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Rangers called Mob vandalises several churches, homes in Jaranwala over blasphemy allegations

Caretaker PM vows strict action against culprits; Dozens arrested; There was a plan to disturb peace by inciting public sentiments, says Mir; PML-N's Shehbaz Sharif, PPP's Bilawal Bhutto condemn incident.

Monitoring Desk

LAHORE: Multiple churches were attacked on Wednesday in Jaranwala tehsil of Faisalabad over blasphemy allegations. Media reports stated that a mob of over 100 people stormed a local Christian neighbourhood in Jaranwala and set ablaze at least one church, the Salvation Army Church, one of the oldest in the area. The United Presbyterian Church, Allied Foundation Church and Shehroonwala Church situated in Isa Nagri were also reportedly ransacked.

Locals accused the police of standing by as spectators as hundreds of people, armed with sticks and batons, vandalised the

churches besides ransacking and even burning homes in the residential area.

As panic spread in the area, traders shut down shops and a strike was called. The situation remained tense despite policemen led by the Jaranwala SP being present on site. The mob also blocked the area surrounding Cinema Chowk.

The police attempted to give assurances of action against the blasphemy accused but the mob remained adamant that they would hang the accused themselves.

The mob was reportedly incited using loudspeakers of mosques in the area over reports of alleged desecration of religious

scriptures by three Christians, suggested videos and messages posted on social media by people of the area.

Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar on Wednesday directed law enforcement agencies to apprehend culprits behind the vandalisation of churches in Jaranwala, Faisalabad over blasphemy allegations.

"I am gutted by the visuals coming out of Jaranwala, Faisalabad. Stern action would be taken against those who violate law and target minorities," said Kakar in a post on X, the microblogging website formerly known as Twitter.

The interim premier also said that all law enforcement agencies have

asked to "apprehend culprits and bring them to justice".

"Rest assured that the government of Pakistan stands with our citizenry on equal basis," he added.

Shehbaz, Bilawal condemn incident. Former prime minister Shehbaz Sharif also slammed the incident, saying: "What is happening in Jaranwala is sad and disturbing."

"There is no place for violence in any religion. All religious places, books and personages are sacred and deserve our highest level of respect. I urge the government to take action against the culprits," the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) president added.

The former premier also appealed to the "religious scholars from all schools of thought to come forward and condemn the reprehensible actions".

"Such madness can't be allowed. Pakistan belongs to all religious minorities," Shehbaz said on X.

Meanwhile, Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) Chairman Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari also condemned the incident.

"Horried to hear about the attack on Churches in Jaranwala, Faisalabad, violating the sanctity of places of worship is absolutely unacceptable. The administration must ensure the safety of the Christian community and their Churches," Bilawal said on X.



FAISALABAD: View of site after a mob enraged over blasphemy allegations set on fire several churches and a number of houses belonging to Christians in Jaranwala tehsil of Faisalabad.

SIFC to continue working uninterrupted for fast-track foreign investment: PM

Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar thanks Saudi Govt for consistent support to Pakistan's economic stability; Saudi Envoy felicitates Kakar on assuming office, conveys best wishes

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar on Wednesday said that the recently-instituted Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC) would continue to work as before to lay the foundations to fast-track foreign investments, particularly from Saudi Arabia.

The prime minister, in a meeting with Saudi Ambassador Nawaf bin Saeed Ahmad Al-Malkiy, who called on him, highlighted energy, infrastructure, agriculture, IT and manpower as potential sectors of co-

operation. The Saudi ambassador congratulated the prime minister on assuming office and conveyed the best wishes and greetings on behalf of the Custodian of Two Holy Mosques, as well as Crown Prince Mohammed Bin Salman, and the people of Saudi Arabia.

The prime minister said that Pakistan and Saudi Arabia enjoyed historical and deep-rooted ties.

He thanked the Saudi government for its consistent support for Pakistan's

economic stability and development.

He particularly mentioned the large number of Pakistanis working in Saudi Arabia and requested the Saudi side to continue to extend all possible facilitation to them.

Ambassador Nawaf reiterated that Saudi Arabia and Pakistan were bound together in a fraternal relationship, which was characterized by mutual trust and understanding, and close cooperation on all bilateral and regional issues of common interest.



ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Saudi Arabia, Nawaf bin Saeed Al-Malkiy calls on Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar.

US looks forward to working with PM Kakar, his team

WASHINGTON (APP): The United States, noting the appointment of Senator Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar as Pakistan's interim prime minister, has reaffirmed its support in areas of mutual interest, including the conduct of free and fair elections, State Department Deputy Spokesperson Vedant Patel said on Tuesday.

Responding to a question from the correspondent of a private Pakistani television channel at his daily press briefing, the spokesperson said that the U.S. looks forward to working with the interim

prime minister and his team.

"We, of course, will continue to partner with Pakistan on areas of mutual interest, including our interest in Pakistan's economic stability, prosperity, and security, and the conduct of free and fair elections and the respect for democracy and the rule of law."

Kakar was sworn in on Monday as the prime minister to head a caretaker government that will oversee parliamentary elections during the country's most challenging period in the economic field.

JI announces countrywide protest against spike in petroleum prices

LAHORE (INP): Jamat-e-Islami (JI) Emir Sirjul Haq on Wednesday gave a call for holding countrywide protest against the whooping increase in petroleum prices on Friday.

Haq said the caretaker government had endorsed the unjust policies of the outgoing coalition government by increasing the prices of petrol and diesel.

Calling it an injustice to the poor people of the country, he said the rulers were putting pressure on them to please the International Monetary Fund

(IMF). He urged the caretaker government to provide relief to the masses.

The JI chief also asked people to join his party's peaceful protest against the petroleum prices.

The caretaker government on Tuesday increased the price of petrol by Rs17.50 per litre, taking the price to a record high of Rs290.45 per litre.

The price of high speed diesel was also increased by Rs20 per litre. After the increase, high speed diesel will be available at Rs293.40 per litre.

Case registered against Imran on misplacement of cipher

ISLAMABAD (Online): Case has been registered against PTI chairman on the matter of misplacement of cipher.

Anti terrorism wing of FIA has registered the case. DIG level officers appointed in Anti terrorism wing are holding inquiry.

Imran Khan had made mention of misplacement of cipher during an interview.

This matter took the steam when the US magazine intercept in its August 9 publication claimed that a copy of cipher which Imran Khan had mentioned is held by it.

SC to hear case against NAB law amendments on Aug 18

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Supreme Court on Wednesday fixed the cases pertaining to amendments in the NAB Ordinance for hearing on August 18.

The SC bench headed by Chief Justice of Pakistan Umar Ata Bandial and comprising Justice Ijaz ul Ahsan and Justice Mansoor Ali Shah, will take up the case filed by the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) chairman for hearing.

The apex court has so far conducted a total of 47 hearings of the case.



ISLAMABAD: Secretary Foreign Affairs, Dr. Asad Majeed Khan paid a farewell call on President Dr. Arif Alvi at Aiwan-e-Sadr.

SC wraps up chairman PTI plea for recounting

ISLAMABAD (Online): Supreme Court (SC) has wrapped up chairman PTI petition seeking court's orders for recounting in the constituency NA-131 Lahore being in-fructuous.

The petition came up for hearing before a two members bench of SC presided over by the Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) Umar Ata Bandial Wednesday.

The CJP while addressing Babar Awan counsel for PTI chairman remarked during the hearing of the case the appeal plea

seeking recounting has become in-fructuous.

The counsel for chairman PTI said yes sir it has become in-fructuous.

He said if I am permitted I may obtain new directives from chairman PTI on this matter. The CJP replied national assembly has been dissolved. What can be done on this matter when national assembly has been dissolved. Therefore, we should wait for new election. The counsel for PTI chairman said we are waiting for new election impatiently.

