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PM emphasizes significance of war games in validating naval war plans

KARACHI (APP): Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar on Wednesday emphasized the significance of war games in validating naval war plans in sync with military and national security policy, besides exploring operational concepts and refining deployment strategies.

The prime minister, addressing the debrief session of Pakistan Navy's war game Shamsheer-e-Bahr IX, lauded the well-deliberated plans of the force commanders and the insightful analysis of the war game, which would help crystallize operational plans for maritime security and seaward defence of Pakistan, a PM office press release said.

He also highlighted the enhanced responsibilities of

the Pakistan Navy in ensuring the security of China-Pakistan Economic Corridor and Gwadar Port.

Prime Minister Kakar expressed complete confidence in the preparedness of the Pakistan Navy to meet all threats and challenges, and reassured the government's commitment to provide all available resources for its capacity building. Earlier upon arrival at the venue, the prime minister was received by Chief of the Naval Staff Admiral Muhammad Amjad Khan Niazi.

While presenting the overview, the Deputy Chief of Naval Staff (Operations) outlined the objectives of the war game which was conducted in triservice format, with participants of relevant ministries and divisions as well.



Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee (JCSC) General Sahir Shamsad Mirza meeting with President of Tajikistan Enomali Rahmon

Smuggling & terrorism to be wiped out with nation's support: Bugti

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Minister for Interior Sarfraz Bugti on Wednesday vowed to wipe out the menaces of smuggling and terrorism from Pakistan with the full support of the nation.

The caretaker government was fully determined to eliminate smuggling of any food items and dollars from the country, he said while talking to a private television channel.

Smuggling of essential items and dollars were criminal activities which must be stopped at any cost, he added.

Sarfraz Bugti said they had zero-tolerance against violent material, and hate speech against the state institutions. No one would be allowed to create violence anywhere in the country, he added.

To a question, he said it had been decided in the meeting of Council of Common Interest (CCI) that the general elections would be held after accomplishing the task of census and delimitation. The delimitation process would take some three to four months, he said adding that Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) would announce the date for next polls. The caretaker government would provide all necessary assistance to the ECP to hold free and fair elections, he said.

To a question about the unsuccessful operation against the criminals of Kacha area, he said there was a need to purge the police force of politics so that it could perform its mandated job.



QUETTA: Caretaker Home Minister Captain (Retd) Zubair Jamali in a meeting with Sardar Akhtar Jan Mengal

Caretaker Provincial Minister visits PDMA, directs to make service system more effective

Independent Report
QUETTA: While appreciating performance of the Provincial Disaster Management Authority (PDMA) for provision of relief during different disasters and emergent situation, the caretaker Provincial Minister for Home and Tribal Affairs, Captain (Retd) Zubair Jamali has directed the concerned authorities to make the delivery and service system more effective so as to provide maximum relief to the people.

The caretaker Provincial Minister was speaking on occasion of the visit to PDMA head office here on Wednesday. The Director General PDMA, Jahanzab Khan briefed the Minister Home about the overall performance of his institution.

The Minister appreciated performance of the PDMA and said that it is commendable that it is providing timely information and services during the natural calamities and emergency circumstances all over the province.



KARACHI: Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar addressing the debriefing session of Pakistan Navy's War Game "Shamsheer-e-Bahr IX".

Shamsad Akhtar No room for further subsidies in IMF agreements

ISLAMABAD (INP): Caretaker Federal Minister for Finance Dr Shamsad Akhtar has ruled out any room in the IMF agreements to provide additional subsidies.

Addressing the media after the committee meeting on Wednesday, she emphasized that the government was aware of the plight of the country's poor population and that further burdening the underprivileged segment of society was not an option.

The subsidies included in the IMF agreements were already established by previous governments, and there was no room for further subsidies in these agreements, she pointed out.

Dr Shamsad Akhtar went on to say that the government was planning for economic stability and was working on practical measures to improve the economy.

CJP says: Apex court wants to conclude NAB amendments case early

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chief Justice of Pakistan Umar Ata Bandial on Wednesday observed that the top court wanted to conclude cases pertaining to the NAB amendments as soon as possible.

He was heading the three-member bench, comprising Justice Ijaz ul Ahsan and Justice Mansoor Ali Shah, which heard the case.

At the outset of hearing, Attorney General for Pakistan Mansoor Usman Awan said that he had not stated that 'there was a flaw in the Supreme Court Practice and Procedure Act', rather he was of the view that it was similar to the Supreme Court Review Act.

The chief justice remarked that the National Accountability Bureau (NAB) had withdrawn corruption cases of less than Rs 500 million. "Under which law this policy

has been adopted?" he asked.

He observed that in the NAB amendments carried out in 2022, the arrest of accused at inquiry stage was excluded but in July 2023 the respective clause had been included in the law again, which was aimed at tightening the grip against politicians.

CJP Bandial said that it had to be viewed that who had been targeted and for how long. Negotiations were underway some people in matters pertaining to the billions of rupees fraud.

He said there was something wrong in the NAB law, due to which the apex court was approached to review it. Whether the Bureau was working to protect the public interest, he questioned.

The chief justice said the court had to view the amendments in light of the provisions of Constitution.



Chief of Army Staff (COAS) General Syed Asim Munir visited Tilla Field Firing Ranges near Jhelum on Wednesday, where he witnessed field fire and battle drills.

Cop martyred in Quetta firing

QUETTA (INP): A cop was martyred in firing of unidentified armed men near Sariab Road Mill Colony in Quetta on Wednesday.

The cop, Akhtar Hussain was on his way back to home after night duty when unknown gunmen attacked him.

As a result of firing, the cop was martyred and assailants fled the scene.

The body was shifted to hospital for postmortem and police after registering a case into the incident have started an investigation.

4 alleged attackers killed in CTD operation in Pishin

PISHIN (Online): 4 alleged attackers were killed in CTD operation in Pishin.

According to spokesperson of Counter Terrorism Department (CTD), operation has been conducted in Pishin district of Baluchistan and 4 attackers were killed in the operation.

Spokesperson CTD said that attackers killed in exchange of fire with forces are affiliated to banned organization.

Battle preparedness of army personnel commendable: COAS

RAWALPINDI (APP): Chief of Army Staff (COAS), General Syed Asim Munir on Wednesday visited Tilla Field Firing Ranges, near Jhelum and witnessed Field Fire and Battle Drills.

On arrival, the COAS was briefed on training objectives, set for the exercise with a view to validate operational readiness of the formation in the challenging environment, an Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR) news release said.

The COAS appreciated the synergy displayed by Air Force, Army Aviation and ground troops in the execution of various operational drills.

He lauded the troops for their combat proficiency and offensive spirit. He also appreciated the high morale and battle worthiness of the troops.

Earlier on arrival, the COAS was received by Lieutenant General Syed Aamer Raza, Commander Four Corps.

Chairman District Council takes notice: Mother & daughter die of diarrhea in Lasbela

Independent Report
QUETTA: Two persons including a female and her daughter died of diarrhea in Lasbela district the other day.

According to the reports reaching here, the mother and daughter were suffering from severe diarrhea for last few days in village Konano Pir of Bela Tehsil, then they breathed their last before provided proper medical assistance in any health establishment.

Meanwhile, the Chairman District Council took notice of deaths due to the diarrhea. The health department officials were directed to send rapid response medical teams in the affected areas. It was directed to ensure provision of medical facilities including medicines to the affected people without any interruption.



QUETTA: Chief Secretary Balochistan Shakeel Qadir Khan presiding over a meeting regarding implementation of orders given by Prime Minister Anwaarul Haq during his recent visit of Quetta

Six more members inducted in interim Balochistan cabinet; allotted portfolios as well

New caretaker Provincial Ministers take oath increasing tally of interim cabinet members to 11; Dr. Amir Jogezei given portfolio of Health, Amanullah Kanrani allotted Law & Parliamentary Affairs

Independent Report
QUETTA: The interim cabinet of Balochistan was expanded further with six more members inducted in it on Wednesday.

