian community in the creation of Pakistan and after the creation of Pakistan, in every field including health, education, and defense is unforgettable. On this occasion, Bishop of Lahore, Nadeem Kamran, said that the way the state and the people stood by the Christian community is commendable.

PM assures Sindh govt of centre's all-out support

KARACHI (APP): Renowned Actor Zahir Caretaker Prime Minister Anwar-ul-Haq Kakar on Wednesday met Interim Sindh Chief Minister Maqbool Baqir and assured him of the federal government's all-out support to run the province's administrative affairs.

In the meeting, the chief minister apprised the prime minister of the administrative affairs of the province and the issues being faced by the caretaker government.

They reiterated their resolve to cooperate with the Election Commission of Pakistan for holding free and fair elections.

Meanwhile, Caretaker Minister for Information and Broadcasting Murtaza Solangi also attended the meeting.

The actor congratulated the prime minister on assuming the office and expressed good wishes for him.

The prime minister thanked the actor for the gesture.

Caretaker Minister for Information and Broadcasting Murtaza Solangi also attended the meeting.



LAHORE: A delegation led by Bishop of Lahore, Nadeem Kamran in a group photo with Governor Punjab Muhammad Balighur Rehman at Governor House.

Finance minister reviews construction of 2.1m houses for flood victims

KARACHI (APP): Sindh Caretaker Minister for Finance, Revenue, and Planning and Development Mohammad Younus Dagha, presided over a meeting to review the construction of 2.1 million houses for flood victims in the province.

The meeting was held at Sindh Secretariat Tughlaq House in the office of the Planning and Development department on Wednesday.

Chairman Planning and Development Board Syed Hasan Naqvi, Chief Executive Officer Sindh People's Housing Scheme for Flood Affected People Khalid Mehmood Sheikh, and other officers briefed the minister.

On this occasion, Younus Dagha said that the construction of 2.1 million houses for the flood victims is a big project. The Sindh government is

committed to the timely construction of flood-affected houses, he added.

He said that the verification process of 500,000 flood-affected houses has been completed and funds should be released immediately for their construction. The work of verification of the rest of the damaged houses should also be completed as soon as possible, he said. On this occasion, it was informed in the briefing that Rs 3,00,000 will be given to the residents of each affected house and the process of payment for the affected houses should be completed within a fixed period of six months.

On this occasion, Muhammad Younus Dagha directed that the report of the construction work done in the period of six months of payment should be submitted step by step.



KARACHI: Peoples Party (PPP) Sindh President, Senator Nisar Ahmed Khuhro along with others addresses to media persons during press conference held at PPP Media Cell Bilawal House in Karachi.

KP govt orders safety checks of all chairlifts

PESHAWAR (Online): Following a recent incident in which the lives of people including school children were jeopardized due to breakage of a chairlift wire in Battagram, the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government on Wednesday decided to ensure the safety of chairlifts across the province.

In response to the incident where an open cable car in Battagram was left stranded due to a cable snap, leaving 8 people including school children suspended for over 15 hours, the government has issued a comprehensive set of guidelines to enhance safety measures.

Under the directive, deputy commissioners from all districts have been instructed to conduct thorough inspections of chairlifts. This inspection mandate covers chairlifts in both commercial and residential areas, as well as those operating in entertainment establishments.

Particular emphasis

has been placed on the swift examination of chairlifts located within entertainment venues. This scrutiny aims to guarantee strict adherence to safety protocols.

Special consideration will be given to chairlifts spanning over rivers and streams, necessitating a meticulous evaluation of their structural soundness.

The scope of the directive also encompasses an evaluation of the design, capacity, and safety features of all chairlifts within the province. With a paramount concern for public safety, the provincial government underscores the importance of adhering to established safety standards, especially during adverse weather conditions such as storms and lightning.

To ensure effective regulation of chairlift operations, acquiring a No Objection Certificate (NOC) from the district administration has been made mandatory.

Water level may rise in Sutlej, PDMA issues threat alert

LAHORE (APP): Provincial Disaster Management Authority (PDMA) Punjab on Wednesday issued another flood warning, possibility of further increase in water level in River Sutlej due to rains occurred in upper catchments during last 24 hours.