2 terrorists killed in IBO in Razmak: ISPR

RAWALPINDI (INP): Two terrorists were killed by security forces in an intelligence-based operation in the Razmak area of North Waziristan district, the military's media wing said on Wednesday.

According to a statement issued by the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR), the operation was conducted on the reported presence of terrorists on the night of August 14/15.

While carrying out the operation, security forces surrounded the terrorists' location and after an intense exchange of fire, "two terrorists were sent to hell", the ISPR said.

Weapons and ammunition were recovered from the slain terrorists, the statement

said, adding that they "remained actively involved in terrorist activities against security forces as well as extortion and target killing of innocent citizens".

Sanitisation of the area was being carried out to eliminate any other terrorists found in the area, it said. "Locals of the area appreciated the operation and expressed their full support to eliminate the menace of terrorism," said the army's media affairs wing.

The security operation comes as Pakistan faces an uptick in terrorist activities, especially in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Balochistan, after the outlawed TIP ended its ceasefire with the government in November last year.

Foreign Secretary Asad Majeed pays farewell call on President Alvi

ISLAMABAD (APP): Secretary of Foreign Affairs Dr Asad Majeed Khan on Wednesday paid a farewell call on President Dr Arif Alvi here at the Aiwan-e-Sadr.

The president congratulated Dr Asad Majeed Khan on the successful completion of his term as the 31st foreign secretary.

He appreciated the services of the outgoing foreign secretary for promoting Pakistan's stance on different matters.

President Alvi also lauded the foreign secretary's professional competence and initiatives on the diplomatic fronts.

He also expressed good wishes for Dr Asad Majeed Khan for his post-retirement life.

Violent extremism struggle for power transgressing many red lines: Sherry Rehman

ISLAMABAD (APP): Former Federal Minister and Senior PPP leader Senator Sherry Rehman on Wednesday said that violent extremism was a struggle for power, and that many red lines had been crossed by the proliferation of hateful narratives.

Senator Rehman stated this at the launch of the research report 'Beyond the Red Line: Contemporary Trends in Conflict Discourse in Pakistan' by Communications Research Strategies (CRS) here, a news release said.

The report was prepared under the 'Conflict Discourse Mapping', a project by CRS, with support from the United States Institute of Peace (USIP). Experts from various sectors attended the event. Senator Sherry Rehman was the chief guest, while the panelists included Dr Adnan Rafiq, Member - Planning Commission of Pakistan, Amber Shamsi, Director - Center for Excellence in Journalism IBA and Fasi Zaka, a senior development expert.

NA Speaker lauds role of journalists in strengthening democracy

ISLAMABAD (Online): Speaker National Assembly Raja Pervez Ashraf has said that the role of media community to further the cause of democracy is pivotal for socio-economic development of country.

He also said that both journalism and politics are intertwined and it is incumbent upon both stakeholders to cooperate with one another for country's progress. He also said that the real power of Media is Journalists and reporter as these are foot soldiers.

He expressed these views while addressing members of Parliamentary Reporters Association (PRA) in Parliament House Islamabad today.

National Assembly Speaker Raja Pervez Ashraf

also said, "PRA role is to bring Parliament and people closer." He also said that maintaining sanctity of parliament is a collective responsibility and PRA members have utmost importance in this regard. He said that media representatives and journalist community have central role to highlight positive image of Parliamentarians and Parliament.

While mentioning about record legislation in the best public interest, he said, "as per FAFEN report I have the honour for supervising record sittings of National Assembly and for record legislation during last fifteen months." He stressed on the need to emphasize highlighting positive images by media.



ISLAMABAD: PRA President, Sadique Sajid presents appreciation shield to Speaker National Assembly Raja Pervez Ashraf for his support to PRA and for welfare of journalist community at Parliament House.

FIA opens inquiries in cases of mega corruption

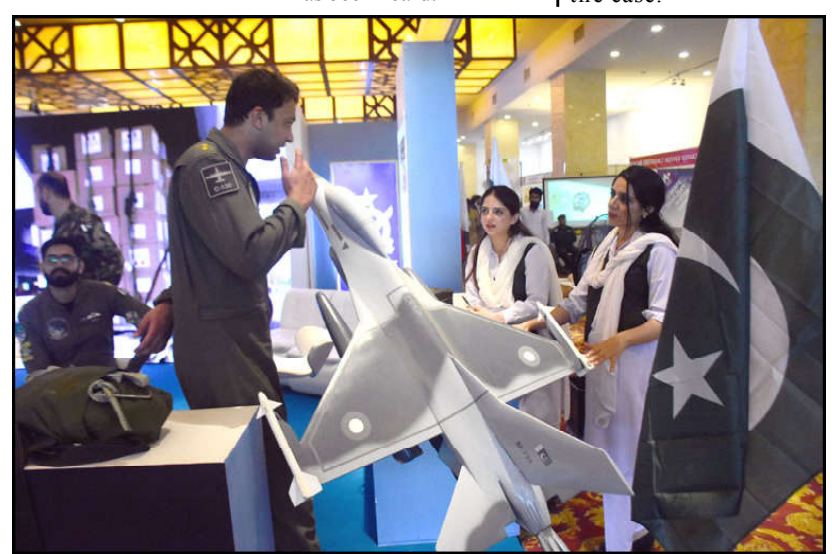
ISLAMABAD (INP): The Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) on Wednesday initiated inquiries in four cases of mega corruption.

The Agency has started inquiries against several banks for opening LCs at a US dollar rate higher than what it is in the interbank.

It has emerged that eight banks minted over 65 billion only in this fashion. Similarly, the FIA has also started an inquiry into alleged embezzlement of Rs32 billion in the purchase of land for M-6 of the motorway by the concerned district administration.

has also started probe into alleged corruption in the distribution of relief goods dispatched to the flood-affected areas for their distribution among victims of the calamity.

The department has sought from the concerned departments an audit report of the relief items handed to flood-affected people in different districts of Sindh, including Sanghar and Dadu. Similarly, alleged embezzlement of 1.8 million bags of flour in the 'Muft Aata Scheme' has also prompted an inquiry. The FIA has started these inquiries when Senator Saifullah Abro pointed out alleged corruption in these cases.



ISLAMABAD: Students are being briefed by the representative of Pak Air force about Aircrafts during "3rd International Property and Construction Industry Expo" in connection with the Independence Day at Pak China Friendship center in Federal Capital.

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On a tightrope

With the country now in election mode, all eyes will be on the Election Commission of Pakistan, which must ensure that the upcoming polls are held fairly and on time.

The watchdog will be walking a tightrope due to the last-minute notification of fresh census results by the former PDM government, which has necessitated the fresh delimitation of constituencies.

The prevalent belief is that the ECP will not be able to complete the delimitation while meeting the election time frame stipulated in the Constitution. At the same time, recent developments have restricted the space for any legal manoeuvring.

It may be recalled that a three-member bench of the apex court had, earlier this month, issued a detailed judgement castigating the ECP's decision to postpone elections for the Punjab and KP assemblies as 'unconstitutional'. The judgement in question had severely rebuked the ECP for "failing to appreciate its constitutional authority" over its failure to hold elections on time.

A week later, the court also struck down a law that would have allowed the ECP to seek a review of that judgement. Yesterday, the court weighed in on the delimitation of constituencies as a two-member bench heard a 2018 petition on the same matter. Observing that the ECP must conduct the exercise in a transparent manner, the chief justice, who was part of the bench, described the issue as "a matter of public interest", which has been brought to the Supreme Court multiple times.

With the legal noose tightening around the ECP's neck, it must also contend with the complications of the task before it. According to an analysis published in these pages, the delimitation exercise will likely end up affecting dozens of districts at the provincial level.

As there is no National Assembly to simply increase the number of seats in the provincial assemblies to reflect changes in the population, the ECP may have to redistribute existing seats between different districts within provinces. It may also have to create new constituencies such that parts of one district may share a constituency with parts of another.

