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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 mar-

tyrs. 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 actu-

ally 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..."



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



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

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

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-1 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 on 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.

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

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 de-

clined 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.

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.

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. Soon after the incident, security personnel cordoned off the area and launch search operation against the miscreants.

Trial court hastened Toshakhana verdict; observes CJP

SC bench asks IHC to consider PTI chief's contentions against trial court's jurisdiction, maintainability of complaint

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.

by CJP Umar Ata Bandial Wednesday. The other two members of bench are Justice Mazahar 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 assets in nomination papers.

Latif Khosa said member of parliament is bound to file details of his, his wife and children assets in EC till December 31 every year. He held 6 MNAs sent reference against chairman PTI to speaker National Assembly (NA) wherein he was charged with filing false declaration of his assets. Speaker sent this reference to EC. Counsel for chairman PTI read out section 4 and 137 of election act on being inquired by Justice Mazahar Ali Akbar Naqvi. He said EC can take action within 120 days. Justice Mazahar Naqvi inquired can one member of parliament send reference against the

other member. Latif Khosa replied no member can send reference. EC too can take action within a stipulated time. Justice Jamal Khan Mandokhail inquired if your appeal is accepted, trial court has already announced its decision. Then case will go where. Latif Khosa said we have challenged legal position also. Justice Mazahar Naqvi remarked you have not challenged the legal position of complaint then what you are saying. Latif Khosa said we have challenged legal position of complaint only. Justice Jamal Mandokhail inquired your case is not pending in trial

court. We will send case where after hearing it. Latif Khosa said SC can nullify all this exercise. Munshi of Khawaja Haris was also kidnapped on the day of decision. The access to justice was stopped. The CJP inquired did you attach summary of facts with the petition. What do you say that the complaint should have gone to magistrate instead of additional session. Justice Jamal Mandokhail remarked the present case is not this that could the reference against chairman PTI be sent or otherwise. You have come against the decision of IHC. Toshakhana central cases has been decided. Was it challenged.

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 Sherwangi 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.



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

'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 talk show, he said all political parties had the freedom to present their viewpoint. "Criticisms is their democratic right, we cannot take this right from them. We are not in favour 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." "The Election Commission of Pakistan is a constitutional body which had the responsibility to conduct free, transparent, and impartial elections." "We will abide by our oath, we cannot think of violating it at any stage", Murtaza Solangi said. The government had no news of hopelessness and there should not be suspicion of breach of promise, he added.

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 Jilil 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.

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 Elec-

tion 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. Similarly, the commission will also consult over the issues of constituencies' delimitations and voter lists as well. The process of consulting the political parties will be initiated in next few days, sources added. He said the PML-N, the PPP, the PTI, the MQM, the JI, the ANP, the JUIF and all other major political parties will be taken onboard.



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

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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

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 combating 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 Eastern 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-

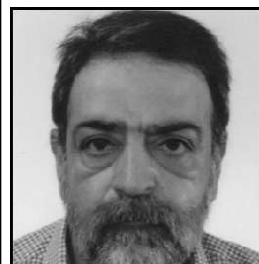
tonomy. However, the fact is that the global economy makes it nearly impossible for struggling economies with high levels of debt to make very many independent choices.

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 expenses, 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. Raves 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.

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

KARACHI (APP): Renowned Actor Zahir Lehrion Wednesday called on Caretaker Prime Minister Anwar-ul-Haq Kakar on Wednesday met Interim Sindh Chief Minister Maqbool Baqar 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.

Punjab Governor says: Jaranwala incident is very painful and reprehensible

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 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.

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.

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.

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



GILGIT: Deputy Speaker Gilgit-Baltistan Assembly Sadia Danish and Minister Finance Gilgit-Baltistan Engineer Ismail giving away flower bouquet to the newly elected member of GB Assembly Jamil Ahmad at Assembly Secretariat.

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

GILGIT (APP): "The 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

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.

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

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.

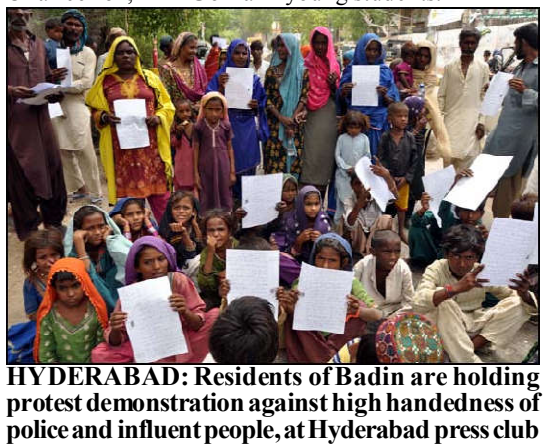
He said 35 patients were admitted to City's allied hospitals, out of which 24 were confirmed cases while 77 were discharged after treatment. Dr Sajjad informed that the district administration had registered 82 FIRs, issued tickets to 23, sealed 14 premises, and a fine of Rs 100,000 was imposed against 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.

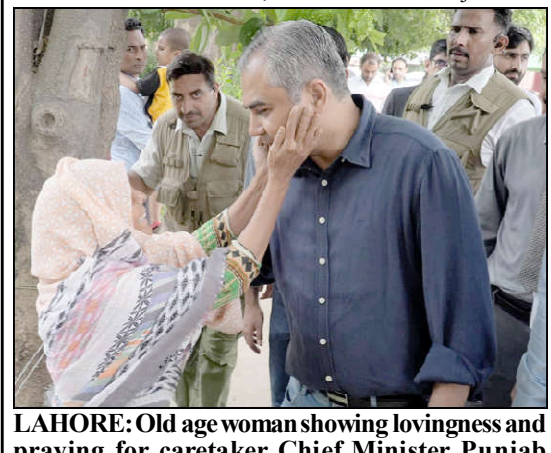
Ombudsman Punjab provides relief of Rs. 1.09 mln to Ramzan bazar suppliers

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,



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



LAHORE: Old age woman showing lovingness and praying for caretaker Chief Minister Punjab Moin Nasir 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 Rafiq 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.

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 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.

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.

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



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

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

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 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.

UN Pak launches dialogue drive ahead of SDG summit

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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.

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 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.



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

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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).

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



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



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

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.

Domki opens monsoon tree plantation campaign by planting Quetta Pine sapling

and increase of forests II 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.

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.

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 Zhari on Wednesday said that the PPP was playing due role to put the country on track of development.

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

QUETTA: 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.

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.

Samina calls on American Political & Economic 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.

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

Security forces kill active terrorist in Ladhra fire exchange

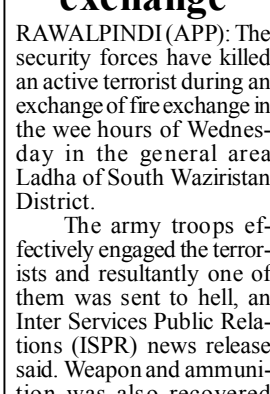
RAWALPINDI (APP): The security forces have killed an active terrorist during an exchange of fire exchange in the wee hours of Wednesday in the general area Ladhra of South Waziristan District.

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