In a threat alert issued by the PDMA, Director General PDMA Imran Qureshi instructed to the administration of the districts adjacent to the Sutlej to remain alert. It has also been instructed to deploy sufficient staff round-the-clock for effective coordination and response, and collect and share latest information in line with national and provincial authorities.

10 dead, 1182 injured in Punjab road accidents

LAHORE (APP): At least 10 people were killed and 1182 injured in 1159 road accidents in all 37 districts of Punjab during the last 24 hours.

Of whom, 567 people with serious injuries were shifted to different hospitals, while 615 people with minor injuries were treated on the spot by rescue medical teams. Analysis show that 582 drivers, 50 underage drivers, 149 pedestrians, and 461 passengers were among the victims of road crashes. Statistics show that 269 road accidents were reported in Lahore which affected 283 people placing the provincial capital at top of the list followed by 87 in Faisalabad with 81 victims and at third Multan with 83 road accidents and 83 victims.

Bid to smuggle arms foiled; two accused held

PESHAWAR (APP): The Gulberg police here on Wednesday foiled a bid to smuggle a huge quantity of arms to different districts of the province and arrested two-member of a gang of inter-district smugglers. According to police, DSP Cantt Haroon Jadoon and SHO Gulberg police Tariq Khan acting on a tip-off conducted a raid on Bara road and arrested two suspects riding in a car. During the checking of the vehicle, the police recovered unregistered 45 pistols of different bores.

The police arrested the accused from the spot and took the vehicle and arms into custody and started investigation.

Sehat Card Caretaker CM takes notice of suspension of free treatment

PESHAWAR (APP): Caretaker Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Muhammad Azam Khan has taken notice of the suspension of free treatment facilities under the Sehat Card scheme, and directed the concerned authorities to take steps on a priority basis for the restoration of free treatment facilities under the scheme, said an official handout issued here on Wednesday.

He further directed that arrangements should be made for immediate

payment of dues to the implementing partner i.e. State Life Insurance Company for the purpose.

On the directives of the Chief Minister, the quarters concerned approached the management of State Life Insurance Company and assured them that their dues would be cleared within a week.

As a result, the company has directed all empanelled hospitals to immediately resume the free treatment facilities under Sehat Card Scheme.

Constable martyred; citizen injured in Tank firing

PESHAWAR (APP): A police constable was shot dead while a citizen sustained the injuries when armed men fired at them near a private bank in the city area of district Tank on Wednesday.

Police said the incident occurred at the main gate of a bank, where armed men fired at a police constable identified as Riaz Uddin. The constable received fatal bullet wounds and died on the spot, while an unknown citizen was injured. The bodies of the constable and injured citizen were shifted to DHQ Tank Hospital.



LAHORE: Members of Women in Struggle for Empowerment (WISE) are holding protest demonstration for demanding justice for 10-years old housemaid Fatima Farooq, at Lahore press club.

SCCI, Gomal Uni agreed to enhance industry, academia linkages

PESHAWAR (APP): In order to build up industry-academia linkages, the Sarhad Chamber of Commerce and Industry has signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with Gomal University Dera Ismail Khan here on Wednesday. According to details, the MoU was signed by SCCI's acting President Ijaz Khan Afridi and the Director Office of Research, Innovation and Commercialization (ORIC), Gomal University DIKhan Dr Barkat Ali Khan during a ceremony held here today at the chambers house. Abidur Rehman, Personal Secretary to Vice Chancellor, Gomal

University DIKhan and SCCI's Secretary General Sajjad Aziz were also present on the occasion.

In his remarks during the meeting, Ijaz Afridi informed that the chamber has so far signed MoUs with more than 16 public and private universities throughout the province, aiming to build up industry and academia linkages.

He said the MoU with Gomal University DIKhan was part of this series of agreements, which would help to strengthen collaboration between the institutions in future.

Ijaz Afridi elaborated that the MoU aims at equipping graduates and young students.

15 more dengue cases reported in 24 hours

RAWALPINDI (APP): As many as 15 more dengue cases were reported in Rawalpindi during the last 24 hours, raising the tally of confirmed cases to 116.

District Coordinator Epidemics Prevention and Control (DCEPC), Dr Sajjad Mehmood, Wednesday said that, among the new cases, six patients had arrived from Chaklala Cantonment, five from Potohar town urban area, three from Municipal Corporation, and one from Rawalpindi Cantonment area.