Either of these could trigger a political uproar and lead to multiple new legal challenges, which would imperil the timely completion of the entire exercise. Amidst all this, the ECP must also undertake the delicate task of drawing up new constituencies.

Gerrymandering, which is the manipulation of constituency boundaries to alter their political makeup and thereby 'control' election results, will remain a particularly important concern, especially considering that other forms of pre-election engineering are also very much in play.

The ECP must, therefore, take all stakeholders along and ensure complete transparency in its work. With the law breathing down its neck, it cannot let external factors delay the election exercise.



Zahid Hussain

The long suspense over the appointment of the interim prime minister finally ended with the nomination of a dark horse. The choice took even members of the ruling coalition by surprise. The name of Senator Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar for the top post is said to have been proposed by the outgoing leader of the opposition and agreed to by the former prime minister.

But the matter is not as simple as we are made to believe. The way the name of the senator from Balochistan popped up from nowhere leaves nothing to the imagination. Given Kakar's political affiliation and patronage, it is not hard to guess whose choice he is. The elevation of a protégé to the helm signals the country's transition from hybrid rule to a vir-

tual praetorian takeover with a civilian façade.

There is not even a pretence of neutrality with the launch of 'Project Kakar'. It also raises questions about elections being held on time. Even if they are held, the fairness of the polls will remain in doubt under a pliant interim arrangement. The lengthening shadow of the security establishment renders prospects of a democratic transition uncertain. There is an element of truth to BNP leader Akhtar Mengal's criticism, in response to Kakar's nomination, that politicians turn to the establishment even for those challenges they should resolve politically.

My first introduction to Kakar came during a seminar on Balochistan in Quetta in early 2017. He was one of the organisers of the conference. What drew my attention was the comments he made on my talk at one of the sessions. He vehemently disputed my assertion on missing persons. "Why do you only talk about missing persons?" he asked, in front of the military top brass sitting in the front row.

This apparent defence of the security agencies may not have been without purpose; he was soon appointed spokesman for the then chief minister. Meanwhile, he had also set up an NGO called Voice of Balochistan.

He entered the political limelight following his key role in the formation of the Balochistan Awami Party in 2018. The role of the security establishment in the creation of the king's party is not a secret. The same year, he became a senator. His political ascent in such a short period was quite remarkable. He projected the establishment's point of view on national and international policy issues from public forums and channels. Nonetheless, his affability and articulation won him many friends among Islamabad's political circles. This may have been an added factor in his nomination.

But the entire episode of selection of interim prime minister manifests the feebleness of our political leadership that abdicated its remit so meekly. The series of legislation enacted by the

ruling coalition has not only empowered the caretaker government whose constitutional responsibility was limited to supervising elections, but also provided sweeping powers to the security agencies strengthening the establishment's stranglehold.

In fact, in the last 16 months we have experienced a hybrid-plus rule. The inclusion of the army leadership in a supra-body spearheading the country's economic and investment policies has enhanced the military's political role and put the security establishment in the driving seat.

Instead of selecting a non-partisan person to head the interim administration with the consensus of political parties, it seems that the former government has accepted the nominee of a security institution. The former ruling alliance has helped create a situation that will soon come back to haunt it.

Akhtar Mengal in a letter to the PML-N chief cautioned that "Legislation contrary to human rights will probably be used against you in the future, [we know] because we, the

residents of Balochistan, have not been considered human beings since day one." But his warning went unheeded by the PDM leadership.

Surprisingly, the PTI also tacitly approved Kakar's nomination, perhaps assuming that it would isolate the PDM, while not realising that the security establishment's expanding power would not help ease pressure on the party. Such politics of expediency and shortsightedness are nothing new in our political culture. Interestingly, with only a few voices of protest from some Baloch political leaders, there has not been any serious objection to the selection of an establishment nominee for the critical job. The argument that Kakar's appointment may help ease Baloch alienation hardly holds water given the scepticism expressed by some Baloch leaders. There are many Baloch leaders with much stronger credentials who could have been chosen for the job.

Now with an interim arrangement in place, the main challenge is not to allow the electoral process

to be delayed under any pretext. True, there is already some debate that elections cannot be held before February next year because of the delimitation of constituencies required under the new population census. That may be a genuine reason for a delay of a few months. But going beyond that will have huge consequences for the country's stability. It is not only important to hold elections within a stipulated time frame but also to ensure a democratic transition through fair polls. Given the prevailing political tension and polarisation, the challenges before the Election Commission of Pakistan are enormous. It is also imperative for the caretakers to bring down the political temperature in the country. The persecution of PTI supporters must be stopped and those arrested without charge released to create a conducive atmosphere for the elections. A country facing existential threats cannot afford to go through experiments that lead to the derailment of the democratic process. -- Courtesy Dawn

The caretaker project

Pakistan's new roadmap



Atta-ur-Rahman

Pakistan's current economic collapse is largely due to our leaders not recognizing that socio-economic development no longer depends on natural resources but largely on the ability of our human resources to create new innovations that lead to the manufacture and export of high technology value-added products. That is the reason why Pakistan has drowned itself in debt, and we must borrow more money at even higher interest rates to pay off old debts. So, the hole that we have dug ourselves into gets deeper and deeper.

The whole of the education sector needs to be completely revamped if we are to become internationally competitive. This can be done relatively easily now by integration of Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) at school, college

and university levels that are freely available from Khan Academy, MIT Open Courseware, Coursera, Udacity and many other sources. About 10 years ago we created an integrated version of MOOCs which are freely available at www.lej4learning.com.pk and which contain some 73,000 video lectures at school, college, and university levels. These need to be integrated into our educational systems so that our students can benefit from excellent faculty available from all over the world. Several thousand Khan Academy lectures have been translated into Urdu and are also available at this website.

The new government must have a visionary scientist or engineer as the minister of planning and development to quickly launch Pakistan on the road to a strong knowledge economy. Unless this new vision is impregnated into the entire government system at all levels, and our development focus changes from the conventional development approach and becomes tailored to the demands posed by the new and disruptive innovations

that are changing world economies, we will remain a poor country deeply sunk in international debt. Here is a glimpse of the new world that we live in and the new economic opportunities that exist.

The rapid pace of technological advancement has led to a plethora of disruptive innovations in various fields. They have revolutionized various industries, reshaping the way we live, work, and interact with the world around us. For instance, biotechnology has witnessed a groundbreaking innovation in the form of CRISPR-Cas9 gene editing. This revolutionary technique allows scientists to precisely edit DNA, enabling them to modify, delete, or insert genes with unprecedented accuracy. CRISPR-Cas9 has the potential to treat genetic diseases such as sickle cell anemia, enhance crop resilience against pests and environmental stress, and create genetically modified organisms tailored to specific needs.

Regenerative medicine has seen remarkable advancements through 3D bioprinting, a technique that enables the creation of

functional, personalized tissues and organs. By layering bioinks composed of living cells, scientists can fabricate intricate structures with the potential to replace damaged organs or accelerate wound healing. This innovation offers hope for addressing organ shortages and improving patient outcomes, paving the way for a new era of healthcare. In 2020, scientists at Tel Aviv University successfully 3D bioprinted a heart using human tissue and vessels, showcasing the potential of bioprinting for creating complex, functional organs.

Precision farming, empowered by technologies like GPS, sensors, and data analytics, has transformed traditional agriculture into a highly efficient and data-driven practice. Farmers can now monitor and manage their crops with precision, optimizing irrigation, fertilization, and pest control based on real-time data. Precision agriculture has resulted in increased yields, reduced resource wastage, and promotion of sustainable farming practices, thereby addressing the challenges posed by a growing global

population and changing climate.

