

Independent

Member APNS & CPNE

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KARACHI: Caretaker Chief Minister Balochistan Mir Ali Mardan Khan Domki being briefed by UAE Consul General Bakheet Ateeq Al-Remeithi about Facilitation Desk in the UAE Consulate

Domki inaugurates Madadgar Desk in UAE Consulate: Caretaker CM & UAE Consul General agree on establishing coordination between business community

Mir Ali Mardan Domki points out towards great potential of investment in different sectors in Balochistan; Bakheet Ateeq Al-Remeithi shows deep interest saying UAE investors to be motivated to invest in province

Independent Report
QUETTA: The caretaker Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Ali Mardan Khan Domki visited the consulate of United Arab Emirates (UAE) in Karachi on Tuesday.

During the visit, he inaugurated the Facilitation Desk in the UAE Consulate. Upon his arrival in the Consulate, the UAE Consul General based in

Karachi, Bakheet Ateeq Al-Remeithi warmly welcomed the caretaker Chief Minister Balochistan.

While briefing the caretaker Chief Minister, the Consul General UAE said that the objective behind establishing Happiness Desk in the Consulate is to provide via and other necessary facilities to the Pakistani people.

He said that it would

also provide assistance to the Pakistani business community doing business in UAE and in promotion of the joint ventures of investment there.

Mir Ali Mardan Khan Domki on the occasion expressed pleasure over establishing Happiness counter in the UAE Consulate.

He said that the counter

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ISLAMABAD: DG Anti-Narcotics Force Major General Muhammad Aniq Ur Rehman Malik calls on Caretaker Federal Minister for Interior and Anti-Narcotics Sarfraz Ahmad Bugti.

DG, ANF briefs Interior Minister on narcotics control

ISLAMABAD (APP): Director General (DG) Anti Narcotics Force (ANF) Major General Aneeq ur Rehman Malik Tuesday brief caretaker Interior Minister Sarfraz Buti regarding efforts being made for narcotics control.

All departments will have to work together to save the nation from the curse of drugs, the minister said adding the role of ANF in this regard was very important.

He appreciated the recent raids of the force and

arrests of drug peddlers along with recovery of drugs from their possession.

The minister also directed to take strict action against those involved in drugs business.

He said Pakistan would be made a drug free country while the young generation to be protected from the menace for healthy society.

Sarfraz Bugti said the government would provide all kind of support in that regard.

ECP assures to hold free, fair polls as per constitution

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Election Commission of Pakistan has assured to hold the upcoming elections peacefully and impartially as per Constitution and the law.

Chief Election Commissioner Sikandar Sultan Raja gave this assurance, while chairing two separate meetings in Islamabad on Tuesday.

The meetings were

aimed at reviewing the preparations regarding the upcoming general elections in the country.

Members of the Election Commission, Secretary ECP, Chief Secretary Sindh, IG Sindh, Chief Secretary Balochistan, IG Balochistan, Provincial Election Commissioner Sindh and Balochistan, and other senior officers of ECP attended the meetings.

During the meeting, the Chief Secretary and IG Sindh briefed the Election Commission on preparations for the upcoming general elections and assured full cooperation in this regard.

The Election Commission emphasized on the Chief Secretary and IG Sindh that conducting trans-

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QUETTA: Iranian Consul General Hassan Darvishi and meeting with Caretaker Information Minister Jan Muhammad Achakzai

Cabinet unable to decide on relief in bills

ISLAMABAD (Online): The Caretaker government could not give any relief to the people who came out on the streets against the increase in electricity bills.

The federal cabinet meeting was held last day under the chairmanship of caretaker prime minister Anwarul Haq Kakar.

Owing to the terms and conditions of the IMF agreement, a decision could not be taken to provide relief in bills to consumers in the form of subsidy.

It has been decided to collect dues in six installments from the consumers using up to 400 units of electricity after IMF's consent.

In the meeting, the bills

Special relief in electricity bills

for the month of July was reviewed.

According to the sources, the Ministry of Finance took a stand in the meeting that it is not possible to provide relief to the people in the form of subsidy on electricity due to the IMF agreement.

The Energy Division presented various options to provide relief to the people in the cabinet meeting. According to the sources, it was agreed in the meeting that the bills will be collected in installments during the next six months from the consumers using up to 400 units of electricity, but this will be possible only with the consent of the IMF.

Govt meddling in judiciary affairs, says CJP Bandial

ISLAMABAD (INP): Chief Justice of Pakistan Umar Ata Bandial on Tuesday expressed concerns over attempts to meddle in the judiciary through further appeals in the Supreme Court Practice and Procedure Act.

The remarks were made during the hearing of the PTI chairman's petition against the NAB amendments, in which the Attorney General admitted to flaws in the Act.

The chief justice also referred to previous court orders related to the Act, stating that the Attorney General had informed about the Review of Orders and Judgments Act on June 1. However, despite assurances that the assembly would review the Act, no action has been taken.

Justice Bandial also questioned why the Attorney General sought time

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QUETTA: Caretaker Home Minister Captain (Retd) Mir Muhammad Zubair Khan Jamali meeting with Governor Balochistan Malik Abdul Wali Khan Kakar

Shares video on his social media account: **CM Domki thanks Caretaker PM for efforts on Pinjra Bridge**

Terms start of work on construction of Pinjra bridge in Bolan an important progress **Independent Report**

QUETTA: The Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Ali Mardan Khan Domki has described the start of work on the construction of Pinjra bridge in Bolan as an important development and a big good news for the people of area.

The caretaker Chief Minister also shared the video of initiation of work on the Pinjra bridge on his social media account, Twitter.

He said that as the work has been started on the construction of Pinjra bridge, it is an important development and good news for the people of area, for we are thankful to the caretaker Prime Minister Anwarul Haq Kakar.

He said that we are thankful to the Prime Minister whose personal interest worked and it could be made possible.

Mir Ali Mardan Khan Domki hoped that the National Highway Authority would complete the project at the earliest.

It may be mentioned here that the caretaker Prime Minister had taken notice of the damaged Pinjra bridge during his visit to Quetta and directed the concerned authorities to start work on it.

Special JIT formed over smear campaign against IHC CJ

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Ministry of Interior on Tuesday evening notified a four-member special Joint Investigation Team (JIT) to probe the "malicious campaign on social media" against Islamabad High Court Chief Justice Amir

Farooq. The JIT, headed by the Director Cyber Crime of Federal Investigation Agency, would comprise one representative each of Inter Services Intelligence, Intelligence Bureau, and Islamabad Capital Territory Police.

Ex PM to remain in jail for 'cypher' hearing IHC suspends Imran Khan's sentence in Toshakhana case

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Islamabad High Court (IHC) on Tuesday suspended the imprisonment sentence of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf Chairman Imran Khan in the Toshakhana criminal case and ordered to release him on bail.

The two-judge bench comprising Chief Justice Aamer Farooq and Justice Tariq Mehmood Jahangiri, in their eight-page judgment reserved on Monday and issued today, also ordered the former prime minister to submit surety bonds of Rs 100,000 to avail the bail.