He said 35 patients were admitted to City's allied hospitals, out of which 24 were confirmed cases while 77 were discharged after treatment.

Dr Sajjad informed that the district administration had registered 82 FIRs, issued tickets to 23, sealed 14 premises, and a fine of Rs 100,000 was imposed against the violations of dengue SOPs during the last 24 hours.

The health officer said that dengue cases were being reported across the district while the health authority along with allied departments was making efforts to control the spread of the disease.

Ombudsman Punjab provides relief of Rs. 1.09 mln to Ramzan bazar suppliers

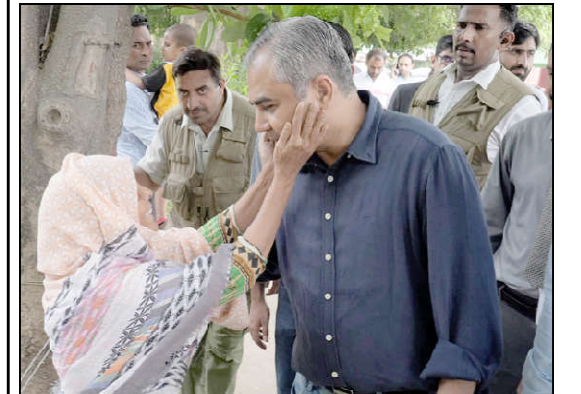
LAHORE (APP): On the order of the Ombudsman Punjab, Major (ret'd) Azam Suleman Khan, the outstanding dues amounting to Rs. 1,090,950 have been paid to the suppliers of different articles for Ramzan bazar of Sargodha district.

According to a spokesman of the office of Ombudsman, the complainant filed a complaint that he supplied sugar and oil for Ramzan bazar of Sargodha district, but even after the Ramzan,

the former Assistant Commissioner Sargodha did not pay him a single penny against the goods supplied.

The Ombudsman ordered to pay the outstanding dues to the complainants, in that any further delay.

The outstanding dues amounting to Rs 9,41,000 of similar kind of suppliers were also cleared by the district administration of Sargodha on the directions of Ombudsman Punjab.



LAHORE: Old age woman showing lovingness and praying for caretaker Chief Minister Punjab Mohsin Naqvi during his visit to Children Hospital.

IGP releases Rs. 2.4m funds for treatment of injured cops

LAHORE (APP): Inspector General Police Punjab Dr. Usman Anwar has released funds worth Rs. 2.4 million.

The applications received from various districts including Lahore were reviewed in detail by the Welfare Branch's Compensation Award Committee, after which 16 police officers and officials of various districts were approved for financial assistance of medical treatment.

On recommendations of the committee, IGP Punjab Dr. Usman Anwar

issued orders for release of funds of Rs. 2.4 million.

According to details, constables Raliq Hussain and Mohammad Javed were approved to give Rs. 3 lac each.

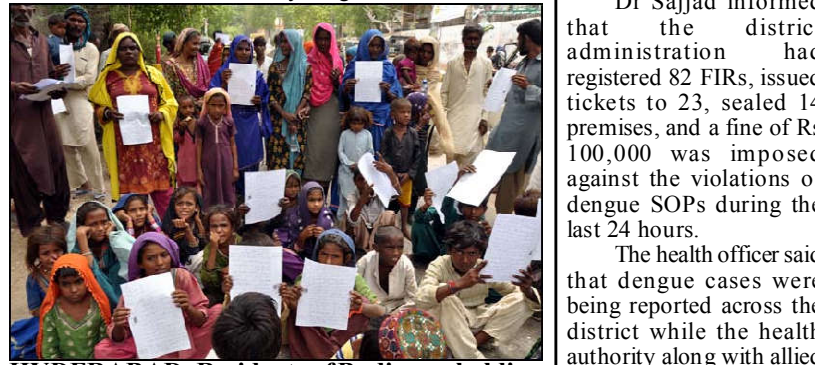
Likewise, constables Asif Ali, Safdar Ali, Waheed Anwar and Muhammad Usman were given 2 lac each. Whereas, Mureed Hussain, Falak, Muhammad Saifdar and Shaikat Ali, Muhammad Siddique, Nasr Javed, Muhammad Afzal, Abdul Rasheed and Mubarak Hussain were approved to give Rs. 1 lakh each.