Another rapidly emerging field is that of Collaborative Robots (Cobots). Cobots have revolutionized industries by working alongside humans, enhancing productivity and safety. Unlike traditional robots that operate in isolation, cobots can be programmed to perform intricate tasks while interacting with their human counterparts. In manufacturing, cobots have streamlined assembly lines, while in healthcare, they assist in surgery and patient care, thereby minimizing human error and fatigue.

Similarly, Deep Learning, a subset of artificial intelligence, has ushered in a new era of machine learning capabilities. Through neural networks with multiple layers, deep learning models have achieved remarkable feats, such as image and speech recognition, natural language processing, and autonomous vehicles. The transformative impact of deep learning is evident in personalized recommendations from platforms like Netflix, medical diagnoses through advanced image

analysis, and predictive analytics for financial markets.

The transportation industry has undergone a paradigm shift with the rise of electric and autonomous vehicles. Electric vehicles (EVs) are reducing greenhouse gas emissions and dependence on fossil fuels, while autonomous vehicles have the potential to enhance road safety and redefine mobility. These innovations are reshaping urban planning, public transportation, and logistics, with implications for energy consumption, air quality, and urban design.

The disruptive innovations discussed above underscore the transformative power of human ingenuity and technological advancement. This can only happen in Pakistan if we have a government in which all ministers and secretaries are top experts with PhD degrees from leading universities in relevant disciplines and the minister of planning is a visionary technocrat who understands the importance of a knowledge economy for socio-economic development and for national defense. -- Courtesy TheNews

Alexander Road



Danyal Adam Khan

Every day in Islamabad for the past few months has been a battle between the city and its administrators. One may argue that the two have never gotten along, but the breakneck speed at which the new administration is inflicting its efficiency on the city is dizzying. Just last month, the Capital Development Authority (CDA) announced an open auction for 20 one-kilometre plots to build a food street inside Shakarparian National Park on the "pattern of JBR Dubai".

Now the latest victim of this developmental rampage is none other than the Margalla Hills National Park (MHNP) — that serene backdrop of Islamabad based on which we lay a vague claim to being the second most beautiful capital in the world — and the weapon of choice is called Alexander Road. For context, this is a 7.5-kilometre road to be constructed through the Margalla Hills to connect Islamabad with Haripur at a cost of Rs600 million. The inauguration was done by none other than former prime minister Shehbaz Sharif at the opening ceremony of the equally contentious Margalla Avenue.

Building a road through this national park is not a new idea. There was the catastrophic tunnel project 10 years ago which envisioned digging a passageway straight through the hills onto the other side, and was brought to a stop with a Supreme Court suo motu.

This is also not the first time 'development' has been thrust upon these protected zones. There's the Navy Sailing Club on Rawal Dam, as well as the Margalla Greens Golf Club in E-8 — both declared illegal by the Islamabad High Court. There are also, of course, the glittering encroachments of Monal and accompanying restaurants, along with residential areas spilling into every part of the range.

Making matters considerably worse is the fact that a formal boundary demarcation of the MHNP is still pending — despite the Islamabad High Court ordering the CDA to do so last year. This boundary, which somehow simultaneously exists on all maps and yet seems obfuscated, has opened up several questions about whether land allocated in the Margalla foothills for golf courses and cricket grounds belongs to MHNP or not. Similar confusion abounds in terms of jurisdiction, for example, when the CDA chairman took to Twitter and contemplated the construction of a road from Bari Imam to Pir Sohawa, and the climate change minister had to step in and inform him that building roads through national parks was not within the CDA's domain.

The construction of Alexander Road, in the meantime, has been halted by the Senate Standing Committee on Climate Change. In the words of the chairperson of Islamabad Wildlife Management Board, the project is aimed at "benefiting real estate" and not local communities — and herein lies the heart of the matter: the CDA's commitment towards real estate development and land value appreciation. With the construction of Alexander Road still up in the air, lucrative housing

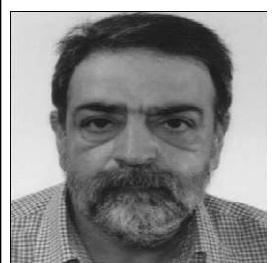
societies have already been advertised at the Haripur end.

That notwithstanding, perhaps the most audacious aspect of this new scheme is that it was launched without so much as an environmental impact assessment. A CDA official has been quoted as saying that since a basic thoroughfare already exists here for local use, merely upgrading it into a proper road does not require an EIA. To reiterate: the CDA does not believe it requires an environmental impact assessment to build a metal road through a national park. With implementing state institutions going rogue in this manner, legislation like the Islam-abad Nature Conservation and Wildlife Management Act, and the National Adaptation Plan will be rendered useless.

This is not the kind of frivolity we can afford with our climate realities. We can lull ourselves into complacency by repeating statistics about Pakistan's low carbon emissions. While these might be accurate for the country as a whole, it is also true that our cities are among the most polluted in the world. Even if we launch frantic tree-planting campaigns in all our cities, it will not be enough to counter the damage done by our crippling automobile dependence. This is not to say that it should not be done, just that plantation drives must go hand in hand with reduced concretisation and cars to have any real impact.

But where are we heading when our administrators decide to do neither? As invasive as its namesake, Alexander Road represents the worst of both worlds: the desecration of a national park in exchange for more asphalt and concrete, more plots and profits. -- Courtesy Dawn

Scorched earth



Mahir Ali

More than 60 years ago, a British sci-fi movie called *The Day the Earth Caught Fire* illuminated the catastrophic consequences of anthropogenic climate change.

Fossil fuels were not part of the script; some oil company executives already knew about the possible fallout, but it wasn't public knowledge. The filmmakers focused instead on a crucial contemporary concern: The US and the USSR simultaneously conducted atmospheric nuclear tests that shift Earth's axis by 11 degrees. As a result, the planet hurtles towards the sun and terrestrial temperatures head beyond 60 degrees Celsius amid cyclones, hurricanes, typhoons and torrential rainfall.

I haven't watched the film and am relying here on a feature published by the BBC this week, which says the scriptwriters were aware that the science behind their conceit was dubious — unlike the scientific theories that help to explain the flames consuming terrain from Rhodes in Greece to Maui in Hawaii.

The threat of nuclear warfare has lately resurfaced in the context of the tussle over Ukraine ignited by Vladimir Putin and fuelled by Nato. Its consequences have been devastating for large numbers of Ukrainians — and to a lesser extent for Russians. Aside from the geopolitics of the conflict, the most obvious global repercussions revolve around the energy sector.

Europe's newfound

distaste for Russian gas has led to China and India becoming the biggest beneficiaries of cut-price fossil fuels from the north. For the most part, though, the West hasn't doubled down on renewables as an energy source, but, instead, afforded its biggest polluters the opportunity to step up their operations.

In Australia, for instance, it's not uncommon to come across the idiotic argument that digging for more gas is tantamount to aiding the struggle for democratic self-determination in Ukraine. Never mind that the International Energy Agency warned against further fossil fuel exploration years ago. The warning just last month from UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres that "the era of global boiling has arrived" goes unheeded — much like most things the UN says.

Greenwashing aside, the multinational oil and gas firms will not change their business model until it ceases to be profitable. Right now, profits are spiking, and their biggest concern is the possibility of extra taxes rather than the state of the world. That's how capitalism works. That's why a million dollars a week is considered low-grade pay for CEOs who fight tooth and nail against a minimum wage of \$15 for their employees.

It could be argued with some justification that concerns about energy and the imperative to maintain unsustainable 'First World' lifestyles are the driving force behind recent decisions by the British, Australian and US governments to speed up or facilitate further fossil fuel misadventures. And right-wing think tanks in America are already drawing up agendas to thwart climate action in the event of a second Trump presidency, which is possible notwithstanding the four indictments against the ex-president.

China and India are often cited as leading culprits in intensifying coal-powered energy. Their excuse is that the nations that were able to industrialise based on relatively easy access to coal, oil and gas are ethically in no position to lecture the stragglers.