The judgment said, "As the sentence given in the case is of short duration, the court considers that the petitioner is entitled to suspension of sentence and release on bail. The trial court's sentence of 3 years imprisonment and a fine of Rs 100,000 is suspended."

It further stated that the trial court pronounced the sentence on the complaint of the Election Commission of Pakistan under the Election Act.

The Supreme Court's Qaim Ali Shah case reference was also included in the written decision. It said that the top court had declared that it was the high court's discretion to grant or deny bail.

Ex PM to remain in jail for 'cypher' hearing

the Avenfield property case. It said that the top court had expressed its displeasure on issuing lengthy orders in decisions pertaining to the suspension of the sentences.

Additional District and Sessions Judge Humayun Dilawar had announced a three-year jail term along with fine of Rs 100,000 to the former prime minister in the Toshakhana criminal case lodged by the Election Commission of Pakistan.

INP adds: Imran's legal team filed a fresh petition in the IHC seeking directives to refrain authorities

from imposing the suspension of former prime minister Nawaz Sharif's sentence in

the Avenfield property case. It said that the top court had expressed its displeasure on issuing lengthy orders in decisions pertaining to the suspension of the sentences.

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ISLAMABAD: A delegation from Balochistan comprising Sardar Aslam Bizenjo, Mir Khalid Langu, Mir Asim Kurd Gailo and Mir Waleed Bizenjo meeting with caretaker Prime Minister Anwar-ul-Haq Kakar in Islamabad

Delegation of Minorities Commission meets:

Governor calls for working together to ensure equal rights for all citizens

Malik Abdul Wali Kakar stresses need to promote harmony and unity among different languages and civilizations as world has turned into global village

Independent Report

QUETTA: The Governor Balochistan, Malik Abdul Wali Khan Kakar has stated that the constitution of Pakistan guarantees giving equal rights as well as religious freedom to all inhabitants of the country. It is also the Constitution which is guarantor of expression of opinion of all. Therefore, we have to work together to ensure equal rights for all citizens instead of representing any minority or majority.

This and similar other views were expressed by the Governor while speaking to a delegation, who called on him under leadership of National Minorities Commission, Sham Lal Lasi, here at the Governor House on Tuesday.

Speaking on the occa-

sion, the Governor said that we have learnt from our political elders that we don't make friendship or enmity on the basis of colour, cast or creed.

He said that it gives him utmost pleasure that there are representatives of all minorities including Hindu, Christian, Sikh, Parsis, Kailash and others in the Minorities Commission.

He stressed the need to promote brotherhood, religious harmony, mutual respect and understanding among all in order to make the country and province hub of peace.

Meanwhile, speaking to a delegation of Pashto Academy who called on him under leadership of its President, Sohail Jaffar, the Governor said that it is duty of the research centers and literary academies to take concrete steps for preservation of the achievements

and sacrifices of the otherwise neglected parts and personalities of the society.

He said that the world has turned into a global village and so we need to promote harmony and unity among different languages and civilizations.

We should also take benefit from the experiences and civilizations of the developed countries and learning international languages, adding he stressed.

The members of delegation apprised the Governor about the issues being faced by the Pashto Academy. They also sought the role of Governor for increasing the grant for the Academy and land for its museum. The President also invited the Governor to participate in the seminar to be held under the auspices of Pashto Academy in September.

Balochistan delegation praises PM's efforts for restoring economy

ISLAMABAD (APP): A delegation from Balochistan comprising Sardar Aslam Bizenjo, Mir Khalid Langu, Mir Asim Kurd Gailo and Mir Waleed Bizenjo called on caretaker Prime Minister Anwar-ul-Haq Kakar in Islamabad on Tuesday.

They paid tribute to the Prime Minister for his efforts to restore economy and promote inter-faith harmony in the country.

Meanwhile Head of South and Central Asia Voice of America, Ayesha Tanzeem called on caretaker Prime Minister Anwar-ul-Haq Kakar in Islamabad on Tuesday.

Three killed, two injured in firing on vehicle Jaffarabad

JAFFARABAD (INP): Three people were killed and two others injured which armed men opened firing on vehicle at the National Highway on Tuesday. Police said that gunmen sprayed bullets at Quetta bound vehicle coming from Karachi. As a result of firing three people of Marri tribe, hailing from Rohjan Jamali were killed while two sustained bullet wounds.



QUETTA: Members of Central Anjuman-e-Tajran Balochistan holding protest demonstration against inflated electricity bills, at Mannan Chowk

Shahbaz Sharif says: Conviction of darling suspended, not abolished

LONDON (Online): Former Prime Minister (PM) Shehbaz Sharif has said the conviction of the darling has been suspended and has not been abolished.

He said this in a statement while reacting to suspension of PTI chairman sentence in Toshakhana case. He went on to say that message of 'good to see you and wishing you good luck' reached Islamabad High Court.

If every one knows what will be decision before the announcement of decision then it should be matter of grave concern for justice system.

If clear message is received from superior court

that subordinate court should not do this then it should do what.

He went on to say monitoring judge was appointed to ensure conviction of Nawaz Sharif and Chief Justice himself became monitoring judge to save the darling.

This role of justice system will be written in black chapter of history.

He said tilting scale and justice system hurting the justice is not acceptable. Law is helpless before the one who has hold out watch. If thief and state terrorist is facilitated then the justice will be administered to common man from where.

Forthcoming ten months to witness substantial progress in execution of 5G action plan: Minister

ISLAMABAD (APP): Care taker Federal Minister for Information Technology and Telecommunication on Tuesday said that the forthcoming ten months would witness substantial progress in the execution of the 5G action plan.

During a meeting with Pakistan Telecommunication Authority (PTA) Major General (Retd) Hafeez Ur Rehman, the minister discussed in detail the upcoming plans related to telecommunications, the rollout of the 5G spectrum, and strategies for optimal spectrum utilization.

Dr Umar Saif, the Minister, shed light on the paramount importance of optimal spectrum utilization and the coordinated deployment of the 5G network.

One of the central tenets of the plan is the prioritized removal of obstacles that could impede the smooth execution of the 5G strategy.

Dr. Umar Saif expressed unwavering determination to eliminate hurdles by establishing a priority-based criterion.

He specifically highlighted that challenges related to taxation, telecom density, and spectrum management would be actively addressed.

In alignment with this proactive stance, Dr. Umar Saif reiterated the administration's dedication to refining the quality of telecom services, thus enhancing the experience for consumers.

The Minister underscored the significance of optimizing existing telecom provisions to ensure citizens derive the utmost benefit from these services.



KARACHI: Caretaker Chief Minister Balochistan Mir Ali Mardan Khan Domki photographed with UAE Consul General Bakheet Ateeq Al-Remeithi and others during his visit to UAE Consulate

Caretaker CM & UAE Consul...

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is an important progress for promotion of mutual relations between the two brotherly countries.

Meanwhile, there was also a formal meeting between the caretaker Chief Minister and Consul General of UAE.

During the course of meeting, the matters were discussed pertaining to boost the investment of UAE in Balochistan and promotion of mutual cooperation in different sectors.

Speaking on the occasion, Mir Ali Mardan Domki pointed out that there are great opportunities of investment in different sectors in the province including energy, minerals, agriculture and livestock. He also mentioned that all out facilities are being provided to the foreign investors in the province.