With induction of six more members, the tally of caretaker provincial cabinet increased to 11. Those included are: Dr. Amir Muhammad Khan Jogezei, Amanullah Kanrani, Nawabzada Jamal Khan Raisani, Sheikh Mehmoodul Hasan Mandokhail, Sardar Ejaz Jaffar and Asifur Rehman.

Meanwhile, the newly elected members of the cabinet took oath the same evening at the Governor House.

The Governor Balochistan, Malik Abdul

Wali Khan Kakar administered oath to the new caretaker Provincial Ministers at the ceremony.

Also present on the occasion was the caretaker Chief Minister, Mir Ali Mardan Khan Domki. The oath taking ceremony was also attended by the caretaker provincial Ministers, Advisors to the Chief Ministers, Chief Secretary, Inspector General of Police, other high ups besides the dignitaries from different walks of the life.

Later, the new caretaker Minister were also assigned the portfolios by the caretaker Chief Minister.

According to an official hand out issued here the same evening, Dr. Amir Muhammad Khan Jogezei was assigned the portfolio

of Health, Amanullah Kanrani assigned the portfolio of Law, Parliamentary Affairs and Prosecution.

Similarly, Nawabzada Jamal Khan Raisani was given the portfolio of sports, Youth Affairs and Culture while Sheikh Mehmoodul Hasan Mandokhail and Sardar Ejaz Jaffar were assigned the portfolios of Local Government & Rural Development and Public Health Engineering & Population Welfare respectively while Asifur Rehman would serve as the caretaker Provincial Minister for Inter-Provincial Coordination.

Soon after the oath taking, the Governor and caretaker Chief Minister greeted the new caretaker Provincial Ministers.



QUETTA: Balochistan Governor Malik Abdul Wali Khan Kakar administering oath of new Caretaker Ministers of Balochistan Assembly, Caretaker CM Ali Mardan Khan Domki is also present on the occasion

Governor pays tributes to Sardar Naseer Tareen: Sustainable solution to collective problems not possible without collective endeavours: Kakar

Independent Report
QUETTA: The Governor Balochistan, Malik Abdul Wali Khan Kakar has stated that it is not possible to find out sustainable solution to the collective nature problems.

He stressed the need to prepare a comprehensive policy for overcoming the climate change. In addition to this, there is a dire need to plan maximum trees in the fields and on mountains of the province to achieve the goal of "Green and Clean" Balochistan.

This and similar other views were expressed by the Governor Balochistan while addressing the ceremony in connection with

Sardar Naseer Tareen Conservation Award arranged at the Balochistan Rural Support Programme (BRSP) here the other day.

It may be mentioned here that Sardar Naseer Tareen Conservation Award was arranged with cooperation of BRSP and Centre for Peace and Development.

Also present on the occasion were the chief of BRSP, Tahir Rasheed, Nadir Gul Baraich, Malik Saleem Kasi, Mrs. Roshan Khurshheed Bharucha, Nawabzada Mehboob Jogezei, Nawabzada Lashkari Raisani, provincial administrative secretaries and people from development sectors.

The Governor highly appreciated the services of Sardar Naseer Khan Tareen saying that the small sapling planted by him (Sardar Tareen) for conservation of the environment and wildlife has now grown up as a long strong tree.

He said that the late Sardar Naseer Tareen is a very prominent name for ensuring the basic facilities in backward rural areas of the province, and his services would be remembered for long. He said that it is a healthy tradition to acknowledge the services of Sardar Naseer Tareen and attribute conservation award in his name.

Caretaker CM grieved over martyrdom of police cop

Independent Report
QUETTA: The caretaker Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Ali Mardan Khan Domki has expressed grief and sorrow over the martyrdom of a police personnel in a firing incident took place at Sariab road Quetta on Wednesday morning.

In a condemnation statement issued here on Wednesday, the caretaker Chief Minister said that the police and security institutions have rendered great sacrifices for establishing law and order in the province. He said that such cowardly acts can't demoralize our law enforcement agencies.

The caretaker Chief Minister expressed sympathy with the bereaved family and prayed that may Allah Almighty rest the departed soul into its eternal peace and give enough patience to the bereaved family to bear the tragic loss.

QUETTA: CEO QESCO Abdul Karim Jamali meeting with Caretaker Chief Minister Balochistan Mir Mardan Ali Khan Domki

Seminar on missing persons at QPC: Speakers voice concern over issue of missing persons in Balochistan

Independent Report
QUETTA: A seminar was held under the auspices of Voice for Baloch Missing Persons (VBMP) here at the Quetta Press Club on Wednesday.

The President of Balochistan National Party and former Chief Minister, Sardar Akhtar Mengal presided over the seminar.

Also participated in the seminar was by the prominent lawyer, Rahib Khan Buledi, Chairman VBMP, Nasrullah Baloch, senior leader of National party and former Senator, Mir Kabir Muhammad Shahi and representatives of the civil society.

The families including women and children of the missing person also participated in the seminar.

The speakers including BNP chief Sardar Akhtar Mengal voiced great concern about the issue of non-recovery of the missing persons.

They alleged that the disappearances of the missing persons are still continued in the province with no respite in the sight.

They said that the families of missing persons are waiting for their dear ones. They demanded of the government and concerned authorities to take cognizance of the issue and recover all those disappeared so far.

Daily Voice of Masses
Independent

Thursday August 31, 2023

Some relief

Former prime minister Imran Khan's legal team and party loyalists may rejoice in their consolation victory at the Islamabad High Court, but the suspension of Mr Khan's sentence in the Toshakhana case does little for him in the larger scheme of things.

His conviction and, therefore, his disqualification from holding public office continue to stand, and until his appeal against the trial court's verdict is disposed of, his political fate remains in limbo. Bail or not, it is also unlikely that he will be allowed to walk free anytime soon: as has been the case with other political leaders arrested in recent months, the state could bring new cases against him to bypass release orders.

The wheels are already in motion. Soon after the IHC announced its decision, it surfaced that a special court constituted to try Mr Khan under the Official Secrets Act had directed Attock Jail authorities to keep him locked up and produce him before the court on Aug 30 for the 'missing cipher' case.

It had previously been commented that the IHC would find itself compelled to give some relief to the PTI chief, especially after a Supreme Court bench headed by the chief justice made adverse observations regarding 'procedural defects' in Mr Khan's conviction in the Toshakhana case. Though the SC ultimately restrained itself from intervening more forcefully in the matter, it put the IHC on the spot.

While the apex court's 'reservations' were justifiably criticised as 'interference' in the high court's workings, it bears mentioning that the manner in which Mr Khan was tried and eventually convicted left a lot to be desired. No wonder that independent observers saw it merely as another example of unelected quarters inflicting punishment on a political leader who had dared cross them.

As the aphorism goes, justice must not only be done, but seen to be done. At some point in Pakistan's recent political history, the law stopped being a reference point for what is right and wrong or what is permissible and what is not. Perhaps it was always so.

Court cases, especially those that have involved political actors, have always seemed more like a means through which different factions within the state may assert their dominance over the other. Despite many bitter experiences over the years, though, nothing seems to change. Those who were once the victims are now perpetuating the same cycle of violence under the patronage of their own oppressors, and those being oppressed today are just as likely to do the same whenever the roles are inevitably reversed. If the situation appears hopeless, it is only so because those who have had the power to change it have consciously chosen not to. Our leaders must answer: when do they want this to stop?



Zahid Hussain

Inflated electricity bills in the country have triggered an eruption of public indignation that had been simmering for long. Discontent over the escalating cost of living has now exploded into mass protests. The unbearable hike in electricity rates seems to be the proverbial last straw.

Angry protesters are now out on the streets, threatening to bring down the edifice of the state. It is now left to a hybridised interim administration to face the public's wrath. Stuck between the IMF deal and growing unrest in the country, the options for the caretaker set-up are limited. The crisis over excessively priced electricity indicates a structural problem that has been aggravated by flawed policies pursued by successive governments over the

past several decades.