That's a valid debating point, but its value is diminished by global exigencies — including the recent floods in Beijing and the current rains in Himachal Pradesh. To their credit, both China and India have also been making advances in green energy. But their continued reliance on coal suggests it's not enough. The leading responsibility for fossil fuel proliferation lies with the primary predators — both nation states and Western energy firms — but everyone needs to chip in.

July was the hottest month on Earth not only in recorded history but in scientific extrapolations reaching back thousands of years. And it is almost guaranteed that there will be worse to follow. Tragically, the reality of apocalypse now is rejected not just by the fossil fuel profiteers but also by plenty of people fooled into dismissing the science behind climate change as part of some kind of a 'woke' agenda or Marxist plot, notwithstanding the evidence unfolding before our eyes.

The feature film mentioned at the outset also reflects the efforts of political leaders to brush off the impending doomsday. In the end, they opt for a series of joint nuclear explosions in western Siberia in an attempt to swing the planet back into its original axis. Audiences never learn the outcome. They just get to see two newspaper front pages prepared by the film's protagonists. One headline says 'World Saved', the other proclaims 'World Doomed'. -- Courtesy Dawn

Samina Alvi for creating awareness to ensure special person's rights

MUZAFFARABAD (APP): First Lady Begum Samina Alvi on Wednesday urged the relevant officials, authorities, media, civil society, health institutions and welfare organizations to organize awareness campaigns to ensure basic rights of the persons with disabilities.

She also called upon the government institutions to increase facilities to address the social and health issues being faced by the special persons, besides improving the primary healthcare system.

"I also appeal to people from all walks of life to work collectively for safeguarding the rights of differently-abled persons and their welfare, and ensuring a healthier, comprehensive and quality-based society," the first lady said in a message.

She said the persons

with disabilities, who accounted for around 10 to 12% of the country's population, were facing difficulties to live a normal life and move around easily.

However, now people were more aware about their problems and that was because of the campaign conducted through seminars, conferences, walks and ceremonies, and messages sent to millions of mobile phone consumers, she added.

Similarly, she said, the welfare organizations and hospitals had also extended facilities to them.

She appreciated the role of electronic media, newspapers, social media, NGOs and civil society that supported their efforts in creating public awareness about the health issues.

She regretted that the persons with disabilities were facing multiple barriers in their access to health, education and employment opportunities.

"We have to make them financially empowered by providing skilled-based education and health facilities," she added.

Samina Alvi said an ignored segment of society were the people suffering from psychological issues, who hesitated to talk about their problems or go to a psychiatrist for treatment because of 'social stigma'.

Around 24% of the country's population was suffering from various psychological issues, she added.

The first lady also asked the women to spare five minutes every month for self-examination for early detection of breast cancer. A number of women died in Pakistan every year due to breast cancer, she added.

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First Lady Begum Samina Alvi addressing an interactive dialogue on breast cancer, disabilities, and mental health issues, in Muzaffarabad.

Naqvi conducts marathon visit to metro bus, orange line metro train & DC office registry branch

LAHORE: Caretaker Chief Minister Punjab Mohsin Naqvi conducted a 3.5 hours marathon visit to the Metro Bus and Orange Line Metro Train today. Mohsin Naqvi travelled in the Metro Bus and Orange Line Metro Train and inquired from the passengers about travelling facilities. Mohsin Naqvi boarded the Metro Bus from the Kutchery Station. CM bought his and of his staff members token and travelled up to

Janazgah Station. Air conditioners of the Metro Bus were out of order and the passengers were in pathetic condition due to severe hot and humid weather. The passengers complained that the air conditioners of Metro Buses are out of order for the last six months.

CM Mohsin Naqvi directed to ensure early functional of air conditioners of the Metro Buses. Mohsin Naqvi stated that male and female students will travel free on the

Metro Bus and Orange Line Train. CM Mohsin Naqvi directed Secretary Transport to put up a summary in this regard. CM Mohsin Naqvi inspected the arrangements and facilities at the Metro Bus and Orange Line Metro Train stations. CM Mohsin Naqvi inquired from the passengers about travelling facilities in the bus and assured them resolution of their problems at the earliest. Mohsin Naqvi visited Anarkali Station of Orange Line Metro Train.

SM Tanveer visits Center for Excellence in Molecular Biology

LAHORE (APP): Provincial Minister for Agriculture, Industry and Commerce SM Tanveer here on Wednesday visited the research institute, Center for Excellence in Molecular Biology (CEMB) to observe the research process in various departments of the institute's lab.

CEMB Director Professor Dr. Muazur Rehman gave a detailed briefing about the center's performance and future plans. The provincial minister was told that the center equipped with modern equipment and knowledge but there was a lack of resources. There were foreign qualified scientists in the institution who needed support.

While addressing the meeting, the Provincial

Minister said that in order to achieve good results, the local scientists had to be given importance and to carry forward the research work with the collaboration of private sector.

An economic improvement plan had been made through promotion of modern agriculture and the results of agricultural research were being transferred to the farmers, he added.

SM Tanveer said that recently 40 research projects worth Rs 900 million had been approved by the Punjab Agriculture Research Board. "Together, we will work to enhance research work and Punjab government will provide support in this regard," he assured.

LHC moved seeking ban on Tek tok

LAHORE (Online): A constitutional petition has been filed in Lahore High Court (LHC) seeking imposition of ban on social media app Tek Tok.

The petitioner has taken the plea it is incumbent on every citizen to be loyal to the citizen under article 5 of the constitution. Immoral material is being uploaded on tek tok persistently.

Tek tok removed from its site 11700000 videos uploaded by Pakistanis in the first quarterly of the current year for violating community guidelines.

Government claims it has no hand in the removal of these videos and tektok has worked out community guidelines as per Pakistani laws. Videos are removed on the violation of these guidelines.

KP Govt bars employees from using social media

PESHAWAR (APP): The government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa has barred all government servants from using social media to discuss or share information on issues relating to government business.

A notification issued here by the provincial Establishment department, however, said that if required the concerned official would take prior approval of the administrative secretary, head of the attached department or commission as the case may be.

It said that the decision has been taken under Rule-34(A) of the KP government servant (conduct) rules, 1987, adding that the competent authority has taken cognizance of the various instances wherein the government and civil servants were found participating in discussions on different social media platforms regarding matters about political issues, sectarianism and anti-state activities.

It said that rules 23, 24, 25, 28 and 29 of the KP government servants (conduct) rules, 1987 bar the

government servants from expressing their views against the ideology and security of the country and from taking part in any public demonstration directed against a government decision or policy.

Referring to the Rule 25 of the said rules, the notification said that a government servant shall not appear in any programme of electronic media and give statements to print media which could embarrass the federal and provincial governments by any means.

It further said that under rule 21 of the government servants' rules, no public servant is authorized to communicate directly or indirectly any official information or the contents of any official document to any unauthorized person or government servant, or the press.

The notification addressed to Additional Chief Secretary KP, Senior Members of the Board of Revenue, all administrative secretaries, all divisional commissioners, all deputy commissioners and heads of the attached departments.



LARKANA: Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam (JUI-F) Leader, Maulana Nasir Mahmood Soomro presides over a meeting ahead of the General Elections held at Jamia Islamia in Larkana.

Landlords donate more land for Timeragara University

PESHAWAR (APP): Nawabzada Sadruddin and Nawabzada Qutbuddin donated 20 kanal more land for Timeragara University.

Both landlords have had already donated 88 kanal land for the establishment of the university and on the request of the Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Haji Ghulam Ali announced donation of 20 kanal more land for the purpose.

Both Nawabzada Sadruddin and Nawabzada Qutbuddin called on Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Haji Ghulam Ali here in on Wednesday.