He said that the UAE's investors would be wholeheartedly welcomed in Balochistan by its people

and government.

He also said that UAE government has always remained in the forefront for service of the Pakistani people terming the Pak-UAE friendship as excellent.

The UAE Consul General took deep interest in opportunities of investment in the province. He said that we consider Balochistan as our second home. He assured that the UAE investors would be motivated to make investment in the province.

Moreover, both personalities were agreed on establishing effective coordination between the business community of two sides. Mutual visits of the business communities would also be arranged in time to come, as was also agreed in the meeting.

In addition to this, they also decided to establish coordination among youth of Balochistan and UAE through Youth Exchange Programme.

Arshad Nadeem thankful to coaches for silver medal

KHANEWAL (APP): Pakistan's javelin maestro Arshad Nadeem said that ceaseless companionship with coaches in hard training sessions and prayers of the whole nation and his parents won him a silver medal in the world athletics championship.

The country's top javelin athlete expressed these views Tuesday after he called on deputy commissioner Waseem Hamid Sindhu at his office where was accorded a warm reception. DC and DPO Rana Omar Farooq received the national hero, decorated him with flower garlands, and presented a bouquet to him.

DC and DPO appreciated Arshad Nadeem for bringing honor to the country and pledged to work harder for the promotion of sports in the Khanewal district in the light of guidance from the national javelin hero.

Care taker PM to visit Kenya in first week of Sep

ISLAMABAD (Online): Care taker Prime Minister (PM) Anwaarul Haq Kakar will undertake official visit of Kenya in the first week of September following invitation extended by the Kenyan President.

According to private TV channel, care taker PM visit will last 3 days.

Members of care taker cabinet, advisors and Special assistants will accompany care taker PM during his visit to Kenya. It has been said agreements and MOUs on bilateral ties, trade and investments will be signed during the care taker PM visit to Kenya.



QUETTA: A delegation led by President Women Wing Balochistan Faiza Sikandar meeting with Governor Balochistan Malik Abdul Wali Khan Kakar

Pak to continue same momentum in Asia Cup, World Cup: Babar

MULTAN (APP): Skipper of the world number one one-day cricket team Babar Azam said that he was confident with the playing squad and would continue same momentum in Asia Cup and upcoming mega event of World Cup.

Holding a press conference at Multan Cricket Stadium on Tuesday, he said that the team has delivered the best during the recent series against Afghanistan and committed to give their best in Asia Cup. He said that all players had given their best performance in given situations both batsmen and bowlers were dominated. He said that he was confident with the playing squad and added there would be no changes but in case of someone's injury and any other issue.

Talking about the preparations, Babar said that fitness of the players was being maintained properly and the travelling plan has also been scheduled for giving rest to players. He said that the team grabbed various achievements especially the status of the world number one team despite criticism and different situations from the last one and a half year.

He said that the boys have overcome the weaknesses and play vital role in obtaining the title of number one of the world.

To a question, he said that he never wished individual



performance but the performance which lead the team to victory. He said that the team would enter the ground with high spirits and planning to defeat Nepal in the first match of the Asia Cup going to be played on August 30 at Multan Cricket Stadium.

Babar while responding to another question said that the matches between Pakistan and India were always high profile and pressure matches but best planning would be made against all teams including India.

"I wish that all matches of Asia Cup would held in Pakistan, but the players were confident and trained to play in all conditions. He said that the team has three to four players named among the top ten players of the world and they were expected to keep the momentum.

Govt meddling in judiciary....

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twice to review the Act, causing delays in legal proceedings. He also expressed concerns about the government's interference in the scope of the apex court.

Justice Ijaz pointed out that the government itself admitted to the flawed legislation, which led to the suspension of proceedings under the Act by court order. He emphasized that the court could not effectively carry out proceedings under such a suspended law.

During the hearing, the chief justice welcomed the PTI's lawyer Khawaja Haris and expressed his hope to avoid being targeted for his statement. He clarified that the Supreme Court does not intend to overrule the Parliament, but the Supreme Court Practice and Procedure Act is unconstitutional and interferes with the independence of the judiciary.

The CJP declared that only the three-member bench would hear the NAB amendments case, and adjourned further hearing of the case until today.

APP adds: The Supreme Court (SC) Tuesday adjourned hearing till today in petitions challenging the amendments in National Accountability Bureau's (NAB) law.

A three-member bench headed by Chief Justice Umar Ata Bandial and comprising Justice Ijaz ul Ahsan and Justice Mansoor Ali Shah heard the case filed by Pakistan Tehreek e Insaf (PTI).

At the outset of hearing, the chief justice remarked that Supreme Court Practice and Procedure Act was contradicting with the constitution, adding that it was an attempt to interfere the powers of judiciary through this act.

The CJP said that cases pertaining to the NAB amendments would be heard by the same three-member bench.

Addressing PTI's counsel Khawaja Haris, the chief justice said that the NAB amendments were introduced in 2022 to bring betterment in the law, adding

that the lawyer could give arguments about it if he wanted.

He said that Makhdoom Ali Khan had raised a serious point that he was not given time so far for arguments in this matter.

The amendments were also introduced in 2023 but the changes made in 2022 were more important, he said.

Chief Justice Umar Ata Bandial asked that what was the stance of Khawaja Haris pertaining to the fundamental rights in light of NAB amendments.

It was good that the cases which were beyond the jurisdiction of NAB had been shifted to the relevant forums, he said.

He said that the petitioner was of the view that the amendment had affected the accountability system and certain people were given exemptions without any reason.

Justice Mansoor Ali Shah said that either the full court bench should hear the NAB amendment case or it should be adjourned till judgment about SC Practice and Procedure Bill.

The CJP remarked that the attorney general of Pakistan had apprised the bench on June 1, regarding 'Review of Orders and Judgments' Act and told that the assembly would review the SC Practice and Procedure Act.

But the law was not reviewed yet, he noted.

He questioned that whether a suspended law should be given as much importance that other all cases should be adjourned due to it.

He asked that why time was sought twice to review the act.

Makhdoom Ali Khan Advocate said that the AGP was not present this day to defend the case.

He argued that a full court bench had already declared that the top court could not suspend any legislation instead it could only suspend actions or orders.

The further hearing of the case was then adjourned till today.

GIS and Natural Resource Management

By Muhammad Umer

Natural resources are the resources that subsist without any action of human kind. Natural resources are found in our environment without any involvement of human. Natural resources are materials that are used to support human life and meets people need.

The economic, social and cultural viability of any nation is mainly set on the land and water resources that it has. These natural resources are important for our economy of a nation since they play a vital role in the provision of employment, they are a source of raw materials for various industries, act as a source of food and income medicine as well as energy. The aesthetic view that is associated to natural resources is always estimated as the cultural representation of nations.

Although, it is essential for nations to grasp that how to utilize these resources in a sustainable manner to make sure their benefits are enjoyed in the present as well as future generations. However, these resources can be depleted if they are not utilized in an efficient manner. In the current situation the utilization of the present resources in the world has been over-



stretched due to the over rising population of human beings.