A patch-up job will not help resolve a chronic problem that requires massive systemic reforms. And that is beyond the capacity of a short-term interim arrangement led by a novice who has apparently been imposed by the security establishment. The multiple taxes and surcharges included in the electricity bills are nothing less than extortion by a state unable to collect taxes from the politically powerful landed and business classes. The burden has shifted to the already over-taxed middle and lower middle classes.

What has made the situation extremely combustible is the prevailing political uncertainty. The spontaneous outburst of anger has all the potential of turning into a mass movement against the existing system. You just have to listen to the chants of protesters against the privileged power elite. Events like this could easily ignite a prairie fire engulfing the entire system.

The ongoing public protests have brought to the surface contradictions embedded in the existing power structure. They have also

deepened the predicament of political parties that were part of the former ruling coalition. The alliance bears much blame for the worsening economic crisis. The disastrous policies of the Dar period may not have been solely responsible for the economic downside but they are just as much to blame as the approach of previous dispensations. The situation has posed a huge dilemma for the PML-N, with elections approaching.

It will be hard for the party to go to the polls with such a liability. The optics of the former prime minister and his finance minister arriving in London for consultations with the supreme leader were hardly comforting for party supporters and voters. The party is at a loss as to how to react to the public protests, particularly in its former stronghold of Punjab, just two weeks after its government ended.

It is apparent that the decision to include excessive taxes in the electricity bill was taken by the PML-N-led government and certainly not by the caretaker administration. While exempting the retailers and

thriving real estate businesses, the former finance minister conveniently shifted the burden to the common people. It is a lame excuse that it was necessary to meet IMF conditionalities. The fiscal gap could have been bridged by removing those exemptions as per the requirement of the IMF rather than fleecing the public.

With little to show for its performance during its 16-month rule, and now with street protests breaking out, it is hardly surprising that the PML-N favours an extension in the election date, as suggested by the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) in order to complete the delimitation process required under the recently concluded population census. Given this uncertainty and the prevailing confusion in party ranks, it is hardly surprising that Nawaz Sharif has yet again delayed his return to the country. He is now expected to come back in mid-October.

Meanwhile, differences within the former ruling alliance over the election timeframe have

become sharper, with the PPP taking an obvious U-turn and demanding that elections be held within 90 days as stipulated in the Constitution. It seems that the PPP's changed position on the election timeframe is for reasons of expediency, as the party doesn't want any delimitation of constituencies in Sindh that could result in an increase in National Assembly seats in Karachi at the expense of the rural areas. The issue has become more contentious with the MQM now siding with the PML-N over the delay.

Meanwhile, the Pakistan Bar Council, too, has demanded that polls be held within 90 days. However, it seems highly improbable that the ECP will change its plan and agree to hold elections on the basis of the old population count. It may lead to yet another court battle, deepening the political turmoil.

Growing public unrest over inflation has simply added to the multiple challenges the state confronts. The public outrage over inflated electricity bills is just a symptom of a much deeper problem.

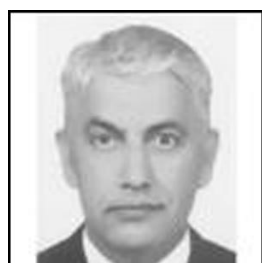
The escalating cost of living has pushed millions of more people below the poverty line and massively increased the ranks of the unemployed. The worsening state of the economy and growing political instability have also put our national security at risk. It is perhaps one of the most serious situations the country has faced in recent times. The prospect of a nuclear-armed nation collapsing under its own contradictions is frightening.

But the powers that be seem completely oblivious of the gathering storm. They remain occupied with their own agenda. While the country is imploding, the security agencies have apparently intensified the crackdown against the opposition, further destabilising the political situation. Recent draconian laws are now being used with impunity against everyone who dares to speak out.

This is the last thing the country needs while facing an existentialist threat. The rumbling of the coming storm is loud and clear, if the ruling elite are prepared to heed the warning. -- Courtesy Dawn

The gathering storm

The date debate



Muhammad Waqar Rana

Mark Tushnet in his book 'Why the constitution matters' argues that the constitution matters because it provides a structure for a civil government that assures liberties. In developing democracies, constitutions also matter a lot. Any slight deviation, for any reason whatsoever, be it state necessity or political expediency, from the constitutional precepts can be fatal for democracy, rule of law and the people. The political and constitutional history of Pakistan is abundant with instances of abrogation and abeyances of constitutions. For a regular citizen, the constitution and the law hardly have any meaning. The constitution however remains the only protection and unifying force for a fledgling federation weak-

ened by divisions and polarization. A colorful gloss put on the constitution in long and lengthy judicial sermons seems like beautifying marginal notes and nothing more. The constitution needs to be treated like a scripture.

It is in this context that the debate about fixing the date for general elections to the national and four provincial assemblies is to be approached. The caretaker government remains non-committal in its stance. The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) in its response to the president's letter seems clear in its stance that the power to fix the date for elections vests in it. That the time limit given in the constitution is not sacrosanct. The outgoing leader of the opposition and the governor of Punjab have been vocal in giving February 2024 as the time for elections. Their stance is aligned with the position taken by the major political parties which have been avoiding elections for the last one year for political expediency.

Two provincial assemblies were dissolved but the governors failed to fix the date for the elections. The matter ended up in courts and was lost somewhere due

to differences having arisen amongst the brethren on the issue of assumption of jurisdiction — with the consequence that despite clear orders by the Supreme Court the PDM government and their appointed governors refused to implement those orders. The ECP, a constitutionally mandated institution to organize elections, also joined the cause of the former federal government and deviated from its constitutional mandate without any fear of accountability. Caretaker governments installed in the provinces were allowed to continue beyond 90 days.

The term of five years of the previous National Assembly would have expired on August 12, 2023. The prime minister, Shehbaz Sharif, however — seemingly to gain political advantage — on August 9, 2023 advised the president under Article 58(1) of the constitution to dissolve the National Assembly. It thus stood dissolved on August 9, 2023.

Having advised the president to dissolve the National Assembly, for constitutional purposes, the prime minister failed to notice that he had lost the power to advise the presi-

dent in the performance of constitutional functions for which the prime minister had to have the confidence of the majority of the members of the National Assembly. After giving the advice for dissolution he lost that power for lacking two underlying constitutional requirements, responsible government and representative character, which provided constitutionality to his advice to the president. This constitutional fiasco may have a serious bearing upon many actions of the previous federal government. It is an established constitutional principle of Westminster parliamentary democracy that the prime minister can advise the sovereign to dissolve the House of Commons. But this rule has exceptions. When a motion for no-confidence is tabled against the prime minister the sovereign may refuse dissolution and instead thereof allow the opposition leader to form the government. When the prime minister advises dissolution his/her advice usually contains the date for the next elections. The sitting government has this advantage in choosing an appropriate time for elections. There is a convention of holding elections at an early date. In the

political history of Great Britain elections were never disputed on the ground of rigging or manipulation by the sitting governments. This principle was followed in the 1973 constitution of Pakistan as well. But the events of 1977 provided a ground to change this rule. Instead of improving the political culture and conduct of leaders, an expedience was found that seemingly further compromised the integrity of the electoral process.

A system of caretaker setup was introduced. Article 48 was amended by PO 14 of 1985 and clause (5) was added whereunder the president in case of dissolution would fix the date of elections not later than 100 days of the dissolution and also appoint a caretaker cabinet. Through the 8th Amendment the period of 100 days was reduced to 90 days. Through the 18th Amendment (2010) Article 48(5) was substituted and amended to the effect that the words 'notwithstanding anything contained in clause 1' was added for the reason that in clause (1), the words 'act on and' were added. On the other hand, read literally, the newly added subsection (1) of Section 57 starts with 'subject to the constitution' — and the con-

stitution provides that the president shall appoint the date for elections. Moreover, since the president does not issue notification and the matter was not to be left to the caretaker governments, obviously the ECP had to announce the date(s) appointed by the president or the governors respectively, in the official gazette. It is a machinery provision. The difference between the words 'announce' and 'appoint' was perhaps overlooked by the ECP. In SMC 1 of 2023, the Supreme Court has held that power to appoint the date of elections in case of premature dissolution vested in the governors. The same applies to the president.