CS GB says: GB govt actively ensuring provision of nourishing meals to school students

GILGIT (APP): "The Gilgit-Baltistan Government is actively ensuring the provision of nourishing meals to primary school students across Gilgit Baltistan as part of its School Khana Program," said Chief Secretary Gilgit Baltistan Muihudeen Wani in an official statement to media here Wednesday. He said this initiative aims to offer highly nutritious, cost-effective, and locally sourced food to all individuals. "Currently, the program has been extended to 75 schools, resulting in a remarkable 25 percent increase in enrollment, a rise in attendance from 60 percent to 95 percent and significant enhancements in students' BMI" the Chief

Secretary said. He added, today, a delegation from the World Food Program (WFP), led by Joyce Owigar, Head SO 2 and Yasir Ithasham, Program Policy Officer, met with me. He said it is with great pleasure that we announce the World Food Program's recognition of the diligent efforts made by the GB Government under its flagship project, the "School Khana Program."

He said this recognition has led to a collaborative agreement between the World Food Program and the Government of Gilgit Baltistan to further expand and enhance this commendable initiative in GB.



HYDERABAD: Residents of Badin are holding protest demonstration against high handedness of police and affluent people, at Hyderabad press club



JARANWALA: Federal Minister for Religious Affairs, Aneeq Ahmad, chairing a meeting Christian community and Muslim Ulama at AC Office on his visit to Jaranwala.

Jaranwala tragedy: Religious scholars, political leaders unite in Islamabad Declaration to promote harmony

ISLAMABAD (APP): The religious scholars representing various schools of thought and political leaders on Wednesday announced the 'Islamabad Declaration' to foster both interfaith and intra-faith harmony in response to the recent Jaranwala tragedy.

The joint conference took place at the 'Our Lady of Fatima Church' in the federal capital, where leaders from different backgrounds unequivocally condemned the appalling inci-

dent that occurred in Jaranwala and called for swift trials and exemplary punishment for those allegedly responsible for this inhumane act, underscoring their commitment to justice.

The collective leadership also issued a demand for the government to conduct an impartial and thorough investigation into the incident emphasizing to make its findings public, and to ensure transparency and accountability.

Addressing the grievances of the affected individuals would contribute to the collective healing process.

The religious and political leaders extended their gratitude to Caretaker Prime Minister Anwar-ul-Kakar and nominated Chief Justice Qazi Faez Isa for their visit to the site of the incident, along with Chief of Army Staff General Syed Asim Munir's statement expressing deep concern over the disgraceful events in Jaranwala.

Infrastructure Projects play crucial role in improving connectivity: Sami Saeed

ISLAMABAD (Online): Caretaker Federal Minister Muhammad Sami Saeed convened performance review meetings on the functions of infrastructure development and Monitoring & Evaluation Wings.

In the meeting, Mr. Waqas Anwar, Member Infrastructure delivered a detailed overview of projects spanning diverse sectors in transportation and communication.

The Minister stressed that Infrastructure Projects play key role in improving connectivity and in meeting the challenges posed by Climate change and Water scarcity. He added that building resilient and weather-resistant infrastructure to embrace the climate induced calamities is the need of the hour.

In another subsequent meeting that reviewed the

progress evaluation of the Monitoring and Evaluation Wing, Dr. Zahir Shah, the respective Member, and Project Director M & E, presented a thorough briefing on real-time project monitoring and evaluation.

The presentation also underscored the Intelligent Project Automation System and outlined forthcoming action plans. It was highlighted that with the integration of technology, impact analysis of development projects has become mandatory under directions issued by the Central Development Working Party for comprehensive project assessment.

Caretaker Federal Minister Muhammad Sami Saeed expressed his resolve and commitment to continue the development endeavours, stated that

Progress and Development warrants harnessing and optimal utilization of resources with an entrenched Monitoring and Evaluation mechanism in place.

The Minister appreciated that Monitoring and Evaluation wing of the Ministry of Planning and Development function is commendable as it laid the groundwork to employ Information Technology that will improve the quality and timeliness in Monitoring and Evaluation.

He added that in a resource constraint environment, robust Monitoring and Evaluation mechanism is indispensable in improving the effectiveness of Development expenditure. The Minister also emphasized to accelerate the pace of implementation and ensure the quality of execution.