Besides, Asfandyar Khan, Inayatullah, Dr. Zahoor Jan, Secretary Higher Education Department Anila Durrani and Principal Secretary to Governor Mazhar Arshad, Ishaq Ali Qazi was also present on this occasion.

The governor thanked Nawabzada Sadruddin and Qutbuddin and others for this unprecedented generosity and termed a huge donation for the youths of remote and backward areas.

He said that the step will not only increase the rate of higher education in the area rather will also open the doors of progress and development.

On this occasion, the Governor gave commemorative gifts and shields to Nawabzada Sadruddin and Qutbuddin and the participants of the delegation.

Meanwhile, a high-level meeting regarding the distribution of land between Agricultural University Peshawar and the University of Engineering and Technology Mardan was also held at the Governor's House with Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Haji Ghulam Ali in the chair.

Besides, Vice Chancellor Agricultural University Peshawar, Prof. Dr. Jahan Bakht, Dean UET Mardan, Professor Dr. Imran Khan, Secretary of Higher Education Department Anila Durrani, and Principal Secretary to Governor Mazhar Arshad and relevant officials also attended the meeting and discussed all matters related to land distribution in detail.



KARACHI: Members of Christian Community are holding protest demonstration against violence on minority community and condemn Faisalabad incident, held at Karachi press club.

Two children drowned after falling into Nullah

KOTLI (APP): Two children died after falling into Nullah in Khoi Rata, Azad Jammu and Kashmir, police and TV channels reported.

According to details, three children were playing near Nullah when suddenly they fell into it, as a result, two of them drowned. Local divers rushed to the site and rescued one of the child after hectic efforts.



PESHAWAR: People officers funeral prayers of CTD Constable Inamullah, who was martyred by terrorists in the limits of Khyber Police Station Bara, were performed at Malik Saad Shaheed Police Line.

PPP aims to strengthen democracy: Farooq

ABBOTTABAD (APP): President PPP Hazara division Malik Farooq after assuming responsibilities at the Abbottabad Press Club on Wednesday said Pakistan Peoples Party's primary mission is to strengthen democracy and uphold the constitution.

President People's Labour Wing Abbottabad district, former MMA Sajida Tabassum, Zulfiqar Qureshi, Saeed Gul, former district president Sardar Abrar Ahmed, PPP Khyber Pakhtunkhwa General Secretary Sarfraz Khan, PPP Provincial Vice President Malik Farid Muhammad, Saeed Gul, Muhammad Saeed, Naeed Gul Abbasi

also addressed the occasion. Embracing the legacy of leaders like Founder Chairman Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto and Benazir Bhutto, the PPP has carved its mission to navigate the country through myriad challenges and lead it towards a brighter future, adding he said. President Malik Farooq expressed his belief that Bilawal Bhutto, a prominent figure within the party, is destined to be the nation's future Prime Minister.

President Malik Farooq emphasized the undeniable history of sacrifices made by the Pakistan Peoples Party in its pursuit of democratic values.

ANF seizes over 908 kg drugs in 38 operations; arrests 45

RAWALPINDI (APP): Anti Narcotics Force (ANF) has seized 908.901 kg drugs worth US\$ 18.576 million internationally, arrested 45 accused including a woman, a foreigner and impounded 18 vehicles while conducting 38 counter narcotics operations throughout the country during last week.

According to an ANF Headquarters spokesman, the seized drugs comprised 26.400 Kg Opium, 70.862 Kg Heroin, 775.600 Kg Hashish, 15.730 Kg Methamphetamine (Ice), 15

Grams Weed, 294 Grams MDMA Powder and 20 Kg Diazepam Powder.

He informed that ANF Balochistan recovered 495.5 Kg Drugs in 6 operations while arrested 7 persons involved in drugs smuggling and impounded 5 vehicles. The seized drugs comprised 14.500 Kg Heroin, 472 Kg Hashish and 9 Kg Methamphetamine (Ice).

ANF Punjab recovered 117.37 Kg Drugs in 11 operations while arrested 15 persons including a foreigner and impounded 5 vehicles.



LAHORE: Chief Secretary Punjab Zahid Akhtar Zaman presides over the meeting of Deputy Commissioners via Vide link at Civil Secretariat

Elders urged to cooperate in eradicating drugs, social crimes

DERA ISMAIL KHAN (APP): The South Waziristan police have urged residents to cooperate against the menace of drugs and other social crimes.

Addressing a jirga, Station House Officer (SHO) Sarrogha Fahimullah Khan said police were determined to rid Waziristan of drugs and other social crimes, but there was a need that people to extend support to achieve the objective.

The jirga which was held in line with directives of District Police Officer (DPO), South Waziristan, Niaz Muhammad Khan was attended by local elders, village chairmen and councilors.

The SHO said the police and the public would work together to eradicate this scourge and would not let the young generation be

ruined by menace. He said, in this regard, a crackdown was being launched against drug dealers and no compromise would be made.

Speaking on the occasion, the elders expressed gratitude to DPO Niaz Muhammad Khan, who has ensured the supremacy of merit by appointing competent police officers.

They assured support and vowed that the entire Jirga would stand by the police against drugs and other crimes.

Later, SHO Fahimullah visited Sarrogha market under community policing and met the traders in which the market management thanked the SHO for providing excellent security and solving traffic problems in the market and cracking down on drugs.

Corruption case: Court extends physical remand of Moonis' secretary

LAHORE (APP): An accountability court on Wednesday extended physical remand of Sohail Asghar Awan, the secretary of former federal minister Moonis Elahi, and another accused for seven days in a corruption case.

Earlier, the NAB officials produced Sohail Asghar Awan and Khalid Mehmood Chatta before Accountability Court Judge Zubair Shahzad Kiyani on expiry of their physical remand term.

The NAB prosecutor argued that investigations were ongoing from the accused and their further physical remand was required for retrieving crucial documents and other material. He requested the court to extend physical remand of the accused for the purpose.

Punjab police arrest 3 more dangerous POs

LAHORE (APP): On the instructions of Inspector General Punjab Dr. Usman Anwar, the crackdown has been accelerated to arrest the fugitive proclaimed offenders abroad, in continuation of which, 03 more dangerous offenders were arrested from United Arab Emirates and reached Pakistan while the total number of arrests has reached 109.

According to details, Punjab Police, in connection with the initiation of murder cases, arrested 03 dangerous proclaimed offender who had fled to the United Arab Emirates, successfully bringing them back to the country. IG Punjab Dr. Usman Anwar thanked DIG Sikandar for his special support in the arrest and return of dangerous criminals and said that the process of arresting fugitive proclaimed offender abroad was speeded up with the cooperation and efforts of DIG Sikandar posted in Interpol.

IGP distributes ownership documents of plots to families of police martyrs

LAHORE (APP): IG Punjab Dr. Usman Anwar has continued provision of plots to the families of police martyrs before 2017.

In this sequence, families of 32 more martyrs of Sargodha police, Lodhran, Layyah, and Gujrat have been provided with plots.

During a ceremony held at the Central Police Office, here on Wednesday, IG Punjab Dr. Usman Anwar distributed ownership papers of plots to 15 families of Lodhran, 08 of Sargodha, 07 of Layyah, 02 of Gujrat.

Recently, IG Punjab Dr. Usman Anwar had provided plot ownership documents to 04 martyrs' families.

The IG Punjab said that with the support of good people, plots have been ensured for the families of more than 100 martyrs before 2017, while financial assistance is also being provided to the heirs of the martyrs for the construction of houses on these plots from the Punjab Police Endowment Fund.



KARACHI: Rangers and Police personnel presents arrested robbers and recover money, to the media at Prady Police Station in Provincial Capital.

Green Initiative by School Education Department South Punjab commences

MULTAN (APP): In a significant stride towards combating climate change, Multan on Wednesday witnessed the inauguration of the Miyawaki Forest Plantation 2023, a pioneering effort orchestrated by the School Education Department South Punjab.