Elections were delayed for no reason after the 1956 constitution came into force. In 1970, the mandate of the majority was not respected. Since 1985, almost every election has remained disputed. Pakistan needs stability and peace for development and prosperity. In the ultimate analysis, the people are the best judges of their leaders — provided they are allowed to elect them or reject them through the ballot for which timely and transparent elections are mandatory. -- Courtesy TheNews

The hardest hit



Abdullah Fadil

As monsoon rains bear down on Pakistan, children's vulnerability to climate change and extreme weather again comes to the fore. Seasonal rains have already wreaked havoc, displacing communities, damaging homes and vital infrastructure, and claiming the lives of at least 211 people, including 87 children. Tens of thousands of people are currently affected by floods in Punjab. Extreme weather events are becoming more frequent and destructive. All too often, it is children who pay the heaviest price.

The scale of last year's floods was unlike anything witnessed before. One third of the country was under water, 33 million people affected, over 1,700 lives lost. Homes, livelihoods, future hopes and dreams, wiped out in a flash. We cannot let this happen again. Pakistan is a known climate hotspot, suffering from floods, heatwaves and droughts that directly threaten families and livelihoods. It is only a matter of time before another large-scale climate disaster strikes.

While Pakistan cannot alter the course of climate change alone, there is a clear need to invest in its children today to reduce their vulnerability to climate change in the future. Last year's floods made pre-existing inequities and deprivations painfully obvious: it is the poorest, most vulnerable girls, boys and women living in underserved areas who are bearing the brunt of climate

change. What little they had was washed away, and access to essential services was severed or disrupted.

Many of the hardest-hit districts were already among the most vulnerable in Pakistan. One-third of children aged five to 16 years were out of school. The floods damaged or destroyed 30,000 schools, locking an additional 3.5m children out of learning. We know from experience that the longer children remain out of school, the less likely they are to return, exposing them to protection risks such as child labour and child marriage. As part of its flood response, Unicef is providing education support for 258,000 children, but this is a drop in the ocean compared to the needs.

Pakistan's looming nutrition crisis has worsened with the floods, bringing immediate and long-term consequences for children's survival and well-being. Around 1.5m children in flood-affected areas are severely malnourished, the most life-threatening form of malnutrition. Low-birthweight babies continue to be born to mothers who themselves are malnourished. This robs Pakistan of human potential and capital that can help drive its economy forward: malnutrition results in a loss of three per cent in national GDP.

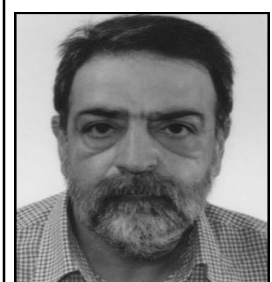
As Pakistan undergoes a period of political transition, nutrition and education must remain national priorities while flood recovery and rehabilitation continue. Pakistan has a window of opportunity to make critical investments in climate-resilient infrastructure and resilient services that bridge equity gaps and reach children, mothers and families in underserved areas. This is vital for not only education and nutrition, but also health, protection, water, hygiene and sanitation. Sadly, the children affected by the floods

in 2010 are again bearing the brunt of last year's devastation. Without real change and societal transformation, the future for children in affected communities looks bleak. Poverty has increased after the floods, further perpetuating the cycle of intergenerational poverty, increasing inequality and worsening outcomes.

Last year's climate devastation was a wake-up call for the world. With the right choices and investments, Pakistan can become a global leader on climate change solutions. This requires urgently addressing the underlying socio-economic inequities and deprivations neglected for far too long. The action must start at home, with governments at the national and provincial levels leading the way. The whole of society must contribute and play a pivotal role, including the private sector, philanthropists, civil society and communities. With Pakistan's house in order, efforts exerted and exhausted, the global community will have no option but to take its own moral and ethical responsibilities and make good on commitments to support Pakistan.

There is no time to lose. The caretaker government and the expected incoming elected government must prioritise sound fiscal policies, such as broadening the tax base and public financing for children. This will lead to the economic gains needed to address chronic malnutrition and increase access to quality education. Unicef is committed to supporting the government of Pakistan to strengthen and expand essential services for children and families and build back resilient systems. Without immediate action, vulnerability to climate shocks will only intensify, and children and the poorest communities will continue to suffer the most. -- Courtesy Dawn

Extreme misogyny



Mahir Ali

The latest chapter in the Taliban's crusade against women was unveiled this week, when at least 60 potential scholars expecting to be accommodated at a university in Dubai were turned away from Kabul airport. It followed a series of similar gestures that have stretched from stripping the right of girls to secondary or higher education, to bans on women working for aid agencies and a ban on hair and beauty parlours.

During the Doha conversations that preceded the cakewalk into Kabul two years ago this month, the interlocutors from Afghanistan indicated that Taliban 2.0 would be different from their Pakistani- and Saudi-backed incarnation in the mid-1990s.

It has not worked out that way. Just last week, the Band-i-Amir national park in Bamian was declared off-limits to women. "I've heard more than one Afghan woman talk about how next the Taliban won't allow them to breathe," Human Rights Watch's Heather Barr was quoted as saying. "That sounds very hyperbolic until you see them doing things like actually trying to stop women from being out doors and enjoying nature."

The Taliban response? "Going sightseeing is not a must for women." That comes from a spokesman called Mohammed Khalid Hanafi who, like many of his Taliban brethren, seems to be unaware that he wouldn't exist without his mother's nurturing instincts following the

agony of childbirth. In other words, as the singer-songwriter Peggy Seeger queried: "How can a man of woman born/ Thereafter treat her sex with scorn?"

She wasn't talking about Afghanistan. Prejudices against women have been entrenched to various degrees in all societies, and their recent resurgence in the US is deplorable but not surprising. Former first lady Laura Bush at one point pretended to be keen on women's rights in Afghanistan, which served as one of the post-hoc excuses for the 2001 invasion, but appears to have had nothing to say about their depletion in the US.

Only a few American journalists have acknowledged that women in urban Afghanistan experienced the least limitations on their ambitions during the Soviet-backed PDPA phase. As schoolteacher Glenn Sacks noted in Counterpunch this month, "In 1985, women accounted for 65pc of the 7,000 students at Kabul University — unthinkable in previous times."

Some US initiatives after the 2001 occupation may have echoed Soviet ones, but that could never officially be acknowledged — not least because back in the 1980s, the Afghan mujahideen were receiving instructions from America on slitting the throats of schoolteachers who dared to instruct girls. An outcome of recent Taliban policies has been to turn Afghanistan into one of the few countries where more women than men commit suicide. The ruling clique seems not to care.

There is a perception that the Taliban leadership is divided between those who might be willing to make social concessions, and a hard-line faction keen to reverse even the tiniest nod to liberalisation. Small wonder, then, that no country has formally recognised the regime — not even Pakistan, the Saudis and UAE, the

three sponsors of the Taliban's first incarnation. In a recent report, BBC's Lyse Doucet quoted a Kabul beautyician as saying that the mounting pressure on women is part of an effort to win international recognition. If that's true, it's a strange way of going about it. One would have thought that some movement in the opposite direction might be more effective.

It is unlikely that any harm can come from talking to the Taliban — and the regime's emissaries are reputedly frequent flyers. So far, there is also no evidence that diplomatic dialogues will yield meaningful results. The conversations should nonetheless continue, if only because there is no obvious alternative. While resisting IS-K, the Taliban have also exercised control over opium production, and, more broadly, security for travellers is reported to have vastly improved since the US occupation — which is hardly surprising, given the Taliban and their affiliates were once the main purveyors of insecurity.