The over rising population has greatly increased human and wildlife conflicts and encouraged the development of desert like conditions. Due to these limitations there is a dire need to ensure that these resources are functionally managed.

Although, with the current trend in the advancement in the field of information technology the natural resource managers have now set down a lot of importance on the use of remote sensing and GIS technologies in the management of natural resource. Both of these technologies will provide a platform through which managers can produce informative data along with information that can be used to make sound decisions for sustainable development. For the management of natural resources, the remote sens-

ing and GIS is mainly used in the land cover maps, vegetation maps, soil maps and geology maps.

GIS in natural resource management is mainly used in analyzing, organizing, managing and monitoring the natural hazards. GIS in natural resource management also give us a spatial data of the disasters that occurred before or might to occur so that early risk can be prevented through GIS technology. The Remote sensing data are used to probe seasonal, interannual and spatial patterns in forest and rangeland health, wildlife habitat along with the impacts of drought, wildfire, and diseases on our landscapes. GIS is an important instrument for managing the earth's resources. For land cover, vegetation, soil, and geology maps, GIS lead the power of spatial analysis to the table, to support informed decisions. As a forest manager, GIS play an essential role to support sustainable forest management. Along with the increasing pressure on natural resources due to the over population, remote sensing and GIS can be used to manage these limited resources in an efficient manner. A sound decision can be conducted to ensure the use of natural resources that will accomplish the need of present as well as future generation.

IHC suspends Imran Khan's...

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from further "illegal and unjustified arrest" of the former premier in any case filed against him after August 5, when he was convicted in the Toshakhana case.

Filed through Barrister Salman Safdar, the petition made the state as a respondent and alleged that the cipher case had been filed against Imran "with mala fide intentions" and termed it of "bogus nature".

The plea stated that the "only remedy available to avoid unjustified, illegal and straightaway arrest" was by invoking Article 10 (safeguards as to arrest and detention) of the Constitution for the "protection of his fundamental rights and safeguards".

The petition further said that the petitioner would suffer irreparable loss in case he is arrested for another offence, which he has not committed.

It further expressed the apprehension that the PTI chief's "political adversaries and opponents would be able to further their nefarious designs and political ambitions in the absence" of the IHC's "kind intervention".

In a separate development yesterday, the Attock

Jail authorities submitted a report to the Supreme Court, detailing the facilities being provided to the ex-prime minister.

The report, submitted by the jail superintendent to comply with the SC's August 24 order, states that meals were being provided periodically on the convict's demand and that his washroom facilities have also been improved.

Previously, Imran's wife, Bushra Bibi, had moved an application before the Supreme Court wherein she expressed apprehensions that her husband's health was deteriorating fast, threatening his life.

The facilities provided to the ex-premier had been upgraded after Additional District and Sessions Judge Shafiqat-ullah Khan submitted an inspection report based on his visit to the prison on August 15.

The report had declared that Imran's grave concern regarding a lack of privacy around his prison cell's toilet facilities in the jail due to a CCTV camera's presence was "genuine" and pointed to a violation of prison rules.

The case, filed by lawmakers of the then coalition government, was based on a criminal complaint filed

by the ECP.

The case alleged that Imran had "deliberately concealed" details of the gifts he retained from the Toshakhana — a repository where presents handed to government officials from foreign officials are kept — during his time as the prime minister and proceeds from their reported sales.

According to Toshakhana rules, gifts/presents and other such materials received by persons to whom these rules apply shall be reported to the Cabinet Division. Imran has faced a number of legal issues over his retention of gifts. The issue also led to his disqualification by the ECP.

On the other hand, on Aug 26, a team of the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) investigated the PTI chief in Attock Jail in the US cipher case.

The former prime minister was questioned about the alleged disappearance of the cipher. The FIA cybercrime team headed by Deputy Director Ayaz investigated the former prime minister. The suspect was questioned for more than an hour regarding the illegal use and disappearance of the cipher.



QUETTA: Members of Metropolitan Corporation Tanzeem Ittehad holding protest rally against non-payment of their salaries

ECP assures to hold free, fair....

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parent and impartial elections are fundamental responsibility of ECP. In this regard, the first step is the transfer and posting of all officers and officials who are important in the perspective of impartial elections.

The Election Commission has issued directives in this regard, because transfer and posting is the first

step towards transparency. After that, there will be appointments of District Returning Officers, Returning Officers, Assistant Returning Officers, and Monitoring Teams will be made.

The Election Commission assured full support and cooperation to Chief Secretary and IG Sindh.

In the second meeting, the Chief Secretary, IG Balochistan, and Provincial

Election Commissioner Balochistan briefed the Election Commission on preparations for the upcoming elections.

The Chief Secretary informed that recommendations for postings and transfers of different officers, Deputy Commissioners, and Additional Deputy Commissioners have been sent to the Election Commission.



QUETTA: Relatives of Tayyab Khan holding protest demonstration for his recovery as soon as possible, at Quetta press club

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

Executive Engineer Buildings, Communication Works PP&H Department District Khuzdar called "Procuring Agency" intends to hire the Consultancy Service Required for **STRENGTHENING OF LEVIES TRAINING CENTER AT KHUZDAR. PSDP NO. (PSDP No.2504 Z 2021.0699). TSE-232408347212 CONSULTANCY SERVICE REQUIRED FOR "STRENGTHENING OF LEVIES TRAINING CENTER AT KHUZDAR.PSDP NO. (PSDP No.2504 Z 2021.0699)" TORs/RFP shall be available on BPPRA website.** The interested consultancy firms with experience of similar nature of assignments may apply for selection containing the following information/particulars duly supported with necessary documents. Competitive bidding shall be held under the **Quality and Cost Based Selection Method** as per BPPRA Rules 2014, amended up to date.

Terms & Conditions:

(a) All Interested Firms are required to be registered with Pakistan Engineering Council (PEC) in categories of relevant codes.

Registered with Income Tax & Sales Tax Department in Baluchistan, Baluchistan Revenue Authority

Detailed RFP can be obtained from the office of undersigned on any Working Day During Office Hours on Payment of RFP Document Fee of PKR 2000/ (Non-Refundable) deposited in the head of account C-02716 through Government treasury/ National Bank Pakistan or can be downloaded from website of BPPRA, from the date of publication of this invitation on the website of BPPRA till one day prior to the last date of submission.

1. Firms are required to submitted their Bids electronically on website by 12:00 AM on 15th September, 2023. Technical Bid will be opened on the same day at 1:00 PM. 2. BID Validity should be 30 days 3. Earnest Money: 2%. 4. The Procurement Agency reserves the rights to annul the Bidding Process as per BPPRA Rules 2014. 5. The method of procurement will be Single Stage Two Envelope. Technical and financial proposals shall be clearly marked on envelope. 6. Firms shall be required to establish that they meet the Requirements of the Tender in their Technical Bid, before the Financial Bid is opened. Firms are required to submit following mandatory requirement and other requirement, Legal Particulars/Documents as mentioned in RFP. i. Valid PEC Registration Certificate ii. Valid National Tax No. (NTN) iii. Valid B.R.A Registration. iv. Avarage Annual Turnover as mentioned in the bidding documents accompanied with audit report duly verified by chartered accountant registered in IGAP. Under taking that they have never been blacklisted by a Public Sector Entity. This information should be uploaded on BPPRA website on/ before 15th September, 2023 at 12 PM.