ISLAMABAD: Abdul Karim Jamali, CEO QESCO, Quetta calling on Chairman Senate, Muhammad Sadiq Sanjrani at Parliament House.

Governor Balochistan assures: Steps to be taken to make procedure of financial aid for poor people: Governor

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Governor Balochistan, Malik Abdul Wali Khan Kakar has stated that steps would be taken for making the procedure of getting financial assistance for poor people easier under the Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP).

The Governor was speaking to the Director General BISP, Abdul Jabbar who called on him here at the Governor House on Wednesday.

The Governor applauded the untiring efforts of DG BISP for providing financial assistance to the poor and deserving segments of the society. He

said that it is matter of great satisfaction for us that the financial assistance is provided to the poor people under BISP.

He said that the BISP's basic objective is to improve standard of living of the marginalized groups and especially those living below the poverty line.

He on the occasion said that the concerned institutions would be approached for providing benefits of the programme to the people living in scattered areas of the province.

In this regard, our every possible cooperation would remain with the BISP, adding he assured.



QUETTA: Activists of National Party (NP) are holding protest demonstration against attack on Mir Douran Khan Khosa and demanding justice for him, at Quetta Press Club.

Domki opens monsoon tree plantation campaign by planting Quetta Pine sapling

ISLAMABAD (APP): The caretaker Chief Minister, Mir Ali Mardan Khan Domki inaugurated the Monsoon tree plantation campaign in the province on Wednesday.

He planted the sapling of Quetta pine in the Chief Minister's secretariat marking launch of the campaign all over the province.

Also present were the Secretary Forests Department, Noor Muhammad Pirani and other concerned high ups. Speaking on the occasion, the caretaker Chief Minister said that planting a tree is a sadaqa-e-jaria. He said that the challenges of climate change can be coped with through tree plantation.

He stressed that we have to ensure protection

and increase of forests all over the province.

He directed to the concerned high ups to create necessary awareness among general public about taking part in the tree plantation campaign. He also said that it is necessary to look after and care the plants after their plantation.

Earlier, the caretaker Chief Minister was informed that some 400,000 trees would be planted on Wednesday all over the province. Meanwhile, the Chief Secretary Shakeel Qadir Khan also planted a sapling in the civil secretariat the same morning.

Also present on the occasion were the Secretary Forests, Noor Muhammad Pirani, Secretary S&GAD, Babar Khan besides others.

Aneeq says: Govt to fully protect minorities' rights

FAISALABAD (APP): Caretaker Federal Minister for Religious Affairs & Interfaith Harmony Aneeq Ahmad said on Wednesday the government would fully protect the rights of minorities by penalizing the culprits involved in Jaranwala riots.

Talking to the media during his visit to Jaranwala, he said that minorities were an integral part of Pakistan as the national flag reflected existence of minorities, whereas the Constitution of Pakistan also provided guarantee to protect their rights.

He condemned the

Jaranwala incident and quoted reference of different Quranic verses and Ahadis

in which the Muslims were emphasized to defend rights of the minorities. He said that Jaranwala tragedy was a deep-rooted conspiracy hatched to create rift among the Muslim and the Christians. However, the government and other law enforcing agencies took immediate action and foiled nefarious designs of miscreants, he added.

He said that Islam is a religion of peace and it always promoted tranquility and brotherhood.

Sanjrani, CEO Qesco discuss issues relating efficient power supply to Balochistan

ISLAMABAD (INP): Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Quetta Electric Power Supply (Qesco) Abdul Karim Jamali on Wednesday held a productive meeting with Chairman Senate Muhammad Sadiq Sanjrani to address critical matters concerning the efficient power supply to Balochistan.

Comprehensive discussion on the pressing issues pertaining to the uninterrupted and reliable supply of electricity to the province was held in between the two. Qesco chief presented their strategies and initiatives aimed at enhancing the power distribution infrastructure in

Balochistan to cater to the growing energy demands of the region.

Muhammad Sadiq Sanjrani acknowledged the significance of a stable power supply for the socio-economic development of Balochistan. He lauded Qesco's efforts to improve their services and infrastructure, highlighting the need for collaborative efforts between governmental bodies and power utilities to ensure the well-being and progress of the province's residents.