There has been talk of Afghanistan profiting by allowing exploitation of the rare earths buried underneath its soil — most likely by Chinese entities unbothered by violations of human rights. The country could obviously benefit from such engagements, given its most lucrative produce is the chief ingredient for heroin. The nation's future, however, will not be determined by royalties. It cannot possibly prosper without liberating women from their shackles. Afghanistan is not entirely an outlier in the Muslim world in the context of women's rights, but it goes further in denying them than even its most retrogressive peers. Plenty of nations have contributed to Afghanistan's plight, but right now its destiny is in the hands of the (originally Pakistan-spawned) Taliban. -- Courtesy Dawn

Caretaker govt to remain apolitical, impartial: Azam

PESHAWAR (APP): Caretaker Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Muhammad Azam Khan on Wednesday said that the caretaker government will keep itself restricted to its constitutional and legal role and remain apolitical, impartial and will perform its duties without any sort of political affiliation.

He expressed these views while presiding over the 9th meeting of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa caretaker cabinet here.

Besides caretaker cabinet members, the meeting was attended by Chief Secretary Nadeem Aslam Chaudhry and concerned administrative secretaries. In his address to the participants of the meeting, the Chief Minister welcomed the new cabinet members. The chief minister said that the role, responsibilities, and dos and don'ts of the caretaker setup is very much clear in the relevant provisions of the Constitution and Election Commission Act 2017.

Azam Khan remarked that the caretaker government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa is faced with two major challenges: law and order and financial crunch, and continued that improvement of the pre-

vailing law and order situation would be the top priority of government and pledged to make all-out efforts to this end.

He said that the province is largely dependent on the federal government, with regard to its revenue, and more than 90 percent of its revenue comes from various federal receipts and added that after the merger of ex-FATA, the population of the province has increased, and as per the existing population ratio, the NFC shares of the province has climbed to 19 percent of the federal divisible pool, but unfortunately, it is getting only 14.6 percent.

The Chief Minister remarked that at the time of the ex-FATA merger, it was committed by the federating entities that three percent of their NFC share would be provided for the newly merged districts, whereas it was also pledged that Rs. 100 billion would be provided to Khyber Pakhtunkhwa every year for the accelerated development of the NMDs, but during the last five years, only 103 billion has been provided to the province out of the total 500 billion.

Highlighting the priorities of his government, the chief minister reiterated

that his government will focus special attention on merit, transparency, and good governance in its day-to-day business, adding that the administrative secretaries of the provincial government has already been directed to take the necessary steps to this end.

He urged the administrative secretaries to give honest and sincere advice to their concerned ministers with regard to the official business of the department. He further directed the cabinet members and administrative secretaries to identify corruption cases, if any, in their respective departments and initiate appropriate actions against those involved. The agenda for the meeting encompassed seven key points, notably the approval of project revisions, the establishment of a forensic science laboratory at Peshawar, the nomination of an administrative judge for anti-terrorism courts, and fixing matters relating to the Police Public School teachers' case in court. The meeting deliberations encompassed the approval of supplementary funding for the Forensic Science Laboratory in Peshawar and revisions to PCI for the Janikhel Bannu Police Station.



LAHORE: Governor Punjab Muhammad Balighur Rehman addressing the launching ceremony of Literate Cholistan Project Phase 2 organized by Punjab Education Foundation.

Punjab Governor says: PEF lighting the candle of knowledge in remote areas commendable

Independent Report
LAHORE: Governor Punjab, Muhammad Balighur Rehman, attended the launch ceremony of Literate Cholistan Project 2 organized by Punjab Education Foundation here today at Governor House Lahore as a special guest. Secretary School Education Punjab Muhammad Ahsan Waheed, Managing Director Punjab Education Foundation Manzoor Javed Ali, Vice Chancellor University of Education, Talat Naseer Pasha and other senior officers were present in the ceremony.

Muhammad Balighur Rehman said that education is the way through which nations develop. He said that it is commendable that Punjab Education Foundation is lighting the candle of knowledge in remote and backward areas through public private partnership. He said that the moral training along with education is very important, adding that high moral values including honesty and truthfulness should be inculcated in the youth. He further said that an educated person neither believes nor spreads what he hears without researching himself. He said that it is very impor-

tant to research the news and information spread on social media. There was a time when Muslims made a name for themselves in education, science and research all over the world. But today we are lagging behind in research. We have to make joint efforts for bringing improvement in the education sector, he added. Governor Punjab said that the best investment is on the education and training of children and youth. Governor Punjab said that Punjab Education Foundation (PEF) is doing good work. It is spreading the light of education in remote areas.

Naqi urged to take notice of non-payments to printers, publishers by PCTB

LAHORE (APP): Lahore Chamber of Commerce and Industry (LCCI) on Wednesday urged Caretaker Chief Minister Punjab Mohsin Naqi and relevant authorities to take notice of non-payment of Rs 5.5 billion to respective printers and publishers by Punjab Curriculum and Textbook Board (PCTB) as they were facing a severe financial crunch.

The LCCI President Kashif Anwar made this demand after having detailed meeting with a delegation of printers and publishers led by Khalid Pervaiz here at Lahore Chamber. The LCCI Senior Vice President Zafar Mahmood Chaudhry, former president Muhammad Ali Mian, former vice president Faeemur Rehman Saigol, All Pakistan Anjuman Tajran (APAT) Secretary Information Zikaria Butt

and All Pakistan Printers Association (APPA) Chairman Syed Makram Abbas also spoke on the occasion.

The delegation informed the LCCI office-bearers that Punjab Curriculum and Textbook Board had issued a tender worth Rs 15 billion for printing of text books for students of public sector schools, however, the payment of Rs. 5.5 billion for this printing was still pending. They added that price of paper had increased many times and if the Board did not pay the remaining amount of Rs.5.5 billion to the printers and publishers, they would not be able to print textbooks for next academic year and millions of students would not get free books thus putting their career at stake. The government should take an immediate notice of this situation and direct the relevant authorities.



PESHAWAR: Provincial Ombudsman Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Syed Jamal ud Din presenting annual report 2022 to Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Governor Haji Ghulam Ali.

LHC reserves judgment on maintainability of petition against escalating bills, taxes

LAHORE (Online): Lahore High Court (LHC) has reserved judgment on maintainability of the petition against inflated electricity bills and recovery of taxes in bills.

The petition was filed by a citizen Muhammad Latif.

A single bench of LHC led by Justice Shams Mehmood Mirza took up the case for hearing Wednesday.

Ahmad Abdullah counsel for the petitioner argued in the case.

The learned judge while addressing counsel for petitioner remarked "yes, you will say what."

The counsel for petitioner said electricity bills have been enhanced and additional tax is being received.

Justice Shams Mehmood Mirza inquired you challenged hike in electricity bills on what basis.

The counsel for the petitioner said the inflated bills are being sent to the citizens.

Justice Shams Mehmood Mirza inquired up to what extent the basic rights are being violated. What law is being violated.

The counsel replied it is violation of article 2.

The learned judge inquired how it is violation of article 2 of the constitution.

The counsel for the petitioner could not give satisfactory reply.

The learned judge remarked what procedure people have adopted is correct procedure. This is the method that people force government to withdraw its decision by voicing protest.

The court reserved judgment on the maintainability of the petition.



KARACHI: Activists of Pakistan Commission for Human Rights hold placards and banner during protest on the eve of International Day of the Victims of Enforced Disappearances, at Frere Hall in Provincial Capital.

Dr Jamal Nasir says: Couple's test essential for controlling Thalassemia

RAWALPINDI (APP): Provincial Minister for Primary and Secondary Healthcare and Population Welfare, Punjab Dr Jamal Nasir has said that thalassemia disease can be controlled by conducting medical tests of the couple before marriage.

He said this while visiting Thalassemia House, Tipu Road here on Wednesday. The minister said that thalassemia patients were increasing in Pakistan while public awareness and blood screening were indispensable to control this disease.