PRQ No.480/29-08-2023

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Executive Engineer Buildings, CW, PP&H Department District Khuzdar

Senate Committee takes decisive action to reinstate over 500 daily wage teachers

Independent Report
ISLAMABAD: During a meeting held today at Parliament House, Chairman Standing Committee on Education and Vocational Training, Senator Irfan Siddiqui passionately articulated that the abrupt dismissal of teachers with years of dedicated service amounts to criminal offense. Drawing a parallel, he emphasized that even a household maid, who has worked diligently for fifteen years, should not be subjected to such unfair treatment.

Senator Siddiqui continued to advocate for fairness, highlighting that long-serving teachers, deserve better than sudden terminations without proper justification.

Furthermore, Director General and Director of Federal Directorate of Education's (FDE) actions came under scrutiny for misleading the Senate Standing Committee. Consequently, the matter was referred to the Senate Privileges Committee for thorough investigation and appropriate action.

The committee's meeting was marked by Senator Irfan Siddiqui's strong assertion that the

sudden dismissal of teachers without valid reasons is an unacceptable criminal act. He passionately expressed that these actions should not be tolerated under any circumstances. He drew attention to the fact that even a domestic worker with a decade or more of service should not be subjected to such unjust treatment. The Senator also criticized the arbitrary interpretation of court decisions that led to the dismissal of over 500 teachers, a move that disregarded established legal principles.

In light of the incident, it was revealed that 551 teachers teaching in Islamabad's model colleges were instructed to cease their duties from August 10 without proper justification. Concerned about the sudden turn of events, the affected teachers sought the intervention of the committee's chairman, Senator Irfan Siddiqui. Subsequently, the matter was included in the agenda of the ongoing committee meeting.

Efforts were made by the Director General and Director of FDE to validate their actions by referring to court orders. However, they failed to provide concrete evidence supporting

their claims. The Ministry of Law's opinion was also invoked, but representatives of the Law Division clarified that it was a standard response and was not a specific query from the Ministry of Education.

The committee was informed that Secretary Education is currently attending a cabinet meeting. Committee chairman directed the ministry officials to contact the secretary. Meanwhile a brief ten-minute break was observed in the committee meeting. Education Secretary Waseem Ajmal joined the committee meeting following this brief pause. Meanwhile, committee members expressed strong dissatisfaction with the Ministry of Education's unwarranted dismissal of teachers with over fifteen years of experience.

Rabia Waheed, a female teacher representing the affected educators, provided a comprehensive account of the situation and presented relevant court decisions. After extensive deliberation, Senator Irfan Siddiqui gave a ruling in favor of the immediate reinstatement of all 551 teachers to their positions as of August 9.



Caretaker Federal Minister for Planning and Development, Muhammad Sami Saeed chairing a meeting to review social sector projects in Islamabad

Sami Saeed reviews progress made in achieving goals of education, health projects

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Planning and Development, Muhammad Sami Saeed here on Tuesday said that the project to attract out-of-school children to education was commendable, providing equal opportunities for education to deprived children was the need of the hour.

Chairing a meeting to review the progress made in achieving the goals of education, health projects

and sustainable development, the federal minister said that the Information Technology (IT) facilities in schools helped in preparing students to meet the demands of modern times and the Ministry had taken concrete steps in the field of health and education.

He said that the approved project for Islamabad Teachers Institute would play an important role in increasing the capacity of teachers. He

directed for ensuring the implementation of the decisions of the National Curriculum Council. He said a curriculum to meet the modern challenges is important to improve the mindset of students and the quality of education.

To achieve the goals of sustainable development, the Ministry of Planning should further strengthen the interconnection with the relevant ministries and departments, he added.

EU ambassador meets caretaker health minister

ISLAMABAD (APP): The ambassador of European Union Rina Kivanka met with the caretaker Minister for Health Dr. Nadeem Jan and discussed issues related to the health sector and mutual interest.

During the meeting, the ambassador congratulated the minister on assuming the portfolio of federal minister.

The European Union will soon host a high-level meeting on the Global Health Security Agenda. Experts and stakeholders from all over the world will participate in the meeting.

The European Union will also be invited to participate in the Global Health Security Summit. The EU ambassador appreciates practical steps on Global Health Security Agenda.

Dr. Nadeem Jan said that the European Union provided full support in the rehabilitation of the flood victims.

"The eradication of polio is the top most priority of the caretaker government. Health ministry is in contact with Afghanistan for joint integrated strategy at the border to eliminate polio."

He said that Pakistan will soon host a high-level meeting on the Global Health Security Agenda. Experts and stakeholders from all over the world will participate in the meeting.

The EU ambassador will also be invited to participate in the Global Health Security Summit. The EU ambassador appreciates practical steps on Global Health Security Agenda.

AC Potohar crackdown on illegal petrol agencies in Shams Colony

ISLAMABAD (APP): On the directions of Deputy Commissioner Islamabad Irfan Nawaz Memon, Assistant Commissioner Potohar visited various areas of Potohar subdivision on Tuesday. During his visit, he inspected LPG shops, clinics, and service stations in PS Shams Colony. He also sealed two illegal petrol agencies and warned other violators of strict action, ICT Spokesman Dr Abdullah Tabasim said. The Assistant Commissioner said that the sealing of the illegal petrol agencies was part of a crackdown on illegal businesses in the area. He said that such businesses were a threat to the public safety and would not be tolerated.

Stakeholder's consultations on child domestic labour held

ISLAMABAD (APP): Group Development Pakistan (GDP) and Sustainable Social Development Organization (SSDO), in collaboration with the National Commission on the Rights of Child (NCRC), organized the 'Stakeholder's Consultations on Child Domestic Labour: The Way Forward'.

This collaborative initiative reflects an unwavering commitment to addressing the critical issue of child domestic labour and championing the rights and well-being of children across Pakistan.

Child domestic labour remains a pervasive issue that undermines the fundamental rights and well-being of children. The Stakeholder Consultations served as a platform for stakeholders to engage in meaningful dialogues, share insights, and propose actionable solutions to combat this pressing challenge.

The event marked an intensive and comprehensive discourse on strategies to overcome legislative and enforcement challenges. Participants included representatives from governmental bodies, non-governmental organizations, civil society, academia, media, and concerned citizens. Their diverse perspectives and collective expertise contributed to shaping holistic strategies that encompass legislative, policy, and grassroots initiatives to eradicate child domestic labour.

GDP and SSDO have been at the forefront of advocating for the rights of children and marginalized communities. Their collaboration with NCRC underscores a shared commitment to safeguarding the rights and dignity of every child, in alignment with international conventions and Pakistan's own legal framework.



ISLAMABAD: Aleema Khan and Uzma Khanam, sisters of Pakistan's former Prime Minister Imran Khan leaving the Islamabad High Court after attending the hearing of Imran Khan's plea seeking suspension of a three-year jail term.