The meeting emphasized the importance of aligning strategies to overcome challenges and achieve the common goal of deliv

PPP delegation calls on PM

KARACHI (APP): A delegation comprising the leaders of the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) Wednesday called on Caretaker Prime Minister Anwar-ul-Haq Kakar here. The members of the delegation apprised the prime minister of the problems confronting Sindh particularly Karachi.

The delegation consisted of Karachi Mayor Murtaza Wahab, Qaim Ali Shah, Syed Murad Ali Shah and Saeed Ghani.



QUETTA: Former Provincial Ministers Mir Arif Jan Muhammadhassani, Mir Zahoor Buledi and Mir Saleem Ahmed Khosa meeting with caretaker Chief Minister Balochistan Mir Ali Mardan Kha Domki

PPP playing role for dev. of country: Ghazala

QUETTA (APP): Pakistan People's Party (PPP) Balochistan Women's Wing President Ghazala Gola and General Secretary Zarina Zehri on Wednesday said that the PPP was playing due role to put the country on track of development.

PPP's workers should prepare for the general elections in order to win the upcoming election with majority seats in Balochistan, they underlined.

They expressed these views while talking to a delegation of women called on here.

Both leaders said that the PPP was the party of martyrs and ghazis, Bilawal Bhutto Zardari bring employment to the people.

Security forces kill active terrorist in Ladha fire exchange

RAWALPINDI (APP): The security forces have killed an active terrorist during an exchange of fire in Ladha in the general area of South Waziristan District.

The army troops effectively engaged the terrorists and resultantly one of them was sent to hell, an Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR) news release said. Weapon and ammunition was also recovered from the killed terrorist, who remained actively involved in various terrorist activities in the area, it said.

Secretary Information says Access to information is basic element of any democratic society

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Secretary Information Department, Hamza Shafiqat has stated that the Right to Information Balochistan Act 2021 has been prepared and the establishment of Information Commission is in its final stages.

The Secretary Information was speaking at the closing ceremony of two-day awareness workshop for the public information officers organized by AID Balochistan in collaboration with Information Department here on Wednesday.

He said that access to information is the basic element of any democratic society. He said that under the RTI Act, any citizen of the province has the right to acquire information from any department or institution. While the provincial departments and institutions would be bound to provide the required information to the applicants

under the relevant law, he maintained.

The Secretary Information appreciated the efforts of AID Balochistan for creating awareness among the general public about RTI law and imparting training to the public information officers.

Meanwhile, he distributed certificates among participants of the workshop. Earlier, the master trainer of workshop, Mir Behram Lehri, Mir Behram Baloch, Muhammad Asif, Syed Raza Ali, Rana Asan and Horain talking about different aspects of the RTI Balochistan Act.

The Executive Director Adil Jahangir praised the efforts of Secretary Information for formation of the Information Commission in the province.

It may be mentioned here that public information officers and other concerned staff of 13 departments participated in the workshop.



QUETTA: Secretary Information Muhammad Hamza Shafiqat giving away certificate to master trainer Mir Behram Lehri after conclusion of RTI workshop



QUETTA: Chief Minister Balochistan Mir Ali Mardan Kha Domki being briefed about affairs of department of Home and Tribal Affairs. Caretaker Home Minister and Chief Secretary are also present

UN Pak launches dialogue drive ahead of SDG summit

ISLAMABAD (APP): Ahead of the International Summit on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in New York next month, the United Nations in Pakistan on Wednesday launched a dialogue campaign with stakeholders across the country. The UN office in Islamabad will engage more than 1,000 local leaders living in 12 major cities outside of the federal and provincial capitals to discuss development priorities across the country.

In total, more than 1,000 local leaders living in 12 major cities across six provinces and territories will discuss the development challenges they face, and how they impede economic and social progress in their districts, a press release on Wednesday said.

The dialogues will be held in the different languages spoken across Pakistan in the coming weeks.

"These dialogues will help United Nations agencies better understand which development issues local leaders see as their priorities outside of the federal and provincial capitals," said Julien Hameis, UN Resident Coordinator in Pakistan.

PML-N forms 7-member delegation for ECP consultation

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan Muslim League-N (PML-N) has constituted a seven-member team to engage in discussions with the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) regarding consultations on electoral procedures.