He said that the provision of a transplant facility in the Thalassemia house was a vital initiative that would benefit thalassemia patients.

Dr Jamal urged the people to play their role in

eradicating thalassemia, adding the support of welfare organizations and philanthropists in Thalassemia House was valuable and citizens deserve tribute who donated blood for a noble cause.

He said there was a need to take special care of the children affected by thalassemia and it's our responsibility to help them to become beneficial citizens of the society despite their medical illness.

On the occasion, the provincial minister met the children affected by thalassemia and inquired about their well-being.

General (ret'd) Pervaiz Ahmed, Brig Kamran, Colonel Kamran, Dr Zoha, CEO Health Rawalpindi Dr Ijaz and others were also present on the occasion.

PTI's Ehsan Gul joins IPP

LAHORE (APP): Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf Chhuan vice president Ehsan Gul has announced to join the Istehkam-e-Pakistan Party (IPP).

He met with the General Secretary, IPP, Lahore Division, Mian Khalid Mahmood and announced to join the IPP. Ehsan Gul expressed full confidence in the leadership of Abdul Aleem Khan and Jahangir Khan Tareen. The IPP leader welcomed him in his party.

On this occasion, Ehsan Gul said that IPP is working on the vision of building, development and stability of the country. "The incident of May 9 is a historical tragedy, we strongly condemn the incident," he said and added that they are standing with their institutions and nation.

No ban on approval of layout plans of buildings: Maqbool

KARACHI (APP): Caretaker Sindh Chief Minister Justice (ret'd) Maqbool Bqar has categorically announced that the government will not place a ban or bar on approvals of the layout plans of residential and commercial buildings.

In a statement issued here on Wednesday, the Chief Minister said that there was no ban on the approval of the plans for the construction of commercial, and residential

buildings. However, violation of the building laws, rules, and regulations by the Sindh Building Control Authority or the builder(s) would not be tolerated, he said.

Talking about the regularization of the illegally constructed buildings, the caretaker CM said that no such proposal was under consideration at all.

The caretaker chief minister urged SBCA to encourage legal construction and simplify the procedure.

3 of family gunned down

SHEIKHUPURA (APP): Three members of a family were gunned down in Shaqur Khurd, in the jurisdiction of Factory Area police station, some 24 km away from here on Wednesday. According to police, unidentified people came on a motorcycle stormed into the house of Akram and opened indiscriminate fire at the family. As a result of which Akram and his two daughters- Fatima and Uzma sustained critical bullet injuries and died on the spot. The motive behind the triple murder was stated to be an old enmity over a piece of land.

On information, Factory Area police reached the spot and collected evidences.

The police have sent the bodies to hospital for postmortem. DPO Sheikhupura Zahid Nawaz Marwat directed the police to cordon off the area for the arrest of suspects at the earliest. Further investigation was underway.



LAHORE: Caretaker Provincial Minister Barrister Syed Azfar Ali Nasir addressing press conference at Director of Public Relations Office in Provincial Capital.

Lady shot injured by her father dies

MIANWALI (Online): Lady Doctor Sidra who was injured in firing by father has died in Rawalpindi hospital.

Father had shot injured his daughter lady doctor Sidra in Muslim Colony Mianwali 10 days earlier due to refusal by her to marry with her cousin.

Lady doctor was referred to Rawalpindi hospital in critical condition. She succumbed to injuries after 10 days.

According to police the bullets had hit her head and legs. Operation of her head was conducted but she died. According to sources lady doctor Sidra had requested her father that she wanted to marry with some educated person. This turned her father furious who opened firing on her.

Provincial Ombudsman calls on Governor, presents annual report of 2022

PESHAWAR (APP): Provincial Ombudsman said that 2,519 complaints were received by the office of the ombudsman among which 1,947 have been addressed.

He said that 492 complaints were related to Elementary and Secondary Education.

KP Governor appreciated the efforts of the ombudsman office and its overall performance to facilitate people.

Provincial caretaker govt initiates action against illegal mining

HYDERABAD (APP): Office on Wednesday. Besides stopping illegal mining wherever reported in the province, he informed that strict legal action is also being taken against the persons who were involved in illegal mining.

The provincial caretaker government also reviewing the lease permission and also taking action in this regard with the cooperation of the administration, he added.

HYDERABAD (APP): Caretaker Sindh Minister for Mines and Minerals Development Mir Khuda Bux Mari has informed that action has been initiated against all those who are involved in illegal mining of minerals in the province.

The minister informed this while presiding over a meeting of the officers of his department and later talking to media persons here at the Commissioner's



KARACHI: Hindu women celebrate the Hindu festival Raksha Bandhan at Laxmi Narayan Temple in Provincial Capital.

Minister assures steps for welfare of prisoners

KARACHI (APP): Sindh Caretaker Minister for Home and Prisons, Brig (ret'd) Haris Nawaz, on Wednesday, assured the Committee for the Welfare of Prisoners (CWP) of the maximum possible support for the welfare of inmates in the prisons.

He was talking to a 5-member delegation of CWP led by Barrister Haya Zahid, who called on him. Sindh Home Secretary Syed Aijaz Ali Shah was also present in the meeting, according to a statement issued here.

The minister was briefed that the CWP has been working for the last many years in the field of legal aid, legal empowerment, welfare and rehabilitation as well as research and policy work while it also provides legal repre-

sentation to first-time under-trial prisoners, who were poor and needy and were implicated in petty offences.

The minister was informed that 2,838 prisoners were interviewed and provided with 'legal advice' by qualified lawyers in the previous two years by CWP and 2,690 vakalatnamas (power of attorneys) were signed and filed in courts while 2235 cases were disposed of with certified judicial orders.

The committee successfully pleaded 1,349 applications for bail and also assisted 41 prisoners in the submission of fines and surety.

The committee also discussed with the home minister the financial issues being faced by CWP and requested support.

Enmity claims two lives in Nowshera

PESHAWAR (APP): At least two people were killed when unidentified armed men fired at them in Nowshera district of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa on Wednesday.

Khweshgi police said the incident took place in Khweshgi Bala where two men identified as Farooq and Abdullah Umar were fired at by unknown assailants.

Both the men died on the scene while the assailants whose identity could not be ascertained so far, managed to escape the area.

Police informed that the killing was a result of old enmity between the deceased and assailants.

Lyari gang commander arrested by Rangers

KARACHI (APP): The Pakistan Rangers Sindh and Police in a joint intelligence based operation in Lyari area on Wednesday arrested an alleged commander of a Lyari Gang and recovered a hand grenade and arms, ammunition from his possession.

Arrested was identified as Muhammad Saleem alias Mullah Sohail, a most wanted gangster of Lyari, according to a news release.

The accused joined Uzair Baloch group in 2003 and in 2009 joined People's Aman Committee.



LAHORE: Former Federal Minister Mian Javed Latif addressing press conference at Press Club in Provincial Capital.

Crackdown against vehicles emitting smoke launched in Abbottabad

ABBOTTABAD (APP): Vehicle Emission Testing Station (VETS) in charge and Traffic Police, acting upon directives of the Secretary of Transport and the Director of Transport on Wednesday launched a campaign against vehicles emitting smoke.

The crackdown has specifically targeted a multitude of vehicles emitting smoke across various locations within the city. Legal actions have been taken against these smoke-emitting vehicles, while fitness certificates have been issued for those adhering to emissions standards.

The VETS in charge Sofia Jadoon in collaboration with the traffic police, conducted inspections in the localities of Havelian. They imposed fines on 50 vehicles emitting smoke and awarded fitness certificates to 42 vehicles.

Sofia Jadoon highlighted the substantial contribution of smoke-emitting vehicles to environmental pollution. She said that they have taken proactive measures in accordance with

instructions from the Transport authorities in Abbottabad city.