IK's 3-year sentence suspended by IHC, not abolished: Tarar

ISLAMABAD (APP): Deputy Secretary General of Pakistan Muslim League Nawaz (PML-N), Atta Tarar said on Tuesday that the Islamabad High Court (IHC) had suspended three-year sentence of PTI Chairman Imran Khan in the Toshakhana case, without abolishing it.

During his interaction with the media persons, he clarified that the suspension of Imran Khan's disqualification was a temporary measure, as his legal team had solely lodged an appeal for the suspension of the sentence.

He pointed out that

the decision to terminate the sentence would depend on the case's merits.

"The release of Chairman Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) appears unlikely because of his existing judicial remand in another case, and his association with events like May 9, which is a unique situation in history," he added.

He believed that Imran Khan had openly admitted to participating in purchase and sale of gifts.

This stance was backed by his lawyer's acknowledgment before the Election Commission, he added.

Water level rises to full capacity in Mangla Dam

ISLAMABAD (APP): After discharge of water from the currently fully-packed country's largest Mangla dam was stopped on Tuesday the water level in the reservoir was kept intact to the stipulated maximum 1242.00 feet capacity. After a week-long pause only up to 0.30 feet of water had been discharged till Saturday last from the country's largest water reservoir, official sources told APP on Tuesday.

Mangla dam contains minimum operating level

1050 feet, present level of 1242.00 feet against the maximum conservation level 1242 feet, live storage 7.356 MAF as recorded today.

Inflows of Jhelum river at Mangla reservoir was recorded as 20400 cusecs with outflows of same 18300 cusecs of water from the dam.

At the same time, the position of the river inflows and outflows at Tarbela, Mangla and Chashma along with the reservoirs levels and the barrages remained as under:-

Islamabad Capital Police distributed body cams to Dolphin Squad officials

Independent Report
ISLAMABAD: According to the details, following the special directions of the Islamabad Capital City Police Officer (ICCP) Dr. Akbar Nasir Khan, the SSP

with the public could be securely recorded. They were also informed that this initiative aims to reduce crime rates and monitor suspicious individuals and activities.



Safe City distributed body cams among the officials of Dolphin Squad and briefed them about their usage, a public relations officer said.

He said that the purpose of the body cams is to ensure the secure recording of conversations between police officials during interactions with the public. The focus is to reduce the crime rate and keep an eye on suspicious individuals and activities.

The dolphin squad personnel were instructed during the briefing to use these body cams while on duty so that the conversations during interactions

Furthermore, the officials were directed that no vehicle search should be conducted without the orders of senior officers and interactions with the public should be conducted courteously as well as maintaining a respectful attitude towards them.

Islamabad Capital Police is taking all possible measures to safeguard the lives and property of the citizens. Citizens were also requested to cooperate with the police and report any suspicious activity to their respective police station or dial "Pucar-15" helpline.



ISLAMABAD: Honourable Justice Supreme Court of Pakistan, Syed Mansoor Ali Shah in a group photograph with other participants during National Conference of Service Providers Gender Based Violence: From Legislation to Implementation.

LAJA & UN Women holds National Conference of Service Providers in Justice Sector

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Legal Aid and Justice Authority (LAJA) and UN Women on Tuesday conducted the first-ever National Conference of Service Providers in Islamabad.

The event brought together a diverse network of Criminal Justice stakeholders to engage in cross-learning and exchange of best practices, with an aim to establish standards of care for survivors and to strengthen the implementation of Gender-Based Violence (GBV) laws across Pakistan, said the press note. Addressing the audience, Ehsan Sadq, Director General of the National Police Bureau, proclaimed the importance of this collaborative effort and said,

"This Conference represents a paramount stride in addressing GBV comprehensively. By connecting professionals across various domains, we are creating a robust network poised to build a more coordinated response to GBV, ensuring survivors receive the support they rightfully deserve."

Ayesha Raza Farooq, Chairperson of the Special Committee on Anti-Rape Law at the Ministry of Law and Justice highlighted the transformative potential of the conference.

"Our commitment to enhancing GBV laws is intrinsically linked to improving mechanisms for

supporting survivors. This conference acts as a cornerstone in aligning our legal framework with the specific needs of survivors, driving a survivor-centric approach" she said.

This historic conference marks a significant step toward advancing the standards of services and response for survivors of Gender-Based Violence (GBV) in Pakistan.

Sharmela Rasool, Country Representative of UN Women, emphasized the country-wide significance of this initiative:

"Ending gender-based violence requires a united national effort, where every individual becomes a voice against silence.

Pakistan needs positive thinking for development: VCA IOU

ISLAMABAD (APP): Vice Chancellor of Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU), Dr. Nasir Mahmood on Tuesday said that positive thinking is such a treasure that turns the soil into gold, youth need to develop positive thinking for the development of Pakistan.

While addressing the contestants of Speech and Painting competitions held at AIOU, he said these competitions were organized amongst students from schools, colleges, and universities of Rawalpindi/Islamabad by the Directorate of Students Advisory & Counseling Services (DSACS) to pay tribute to the great leaders of the Pakistan Movement.

Dr. Nasir emphasized youth to channel their emotions into dedication and hard work for the betterment of Pakistan.

He emphasized the importance of admitting

mistakes and taking responsibility for one's actions to bring positive change into their lives.

Director DSACS, Syed Ghulam Kazim Ali, expressed that the purpose of these events is to honor the efforts and sacrifices of previous generations and inspire the next generation to pursue education for the development of Pakistan.

It is pertinent to mention here that 36 students participated in the painting competition, while 40 students took part in the speech competition. Hifza Nasib, Mahnoor Nawaz, and Umm Abiha secured the first, second, and third positions respectively in the painting competition, while Muhammad Ali claimed the first position in the speech competition.

Amina Adil and Mahnoor Zeib were placed second and third respectively in the speech competition.

Motorway Police recover lost cell phone, owner overjoyed

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Motorway Police on Tuesday recovered a costly mobile phone of a motorist after it fell from his car near Charsada on the Peshawar-Islamabad motorway.

According to a Motorway (North) spokesman, the commuter, identified as Omar, was travelling from Peshawar to Islamabad when he stopped to check his tire. As he got out of the car, his mobile phone fell out of his pocket where he did not realize that his phone had fallen and continued on his journey.

The Motorway Police were alerted to the lost phone and began a search. They eventually found the phone and contacted Omar. The owner was overjoyed to have his phone returned and thanked the Motorway Police for their help.

This incident is a reminder to motorists to be careful when traveling on the motorway.

DC launches crackdown, tackling price hikes, encroachments

ISLAMABAD (APP): On the instructions of Deputy Commissioner Islamabad Irfan Nawaz Memon, Assistant Commissioners on Tuesday took action against price hikes, encroachment and professional beggars in their respective areas.

As the ICT Spokesperson said, a comprehensive effort was made, involving inspections at 134 different locations to curb price hikes, while fines totalling Rs.17,100 were levied in response to pricing violations.

He further said, the crackdown resulted in the sealing of three shops, arresting of four individuals, and the initiation of legal proceedings against them.

Moreover, 29 professional beggars were apprehended and subsequently handed over to law enforcement, while simultaneous measures were enacted against unlicensed medical

facilities and outlets offering Shisha services.