The ceremonial event took place at the distinguished premises of Government High School Jamul-Aloom in New Multan.

Dignitaries present at the event included Secretary School Education South Punjab Rana Saleem Ahmed, Secretary Forest South Punjab Sarfraz Hussain Magasi, and Additional Secretary School Education South Punjab, Agha Zaheer Shirazi.

The scope of this initiative is vast, as Miyawaki Forest is designed to be established across 258 schools, spanning 11 districts in South Punjab. Secretary of Schools Education South Punjab, Rana Saleem Ahmed Khan, emphasized the magnitude of the project, disclosing that 116,000 trees will take root as part of the year's Miyawaki Forest Campaign. Encompassing a sprawling expanse of 14 thousand marlas, this green initiative is set to transform the landscape of 258 schools in South Punjab. As Secretary of School Education South Punjab, he pointed out, the conservation of these newly planted trees will be a collective effort involving teachers, students, and school personnel, ensuring their flourishing growth. Rana Salim Ahmad Khan further underscored the holistic benefits of this reforestation endeavor. Apart from bolstering the ecological landscape, the greening of school premises is projected to improve the overall environment and enhance the beauty of the educational institutions. The event served as a reminder of the successful Phase 1 of Miyawaki Forest, wherein a remarkable 108,000 saplings were planted previously. Secretary School Education South Punjab highlighted the strategic placement of these Miyawaki forests on plots spanning 3 to 5 marla within school grounds. As the enthusiasm for tree planting gains momentum among the students, Rana Salim Ahmad Khan assured that the completion of Miyawaki Forest Phase 2 is imminent, set to culminate within a span of two days.



ISLAMABAD: President Dr Arif Alvi addressing the inaugural session of MED-Health Expo and Summit 2023.



President stresses adopting preventive measures to avoid diseases

ISLAMABAD (APP): President Dr Arif Alvi on Wednesday said adopting preventive measures could help people avoiding or minimizing intensity of diseases, and improving the overall health condition of population of the country.

Health and education were two basic sectors which needed to be put on top priority because nations always build on these two areas, he said while addressing the "Med-Health Expo 2023 and Summit" here.

The president said the people specially those with limited resources could easily avoid the chronic diseases such as breast cancer, hepatitis, and communicable diseases by adopting preventive measures.

With regard to deteriorating health sector in the country, he highlighted that lack of decision-making, avoidance of merit and corruption in the past were the main reason behind limited health facilities in the country.

The health sector exhibition was organized by Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce and Industry (RCCI) aimed at information exchange, learning, and cooperation opportunities for health professionals.

The two-day event will showcase the latest research and developments in various medical fields through a series of sessions. President Alvi stressed universities and academia to promote research in the health sector that would bring tremendous improvement in human health. He urged the medical professionals to move along with the world that was doing advance research on human DNA to predict the disease in people. He also called upon the industrialists to produce affordable medical devices to ensure access of people especially from all walks of society to the quality medical facilities.

President Alvi said the industrialists and the exporters should explore big potential markets such as Africa to increase their exports of pharmaceutical and surgical instruments.

He informed that some 9 million pregnancies occurred annually in the country out of which 50% were unwanted which could easily be avoided by providing contraceptive facilities to the people.

Similarly, he said doctors and hospitals should also use the latest technology to provide online healthcare facilities to save resources of both patients and the hospitals.

This would also help reaching out to the maximum number of people, he added. The president also stressed the need to provide first aid and cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) training to common people from school levels to save lives of the people in emergencies.

President RCCI Saqib Rafiq said President Dr Arif Alvi and First Lady Samina Alvi played vital role in creating awareness about different diseases especially breast cancer in the country.

France to provide \$3.27m for rehabilitation in flood-hit areas of Sindh

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Government of France has allocated 3 million euros (nearly 3.27 million USD) to support UNICEF's humanitarian response in flood-affected areas. This vital funding will strengthen primary healthcare and immunization services in the most affected districts in Sindh province, targeting 1.9 million children and women.

This contribution from France follows the International Conference on Climate Resilient Pakistan, co-hosted by the United Nations and the Government of Pakistan in Geneva, earlier this year.

The conference garnered international support for flood recovery and rehabilitation, as well as long-term partnerships to build Pakistan's climate resilience and adaptation.

"Children are often the first victims of crises and natural disasters, but also those who bear invisible scars for the longest time. France is pleased to partner with UNICEF to expand access to primary health care and improve immunization services for the most vulnerable communities in Sindh," stated Nicolas Galey, Ambassador of France to Pakistan.

Sindh province was particularly hard hit by last year's floods. Approximately 14.5 million people were affected and almost 1,000 health facilities were damaged or destroyed. Communities and health workers were displaced, while medical supplies and services were damaged and disrupted.

Over the past year, UNICEF has reached 3.6 million people with pri-

mary healthcare services in flood-affected areas, but for many communities, adequate healthcare remains out of reach.

"The onset of the monsoon exacerbates the health risks for children and women in flood-affected areas. The spread of diseases, such as malaria, dengue and Acute Watery Diarrhoea are a particular concern. This generous and important funding from France enables UNICEF to expand critical healthcare and strengthen immunization services during a time of great need," said Abdullah Fadi, UNICEF Representative in Pakistan.

The devastating floods in 2022 affected nearly 33 million people, including 16 million children, and was widely recognized as a climate-induced disaster.

Looking forward to advancing trade, investment ties with UAE: PM Kakar

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar on Wednesday said that he looked forward to working with the United Arab Emirates (UAE) on advancing bilateral cooperation in various fields, especially trade, investment and energy.

The prime minister, in a meeting with the UAE Ambassador Hamad Obaid Ibrahim Salem Al-Zaabi, who called on him here, expressed gratitude for the UAE's support for Pakistan's economic and financial stability.

The ambassador conveyed the greetings of the UAE leadership to the prime minister on his assumption of office.

Prime Minister Kakar thanked the UAE government for the warm congratulatory messages and said that Pakistan and UAE enjoyed historic and deep-rooted fraternal ties.

He also wished the UAE success in hosting the COP28 Summit later this year.

The prime minister also emphasized the important role played by the Pakistani diaspora in the UAE and sought the UAE government's continued support to them.

Party sources said that Nawaz Sharif will leave for Lahore via GT Road in the form of a big rally.

Nawaz Sharif's rally will also be the start of the election campaign of Muslim League-N.

The task of making the Lahore rally historic has been entrusted to Hamza Shahbaz and Maryam Nawaz.

After welcoming Nawaz Sharif at Lahore Airport, Data will be taken to Darbar in the form of a rally.

Nawaz will hold a historic rally on his return home

LAHORE (Online): Plan A and Plan B have been prepared regarding the return of former Prime Minister (PM) Nawaz Sharif.

Party sources said that Nawaz Sharif will leave for Lahore via GT Road in the form of a big rally.

In this regard, party sources said that according to plan A, Nawaz Sharif's security bond will be taken from the Islamabad High Court before he returns home. His return home will take place at Islamabad Airport and Nawaz Sharif will be welcomed on his return home.

According to the sources, Nawaz Sharif will address public gathering at the Islamabad Parade Ground on his return home. Ticket holders and officials of the national and provincial assemblies of the PML-N will demonstrate full public power.

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ISLAMABAD: Deputy Chairman Senate, Mirza Muhammad Afridi addressing the first ever Nazam Expo on Disaster Risk Reduction-Pedrr 2023 organized by National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) in Islamabad.

Those appointing Kakar as caretaker PM are unhappy themselves: Akhtar Mengal

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Islamabad Citizens Committee (ICC) here on Wednesday celebrated the 76th anniversary of the country's independence, recalling the objectives of the Pakistan Movement which led to the creation of a separate homeland for Muslims of the Indian sub-continent.