Vehicle owners have been earnestly advised to ensure optimal engine conditions to mitigate environmental contamination. Sofia Jadoon underscored that emissions not only fuel air pollution but also exacerbate noise pollution. Stringent measures are being enforced against both issues, including subjecting multiple vehicles to emissions tests to tackle air quality concerns.

Recalling a collaboration with the German agency GTZ, Sofia Jadoon mentioned that a smoke testing station was established in Peshawar in 1997, focusing on evaluating smoke emissions from vehicles leaving the city.

She further said that over time, this initiative has expanded its coverage to encompass significant provincial cities such as Peshawar, Mardan, Swat, Malakand, Abbottabad, Mansehra, Kohat, Dera Ismail Khan, and Bannu.

Lady shot injured by her father dies

MIANWALI (Online): Lady Doctor Sidra who was injured in firing by father has died in Rawalpindi hospital.

Father had shot injured his daughter lady doctor Sidra in Muslim Colony Mianwali 10 days earlier due to refusal by her to marry with her cousin.

Lady doctor was referred to Rawalpindi hospital in critical condition. She succumbed to injuries after 10 days.

According to police the bullets had hit her head and legs. Operation of her head was conducted but she died. According to sources lady doctor Sidra had requested her father that she wanted to marry with some educated person. This turned her father furious who opened firing on her.

Hindus celebrate 'Raksha Bandhan'

SUKKUR (APP): The Hindu community observed their brotherhood festival commonly known as 'Raksha Bandhan' at the main Sadhu Bela Temple here on Wednesday.

Wearing colorful clothes, the participants observed their religious festival by tying the knot of protection and distributed sweets. They said that they used to observe the festival every year in this month, adding that Hindus celebrated the festival on sighting full moon in the lunar calendar's Savan or Sravana month, during which Hindu women used to tie a thread of Rakhi around their brothers' wrist and pray for their safety.



LAHORE: Former Federal Minister Mian Javed Latif addressing press conference at Press Club in Provincial Capital.

Pakistan's economy linked with IT development: Alvi

ISLAMABAD (APP): President Dr Arif Alvi on Wednesday stressed the need to equip youth with skills of latest technology saying that the Pakistan's economy was linked with the development of Information Technology in the country.

He said Pakistan had become the second largest free lance market in the world, however the people were facing issues related to financial transactions.

He underlined that by easing the financial movement and financial transactions in Pakistan, the country's economy could further boost and its GDP growth rate could increase by 2-3%. Addressing the closing ceremony of Huawei ICT (Information and Communication Technologies) competition 2022-23 here, the president said IT had now become unavoidable part of almost every filed of life.

He informed that Huawei was going to open its global service center in Pakistan which would cre-

ate employment opportunities besides ensuring technology transfer to the youth of the country.

"This ICT Competition Program from Huawei speaks volumes of the efforts made in the past decade and how this Industry-Academia Relationship has been thriving towards providing the solid backbone towards the ICT Industry of Pakistan", he added. The president stressed that the universities should arrange boot camp in the campuses to train the university graduates and make them ready for the market.

He also urged the universities to start two-year undergraduate associate degree programs for the students as the growing technology around the globe does not need degrees but skills. Huawei Technologies held the closing ceremony of Huawei ICT Competition 2022-23 here at the Aiwan-e-Sadar, celebrating the success of the Pakistani teams that brought home prizes in the regional com-

petitions.

The students from Pakistan had won second and third prize in the Network Track and third prize in the Innovation Track at the Huawei ICT Competition 2022-2023 Global Final concluded at Huawei Headquarters in Shenzhen, China. The first to be held in person since 2019, the event's culmination was a competition between finalists in 146 teams from 36 countries.

The president said in today's time, every person irrespective of which filed he or she was in, should be familiar with the basics of modern technology including Artificial Intelligence, IT, and clouding etc.

He said the political and bureaucratic leadership must also be equipped with the basic skills of IT and modern technology.

He said a program was initiated by the government to train 1000 bureaucrats in IT field but despite several years, only 800 received the required training due to lack of will by the officers.



ISLAMABAD: President Dr. Arif Alvi addressing the closing ceremony of Huawei ICT Competition 2022-23 at Aiwan-e-Sadr.

Sanjrani, FNF delegation discuss multilateral issues of mutual interest

ISLAMABAD (APP): A delegation of the Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Freedom (FNF) called on Chairman Senate, Muhammad Sadiq Sanjrani here on Wednesday.

The delegation consisted Dr Carsten Klein (Regional Director, FNF South Asia), Ms. Birgit Lamm (Head of Country Office, FNF Pakistan), and Ms. Rebea Firdous (Communication Officer, FNF Pakistan Office) engaged in a comprehensive dialogue with the chairman Senate.

The topics of discussion spanned a range of crucial areas, most notably renewable energy initiatives, fostering women's entrepreneurship, and fortifying the Pak-German trade relationship within the ambit of the GSP+ framework.

Of particular note was the foundation's unwavering commitment to nurturing a business-friendly landscape in Pakistan. This commitment was further underlined by an insightful exploration of challenges faced by businesses and entrepreneurs, with a focus on proactive solutions.

In addition, FNF shared valuable insights from their ongoing study titled "Energy Security and Transition to Renewable Energies in South Asia," illuminating pathways toward sustainable energy practices.

The foundation also shed light on their collaborative efforts in empowering women entrepreneurs, a pivotal aspect of economic progress, in close collaboration with chambers of commerce in both Pakistan and Germany.

A poignant moment arose during the interaction as the visiting delegation presented a symbolic fragment of the Berlin Wall, evoking historical memories and embodying the spirit of unity.

In response, Sadiq Sanjrani exhibited profound appreciation for this gesture of remembrance.

Recognizing the historical value and symbolic significance of the artifact, he directed its placement within the Senate Museum.

Aneeq stresses unity among faiths, condemns image-tarnishing efforts

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Minister for Religious Affairs and Interfaith Harmony Aneeq Ahmed, addressing the Interfaith Harmony Conference at the Pakistan National Council of the Arts on Wednesday, emphasized the need for unity among all faiths and condemned any attempts to tarnish the image of religions.

"Who are those individuals seeking to distort the essence of faith?" asked Aneeq, as he addressed a captivated audience. "We are brothers, and in our presence, any attack on a place of worship is a grave injustice."

Reflecting on recent events such as the incident in Jaranwala, the minister

stated that such incidents should never have occurred. However, he pointed out that there had been even worse atrocities against various communities in neighboring India.

"Those who lost their lives in India among the Christian brethren are not just Christians but also our brothers," he passionately expressed.

He further reiterated that Pakistan was not merely a "State," but an Islamic Republic. "We are the People of the Book, and we are supplicants of the One God," he proclaimed.

Aneeq extended his message of inclusivity by highlighting the divine nature of all scriptures, including Torah, Psalms, Bible, and the Holy Quran. "These are all divine revelations, the final one being the Quran," he affirmed.

Turning his attention to the tragic incident in Manipur, India, where over 150 Christians lost their lives, the minister clarified that no Christian had been harmed in Pakistan. "We believe that what happened in Jaranwala should never have happened," he stated emphatically.

He applauded the collective stance of the nation alongside their Christian brethren in the face of the Jaranwala tragedy. "We are a resilient nation, and our protest speaks volumes," he declared.



ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Federal Minister for Interior Sarfraz Ahmed Bugti in a meeting with visiting Saudi Delegation.

PM invites Enertech Holding Kuwait for further investment in Pakistan

ISLAMABAD (Online): Caretaker Prime Minister (PM) Anwar ul Haq Kakar has invited Kuwaiti companies for investment in Pakistan.

Head of Emerging Markets Enertech Holding Kuwait, Yasir Malik called on caretaker Prime Minister Anwar ul Haq Kakar in Islamabad.

He informed PM about Enertech's investment in Pakistan.

It has been told that PM appreciated Enertech's

work in Pakistan hoping it will further enhance its investment in Pakistan due to business friendly policies of government.