Significantly, the campaign included an extensive anti-encroachment operation, leading to the apprehension of seven persons due to encroachment violations. A legal case was registered against two outlaws implicated in the encroachment incidents.

The efforts to counteract rising prices also encompassed the confiscation of over 12 kilograms of polythene bags, which are a major contributor to environmental degradation.

In a parallel endeavour, unauthorized petrol filling stations and illegal LPG facilities were targeted. A total of fourteen non-compliant petrol filling agencies were shut down, alongside the closure of three unlawful LPG filling stations. Three individuals linked to these operations were arrested and relocated to police facilities.

Pabad police chief conducts online open forum

Independent Report
ISLAMABAD: Islamabad Capital City Police Officer (ICCP) Dr Akbar Nasir Khan organized an online open forum, providing residents with direct access to senior police officials and ensure the resolution of public problems.

During this interactive session, ICCPO Dr Akbar Nasir Khan personally addressed public inquiries while AIG (Operations) Saud Khan was also in attendance.

Dr. Akbar Nasir Khan attentively listened to callers' concerns and promptly directed relevant officers to find immediate solutions. Many of the issues raised by the callers were of a personal nature and related to police station matters.

Addressing the citizens, ICCPO Dr Akbar Nasir Khan underscored the police force's unwavering commitment to promptly resolve public issues. He emphasized that initiatives like this one aimed to bridge the gap between the police and the public. Residents from across the city presented their suggestions and concerns to ICCPO Dr Akbar Nasir Khan. The majority of these concerns revolved around personal matters, ongoing investigations, the expedited handling of cases, and other related issues. The Chief of Capital Police highlighted that the federal capital has witnessed a significant reduction.



ISLAMABAD: Senator Irfan-Ul-Haque Siddiqui, Chairman Senate Standing Committee On Federal Education & Professional Training presiding over a meeting of the committee at Parliament House.

Wednesday August 30, 2023

Sutlej floods

Climate change-related devastation seems to have become such an ordinary feature of our news cycle that it does not appear to be arousing the same level of angst as our more ephemeral problems do. With national attention focused more on political and economic challenges, widespread devastation continues in Punjab along the Sutlej, which has swelled manifold to reportedly its highest level in 35 years, inundating vast areas along its banks. The flooding was triggered by the flow of large volumes of water into Pakistan from India, where heavy monsoons in the north of the country — rainfall was reported as almost three times the norm in the Ladakh region, for example — have fed the river and forced it to spill its banks. Satellite images captured by Nasa's Earth Observatory depict a huge level of flooding in both countries, with before and after images of the Sutlej taken around mid-June and mid-August showing how radically the landscape has changed in a very short while.

With hundreds of thousands of citizens already relocated, efforts to secure affected populations and move them to safer lands are still ongoing. Thankfully, the authorities have been proactive in their rescue operations, managing to move thousands of residents and livestock from hundreds of settlements in the fertile plains alongside the Indus's easternmost tributary to safer locations before there could be any major loss of life. The Punjab relief commissioner believes life will be back to normal "soon", and the people will eventually be able to return to their homes, but that is unlikely to be the end of this episode. Vast tracts of cropland have been submerged, and their produce may be destroyed by the time the waters recede. There will also be new health challenges in the affected areas arising from waterborne diseases, which will require timely action by the provincial authorities.

Within a year of 2022's catastrophic monsoon and the floods that followed, we are witnessing a rerun of the disasters wrought on our lands by climate change. The locus may have shifted to another geographical area, but the worst effects of the damage done to the global environment by developed nations are again being faced by the vulnerable populations of the Global South. With COP28 just a few months away, Pakistan, India and all other nations bearing the brunt of climate disaster must join forces and seek the operationalisation of the agreement to compensate countries for loss and damage arising from climate change, which was reached at the conference last year. Key issues like who is to pay, who will benefit, and what amount will be allocated to the loss and damage fund have yet to be decided, and, with time already having run out for the people of the subcontinent, the matter needs urgent attention.



Arifa Noor

Last week, after the daylong high drama surrounding the cable chair rescue, a press release from the Tehreek-i-Taliban Pakistan began doing the rounds on social media. It praised the local residents who were part of the rescue mission, and announced a cash award for them.

So bizarre is the press release that people such as myself thought it was fake. However, since then, I have spoken to journalists who cover these issues and they confirm it is genuine. In fact, colleagues point out that the TTP in its present 'reincarnation' seems to be doing a lot more than just enjoying the sophisticated weaponry left behind by the Western forces during their quick exit from Afghanistan: the organisation has also learnt the impor-

tance of winning over the public and are now trying to 'craft' a social agenda. Apparently, it even released a statement on the migrants' ship that went down. (Those familiar with the issue say the group is trying to emulate the Afghan Taliban in organisational matters and reaching out to the populace).

So far, there is little indication they are making any headway in winning over the people. However, this may change, as discontent in the province is growing due to several reasons, according to those who keep a close eye on the situation.

A major factor is the security situation, which continues to deteriorate day by day. Incidents take place on a daily basis, even though not all of them are, fortunately, big enough to catch the attention of the press.

However, the impact on the local residents is evident enough. While the people of the province are worried and upset at the attacks, they are also wary of the possibility of large-scale operations to eliminate militants. Indeed, the residents are fearful of the

threat the TTP can pose, as evident in the large, seemingly spontaneous, protests held earlier this year in different parts of the province when the attacks gained momentum. Such was the sentiment that most of the parties active in the province took part in these protests, ranging from the PTI to ANP, to peace movements such as the PTM.

However, it is important to note that these protests were not just against the TTP's return but also against the possibility of further operations by the state. Having suffered displacement and the destruction of their homes in the past, the people of KP are not keen on a repeat of the experience. This is not lost on the parties active in the area.

Along with the fears of the people, the security situation has also impacted the police force in KP. At the receiving end of many terrorist attacks, the police have borne the brunt of the situation. What complicates matters is the sophisticated equipment being used by the TTP in attacks, placing law-enforcement personnel at a distinct disadvantage.

That the police force is as frustrated by the attacks as are the people was evident from the protest the force held after the attack in Peshawar in February. There may have not been another protest since then, but to assume that its reservations and worries have been addressed would be foolish.

Many feel the security concerns are a critical factor in the growing distrust between the people of KP and the state. As one journalist put it, the people feel abandoned and are sceptical of any effort or move by the state. Economic hardship doesn't help, but while that is a phenomenon the entire country is dealing with, in KP it is being matched by the insecurity caused by terrorism. It is in this context that the TTP's strategy should be viewed.

An additional factor is the challenge presented by Fata's merger with the province. Due to a number of reasons, the administrative challenges which arose since the merger have not been effectively addressed. Financial constraints have been a major reason — especially because of the lack of consensus on the NFC

share, which was to be agreed on by all the provinces. As a result, the state's infrastructure has not been extended to the region. An example of this is that dispute resolution has become difficult. Colleagues point out that the TTP is once again trying to mediate for the quick resolution of disputes. However, these are issues limited to one part of the province; they need immediate attention because this is the area where the militants entrenched themselves the last time. And, if the alienation is not addressed, the forces which can take advantage of it will prove dangerous for the entire country.