In a statement, Marriyung Aurangzeb, the party's Secretary of Information, said the Election Commission Secretary has officially invited the Pakistan Muslim League (N) for discussions on electoral procedures, which are scheduled for August 25 at 11 a.m.

Comprising seven members, the delegation includes Ahsan Iqbal, the Secretary General of PML-N, Senator Azam Nazir Tarar, Zahid Hamid, Khawaja Saad Rafiq, Rana Sanaulah Khan, Engineer Amir Maqam (Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Presidents respectively), and Attaullah Tarar, Deputy Secretary General will visit ECP on Friday for consultations.

Four killed, 3 injured over financial dispute in Lakki Marwat

LAKKI MARWAT (Online): As many as 4 people died as a result of clash between two groups over money dispute in Lakki Marwat.

According to policemen, two groups exchanged fire in a fair in Lakki Marwat as a result of which 4 people lost their lives and 3 people were also injured in the firing.

Policemen said that firing took place over a dispute over money transactions. Dead bodies and injured were shifted to hospital.

Policemen started raids to arrest the suspects.

For free, fair elections in Balochistan CM directs concerned high ups to provide peaceful environment

Independent Report

QUETTA: The caretaker Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Ali Mardan Khan Domki has stated that it is main job of the caretaker government to provide peaceful environment for the free and fair elections in the province.

He directed the concerned authorities to take practical steps for providing base to conduct free and fair elections in peaceful environment.

These directives were issued by the caretaker Chief Minister while chairing a high level meeting held about the overall functioning of Home and Tribal Affairs Department, here on Wednesday.

The Provincial Minister for Home, Captain (Retd) Zubair Jamali, Chief Secretary, Shakeel Qadir Khan, Additional Chief Secretary Home, Saleh

Muhammad Nasar, Inspector General of Police, Abdul Khalique Sheikh and other concerned senior officials were present in the meeting.

The meeting was briefed about departmental affairs of the Home and Tribal Affairs department besides coordination of the department with other departments and their functions.

The meeting was also briefed about the performance of police force and its special units.

Speaking on the occasion, Mir Ali Mardan Domki said that it is job of the interim government to provide peaceful environment for conducting the elections in transparent manner.

For the purpose, it is necessary for the Home department to perform better, adding he stressed.

It Pakistan-KSA Joint Special Forces Exercise AL BATTAR-I begins

RAWALPINDI (APP): The First Pakistan-KSA Joint Special Forces Exercise AL BATTAR-I began on Wednesday with opening ceremony at Cherat.

The special forces of Pakistan and Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) are participating in the two-week long exercise, an Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) news release said.

The exercise is aimed at further harnessing the historic military to military relations between the two countries, including nurturing of joint employment concept and identifying ar-

reas of mutual interest for future military collaboration, with a view to accrue maximum benefits from each other's experience in employment against terrorism.

The national anthems of both countries were played at the start of the ceremony. Senior officials from the two armed forces were present on the occasion.

Such joint military exercises between armies of the two brotherly countries were aimed at enhancing existing bilateral relations and benefiting from each other's experience, ISPR said.



ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Federal Minister for Health Dr. Nadeem Jan addressing on the seminar regarding breast feeding.

Samina calls on American Chief Shelly Saxon

QUETTA (APP): Senator Samina Mumtaz Zehri and American Political and Economic Chief Shelly Saxon held a vital meeting at the American Consulate on Wednesday.

During a meeting, both leaders discussed various topics, especially women's representation in political parties and being the women's representative of Balochistan Awami Party, general elections, Balochistan politics.

There was a lively discussion about the role of Balochistan Awami Party (BAP) and the party as an emerging political force.

Earlier, American Political and Economic Chief Shelly Saxon welcomed Samina Mumtaz Zehri on her arrival at the American Consulate.

While discussing on this occasion, Shelly Saxon appreciated the political and social services of Senator Samina Mumtaz Zehri.

Senator Samina Mumtaz Zehri informed to US Political and Economic Chief Shelly Saxon about the role of women in Balochistan politics and the role of women in the BAP as an emerging political force.

She said that many women have been appointed to high positions in Pakistan including Balochistan in the past and have performed their duties well.

She said that BAP believed in democratic values and the focus of our politics is the welfare of the people and equal rapid development.