It is told that armed forces of Pakistan and Kuwait have signed an agreement in the headquarters of defence ministry of Kuwait.

This agreement is aimed at bolstering and expanding the bilateral cooperation in military and defence fields between the two countries.

Newly appointed Iranian envoy calls on minister

ISLAMABAD (APP): Newly appointed Iranian ambassador to Pakistan Reza Amiri-Moghaddam paid a courtesy visit to Caretaker Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Sami Saeed here on Wednesday.

Chief Economist Dr Nadeem Javid and Senior Joint Secretary Muazzam Ali also attended the meeting, a news release said.

During the meeting, the both sides discussed various avenues of collaboration between the two nations including bilateral trade, the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), cooperation in energy and economic sectors.

Minister Saeed warmly welcomed the envoy and felicitated him on assuming responsibilities as the Iranian Ambassador to Pakistan.

He emphasized the importance of the long-standing friendship between Pakistan and Iran and reiterated the commitment to further strengthening bilateral ties.

Both sides emphasized the need to enhance trade and connectivity between the two nations, expressing a mutual desire to boost the bilateral trade volume.

Ambassador Amiri-Moghaddam, during the talks, offered his country's cooperation in the energy sector, acknowledging Pakistan's energy security needs.



QUETTA: A relative of missing persons talking with leader of BNP Akhtar Jan at press club in Provincial Capital.

QCCI delegation meets him: Governor assures every possible cooperation to resolve issues

Independent Report
QUETTA: The Governor Balochistan, Malik Abdul Walik Khan Kakar has reaffirmed that complete protection of life and property of all those associated with industry and commerce is responsibility of the government.

He said that there is a key role of people from commerce and industry in stabilizing economic system and providing the people employments.

The Governor was speaking to a delegation comprising office bearers of the Quetta Chamber of Commerce and Industry (QCCI) who called on him here at the Governor House on Wednesday.

Abdullah Khan Achakzai led the delegation and apprised the Governor about the issues and hardships being faced by the traders and business community.

The Governor gave patient hearing to the issues as raised by the office bearers of QCCI.

He assured them of every possible cooperation to resolve their issues.

Chairman PTI challenges law ministry notification

ISLAMABAD (Online): PTI chairman has challenged in Islamabad High Court (IHC) law ministry notification on shifting court to Attock jail.

Chairman PTI filed petition in IHC in this regard through his counsel Sher Afzal Marwat. Law secretary, interior secretary, chief commissioner, IG and DG FIA have been made respondents in the petition.

Superintendent Adiala jail and Superintendent Attock jail are also respondents in this petition.

The court has been requested in the petition that the notification shifting court to Attock jail is illegal.



QUETTA: Provincial Secretary Prosecution Ghulam Ali Baloch meeting with Caretaker Chief Minister Balochistan Mir Mardan Ali Khan Domki

BAP delegation discusses election roadmap with ECP

ISLAMABAD (APP): A delegation of Balochistan Awami Party (BAP) on Wednesday held a meeting with the senior officials of the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) to deliberate the election roadmap.

The delegation comprising BAP senators Manzoor Kakar, Sana Jamali, Danesh Kumar and Naseebullah Bazai, in the meeting, conveyed their party's position on conducting elections within 90 days.

Besides Chief Election Commissioner Sikandar Sultan Raja, ECP members and senior officials attended the meeting.

The discussions were primarily centered on the demarcation of constituencies and other election related issues.

Manzoor Kakar mentioned efforts to organize a meeting of Balochistan's political parties to discuss constituency delineation and issues concerning general elections.

He intended to visit Balochistan for further discussions and would subsequently present their action plan to the Election Commission, he added.



QUETTA: Leader of JUI Mir Amanullah Notezai and Mir Parvez Rind meeting with Caretaker Provincial Information Minister Jan Muhammad Achakzai

Zubair Jamali pays tributes to martyr police constable

Independent Report
QUETTA: The caretaker Provincial Minister for Home and Tribal Affairs, Mir Zubair Jamali has paid tributes to the police constable martyred in a firing incident took place on Sariab road on Wednesday.

According to an official hand out issued here, Zubair Jamali took notice of the incident and sought report of the same from Deputy Inspector General of Police Quetta.

He said that the police personnel set a high example of dutifulness by rendering sacrifice of his life during the duty hours. The caretaker Minister expressed sympathy and condolence with the bereaved family of martyr police constable. He also prayed that may Allah Almighty rest the departed soul into its eternal peace and give enough strength and patience to the bereaved family to bear the tragic loss.

Babar says: ECP should announce date of general election

Independent Report
QUETTA (APP): Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) Balochistan leaders Chaudhry Babar and Javida Hamad Khan Wednesday said the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) should announce the date of the general elections by making new constituencies. In a statement issued here, they said that Muslim League-N was active in Balochistan under the leadership of Provincial President Sheikh Jafar Khan Mandukhel.

They said important political and tribal figures were being contacted to join the party.

They said that whenever the Muslim League (N) came to power, it laid a net of development works across the country.

This is the reason why Muslim League (N) has emerged as the largest political party in the country today, they said and added that Muslim League-N Balochistan was ready to take part in the general elections whenever the Election Commission announces the date so the PML-N would get success by participating fully in the elections across Balochistan.

They said, God willing, the coming time belongs to the PML-N and the party could form governments in the federation and provinces including Balochistan.

The party leader Mian Muhammad Nawaz Sharif will soon come to Pakistan and lead the election campaign, they said.



QUETTA: Caretaker Home Minister Caption (Retd) Zubair Jamali being briefed by DG PDMA Jahanzeb Khan about machinery

CM Balochistan Green Tractor Scheme inaugurated

Independent Report
QUETTA: The Chief Minister Balochistan Green Tractor Scheme was inaugurated here in Quetta on Wednesday.

The Additional Deputy Commissioner (General) Quetta Muhammad Anwar Kakar inaugurated the scheme.

Also present on the occasion were the office bearers of Anjuman Tajran Balochistan, zamindars and farmers.

Speaking at the inauguration, ADC (General) Anwar Kakar said that the government of Balochistan is providing every possible facilities for promotion of agriculture and betterment of the farmers.

The Green tractor Scheme is also part of the

same initiatives so as to provide maximum relief to the farmers, adding he mentioned.

The draw was also held under the Green Tractor Scheme. Three lucky farmers were named in the draw.

Anwar Kakar on the occasion said that the lucky farmers would be provided tractors by the Agriculture Engineering Department on 50 percent discount. They would be bound to deposit 50 percent amount of the tractor in form of bank draft, he added.

In case of failure in depositing the due amount within stipulated time, the zamindars in waiting list would be given opportunity to deposit the amount within three days.

NEPRA says: DISCOs should improve performance in 15 days

ISLAMABAD (INP): The National Electric Power Regulatory Authority (NEPRA) on Wednesday directed the power distribution companies (DISCOs) to improve their performance in 15 days and submit a report in that regard. "NEPRA will conduct a hearing after three weeks to review the performance of DISCOs", a news release said. NEPRA heard the request of Central Power Purchasing Agency (CPPAG) regarding monthly fuel adjustment charges of Rs 2.07 per unit for the month of July. However, during the hearing the CPPAG reviewed its request from Rs. 2.07 to Rs. 1.57 per unit raise on account of FCA.



QUETTA: Activities of civil society burn electric city bill during protest outside QPC.

Issues of regional newspapers to be resolved, assures DGPR

Independent Report
QUETTA: The Director General Public Relations, Kamran Asad has assured that the issues being faced by the regional newspapers and periodicals are facing extraordinary issues as the payment of their advertisement bills have not been made for last three months.

They demanded of the government to take special measures in view of the financial hardships of the newspaper industry. Speaking on the occasion, DGPR said that necessary steps would be taken for protection of the newspaper industry in the province.

The members of del-



QUETTA: A representative delegation of Balochistan Editors Forum meeting with Director General Public Relations Balochistan Kamran Asad regarding problems faced by newspapers and periodicals