It highlighted the objectives of the independence movement and paid tributes to those who sacrificed their lives in getting a separate identity for Muslims of the sub-continent, a news release said.

The event, presided over by ICC President Syed M. Siddiq Hasan, was attended by the members of the Executive Committee and distinguished guests from various walks of life.

The national anthem was played followed by a cake-cut ceremony to mark the event in a befitting manner.

The gathering of the notables passed a unanimous resolution on the occasion, pledging to work for the betterment of the motherland.

The resolution said, "We were fortunate enough to get an identity of our own 76 years ago as the Islamic Republic of Pakistan. This independence was achieved after countless sacrifices of our ancestors and as a result of which we can live freely in our own homeland."

been shown as 2 crore 14 lakh, the meeting of Council of Common Interests (CCI) waited for Chief Minister for six hours. The number of seats of Balochistan were to be increased on the basis of new population census. However, the CCU's meeting was made justification of delay in the general elections.

The BNP chief stated so while speaking to a private TV channel on Wednesday.

Sardar Akhtar Mengal said that we express our opinions and decisions openly while leaders of big political parties keep mum under the need of necessity.

CDA pursues upgradation of urban amenities, infrastructure

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Capital Development Authority (CDA) is taking concrete steps for ensuring the provision of urban facilities to the city dwellers and maintenance of infrastructure including the installation of street lights, road carpeting and resolving water-related issues, neglected in the past.

"Special attention is being given to the completion of the remaining development works in the sectors I, G, H and D series, provision of civic facilities, and facilitating the home builders in these sectors in pursuance of the directives of Chairman CDA Noor ul Amin Mengal," an official told APP.

"The work of installation of streetlights in the main roads and within the sectors to ensure proper lighting management in Sector I-11, I-10, I-14 and Sector I-16, D-12 and other sectors is in full swing," he added.

To a question, the official said, "After a few months of delay due to legal complications, the authority has started work to install street lights in Sector D-12."

He said that the work on this project was initially halted when a contractor, who failed to secure the contract, filed a case in court.

Pak on its way to become an economic hub: Indonesian envoy

ISLAMABAD (INP): Acknowledging that Pakistan has a geo-strategic importance, Indonesia's ambassador to Pakistan Adam M. Tugio has said that Pakistan is going to become an economic hub in future.

Speaking to private TV news channel, he has said that due to better policies, there are signs of economic improvement in the country.

He has further said that the country's financial condition is improving with the passage of time.

Tugio has said that both Indonesia and Pakistan are brotherly countries, and that the people of Indonesia look up to their brethren in Pakistan with respect. "Indonesia is the largest exporter of crude oil to Pakistan," he has said, adding, "Both the countries can increase trade in the pharmaceutical sector."

PTI urges caretaker PM to ensure timely elections

ISLAMABAD (INP): A day after the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) failed to give the Supreme Court a final date for the upcoming general elections, Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Vice Chairman Shah Mahmood Qureshi urged caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar to ensure timely polls in the country.

Speculations about the delay in holding polls sparked when Director General (Law) Muhammad Arshad failed to give the apex court a certain date for the polls. Hearing petitions against delimitations of provincial constituencies PS 7, 8, and 9 Shikarpur, Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) Umar Ata Bandial on Tuesday inquired when were the general elections being held.

To this, the director general shrugged his shoulders.

"As yet, no date for the elections has been decided. The election commission should resolve all issues before the polls," the CJP remarked.

In a letter to the interim prime minister, Qureshi apprised Kakar that his party intended to challenge the decision made by the Council of Common Interests (CCI) in the court.

On August 5, the CCI "unanimously" approved the 7th Population and Housing Census results, making it almost certain that the general elections — which were to be held in November after the dissolution of the National Assembly on August 9 — would not be held during the current year.

Islamabad Police chalk out elaborate security for Bari Imam Urs

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Islamabad Capital Police have embarked on a comprehensive security initiative for the Bari Imam Urs and decided to deploy security personnel for safety of devotees.

Under the specialized guidance of Islamabad Capital City Police Officer (ICCP) Dr. Akbar Nasir Khan, the police force has laid down meticulous security arrangements to facilitate an atmosphere of serenity and devotion during the revered event.

Islamabad Capital Police have implemented a robust security plan across the area where the Bari Imam Urs will be observed. As part of these efforts, SP High Security Zone, Muhammad Iqbal, undertook an on-site assessment of various security blockades. During his inspection, he engaged in dialogue with security officials stationed at diverse points to ensure a seamless execution of the security protocols.

SP Iqbal underscored the pivotal roles played by security personnel in upholding a secure atmosphere for all participants of the Urs. He further directed officials to maintain an eagle-eyed vigilance over any suspicious activities, emphasizing the importance of identifying potential criminal elements.

Amidst his interactions, SP Iqbal emphasized the necessity for security officers and officials to carry out their responsibilities with utmost diligence. Additionally, he highlighted the significance of a warm and hospitable approach towards Urs attendees, fostering an environment of unity and inclusiveness.



ISLAMABAD: German Ambassador to Pakistan Alfred Grannas calls on Federal Secretary Health Itikhar Ali Shallwani, Pak-German health collaboration discussed.

IHC declares arrest of Shehryar Afridi, Gulzar under MPO as illegal

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Islamabad High Court (IHC) on Wednesday declared the arrest of PTI leaders Shehryar Khan Afridi and Shandana Gulzar under the Maintenance of Public Order (MPO) as illegal and decided to indict Islamabad's Deputy Commissioner and Senior Superintendent of Police (Operations) for contempt of court. Justice Babar Sattar heard the petitions of Shandana Gulzar and Afridi against their arrests under 3 MPO. Islamabad's Chief Commissioner, Inspector General of Police, and DC appeared before the court.

During the course of proceedings, the deputy commissioner adopted the stance that as per intelli-

gence reports Shehryar Afridi had instigated the PTI activists for violence on May 9. A planning was made to attack the district courts and a campaign was also launched to malign the judiciary, he said.

The court inquired that how the accused instigated the political workers for violence while staying in jail. The IGP said precautionary steps used to be taken to avert any such violent incident and also to maintain the law and order in the city.

The deputy commissioner said that video clips and statements of the accused were on record. He said that the administration had to rely on the reports of intelligence agencies.



ISLAMABAD: Former Senator Saif Magsoo calls on Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar.

ITF seeks probe into PIA violations of cabin crew rules

ISLAMABAD (INP): The Pakistan International Airlines is in hot water on Wednesday as the International Transport Workers Federation (ITF) has expressed concern over the violations of the cabin crew rules by the PIA management.

In a letter written to the Pakistan Civil Aviation Authority's (PCAA) director, the ITF conveyed its serious concerns over the tragic death of cabin crew senior purser Rashida Majeed while Samina Aurangzeb was seriously injured.

The letter says: "On behalf of the International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF), a global union federation representing nearly 18.5 million transport workers from 740 affiliates in over 150 countries, including Pakistan, we write to you to urgently initiate an investigation into Pakistan International Airlines' flight services management."

"Suspected violations of PIA's SEP manual and flight and duty time limitations have been raised by our affiliate, the Pakistan Airlines Cabin Crew Association (PACCA). These issues are fundamental to the operational safety of Pakistan's flag carrier but even more crucial in light of the recent road traffic accident on 29 June 2023 that resulted in severe injuries to one cabin crew member at PIA and the tragic death of senior purser Rashida Majeed." It adds that PACCA expressed concerns in its letter to the PCAA on July 11 with regard to the violation of rules and laws specified within the SEP handbook of cabin crew, which is authorized by the Pakistan Civil Aviation Authority.

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ISLAMABAD: A large number of students are struggling to board in Blue Line Bus Service as due to the extremely high prices of fares, it is now impossible for the students and Common people to use any other medium of transport across the country.