Last but not least is the larger political situation in the province, where the bulk of the political support is enjoyed by the PTI, electorally, or peace organisations such as the PTM. The rest of the parties, now expected to return to power whenever elections are held, are not seen to enjoy widespread support. This strategy needs to be viewed in the larger context of KP rather than simply the issue of PTI and its 'undesirabil-

ity'. But that is not happening. If earlier the entire focus was on providing support to the PDM parties, such as the JUI-F and ANP, it now seems that hopes are being placed on Perviz Khattak, who is rumoured to enjoy access to the new caretaker set-up and, in his interactions with journalists, appears confident of a bright future.

However, this unhealthy focus on the political situation — over security matters — can have unforeseen ramifications. If there is already a sense of alienation or distrust among the people, will it be aggravated or addressed by an election result which brings to power forces that don't enjoy popular support? For at some stage, there will be a need to address the security challenge in the province, which is not possible without the local people's support.

The battles at the top may be important, but strategies shouldn't be planned without taking into account public sentiments. One can only hope someone has their ear to the ground as well. -- Courtesy Dawn

BRICS plus six

Maheen Shafeeq

In 2001, Goldman Sachs chief economist Jim O'Neill coined the acronym BRIC in a research paper, predicting a potential club of emerging economies. From there, BRIC grew and had its first summit in 2009. South Africa was accepted as a full member in 2010, and the group was renamed BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa).

Last week, BRICS held its 15th summit in Johannesburg, South Africa from August 22 to August 24 where the prominent agendas of the debate were the further expansion of BRICS and de-dollarization.

On the subject of expansion, South African officials have reported that more than 40 countries have expressed interest in joining BRICS, while about 20

applications for membership were received. Among the applicants, divergences in political systems, economies, cultures, and even diplomatic positions remained obvious.

However, the prominent commonality across the application remained hailing from the Global South. Many analysts have assumed the group to be a counter to the Global North's G7. However, G7 is an exclusive group which does not accept more members. In contrast, BRICS has expansion plans.

China views expansion as the most critical factor of BRICS. Many Western analysts argue that BRICS offers China a forum to expand its influence and cast itself as a champion of the developing world and the Global South. India, in strategic rivalry with China, has been competing for the status of the leader of the Global South. However, when it came to the expansion of BRICS membership to countries in the Global South, India proposed stringent criteria.

India's proposal requires that members have a certain GDP and should not be the target of international

sanctions. This is strange since Russia, India's historical strategic partner and also a member of BRICS, is under international sanctions. This shows the complexities that India has put itself in.

Brazil, regardless of having a similar non-alignment foreign policy as India, believes adding its regional neighbours, buried under inflation, will relieve them from the Western financial system. Russia, at war with the West, has also shown enthusiasm towards ending the West's neocolonialism by adding new members to its alternative system.

It was highly anticipated that the recently held BRICS summit would add new members. As per reports from Johannesburg, BRICS has decided to invite six new members — Argentina, Egypt, Iran, Ethiopia, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates. This shows that expansion is underway, and it yet remains to be seen how the new enlarged group will be able to forge convergences.

The matter of de-dollarization is highly polarized. While some believe that it is inevitable, others believe in the irreversible

supremacy of the US dollar. It is undeniable that efforts towards de-dollarization are gaining some momentum through BRICS.

The New Development Bank (NDB) was established by BRICS members in 2015 with its headquarters in Shanghai, China, which is argued as an alternative option to the IMF and the World Bank. The NDB lends loans in Chinese renminbi and is expected to start lending and trading in South African, Brazilian and Indian currencies soon.

The NDB ceased structuring loans in US dollars and euros in 2021, which shows measures towards reducing the use of Western currencies and the expected use of currencies of BRICS nations. So far this is the only platform of such a kind. Although nations have started using other currencies for trading, such as Pakistan and India paid for Russian oil in the Chinese currency recently, these are sporadic incidents.

The invitation to oil-exporting countries such as Saudi Arabia, Iran, and the United Arab Emirates, shows that there is a great

enthusiasm towards ditching the petrodollar. So far, further acceptance into BRICS has remained unclear; however, oil-exporting countries stand a huge chance of acceptance into the BRICS to end the dollar's dominance.

Some analysts have argued that the choice of trading currency depends on the oil-importing country, and as the Western countries, especially the US is one of the major oil-importers, the dominance of the petrodollar will prevail. However, at the BRICS summit, the countries expressed strong interest in using currencies other than the US dollar while trading among themselves.

As the group expands and offers national currencies of members, there could be a possibility of not preferring dollars. While countries might opt to use other currencies for trade with non-Western states, they cannot completely rule out the use of the dollar. At the government level, most central banks, even BRICS nations, hold reserves and most business transactions take place in dollars. Likewise, individuals too are not yet ready to convert their dollar savings to yuan or

any other currency.

Pakistan has not made any formal requests to join BRICS. It appears that Pakistan is still deciding on whether to be part of the group since Islamabad is watching the group closely. It is also mindful of becoming part of bloc politics as the group is being led by the Sino-Russia alliance. Additionally, India's presence in BRICS and its attached tantrum come as irritants to Pakistan.

BRICS should also be mindful of India and its tactics of sabotaging every multilateral forum. India hosted the SCO, which could not be productive for regional cooperation, while its G20 presidency was marred with controversy. This shows that India's self-serving agendas and its rivalry with China and Pakistan could be a bane for BRICS and its potential.

India has failed to work for the global good and should do a reevaluation of its failures at multilateral forums. BRICS presents an insight into the future of global geopolitics; however, its effectiveness as a stable and preferred alternative system is yet to be seen. -- Courtesy TheNews

Living in fear

Syed Sheheryar Raza Zaidi

Among the many existential crises Pakistan faces, the plight of its minorities and the downtrodden seems to be the least of the state's worries. In all the perceived concern for Pakistan's economic plight and the fundamentals of its Constitution, the people of Pakistan — that is, its constituents — have been left at the mercy of mobs, religious fanatics and feudal lords.

A nation which has continued to vociferously protest against the desecration of the Holy Quran now finds itself condemning the desecration of churches and the homes of its minority Christian community by its own brethren.

Unfortunately, Pakistan's minorities have had to live their lives in fear — the fear of being subjected to abuse, fear of being killed at the whim of the local cleric, and fear of being accused of religious hate crimes — because their existence is seen as hampering the economic rights of some in the mob.

To put things in context, a mob of 'religious fanatics' recently burned the homes and places of worship of the Christian community in and around Faisalabad on the mere allegation of blasphemy. A mere allegation was enough to condemn thousands of people belonging to a particular religion to violence. It forced them to spend the night in the fields, praying for their lives. Pakistan has one of the most stringent blasphemy laws even among fellow Muslim coun-

tries. It also has among the highest, if not the highest, number of blasphemy cases reported anywhere in the world, despite the overwhelming majority of its population calling itself Muslim.

Unfortunately, for some religious bigots in the country, being accused of blasphemy is the same as being convicted of it. This has meant that tens of people have been brutally murdered on charges of blasphemy even before they had a chance to defend themselves. This has given rise to a sense of fear amongst not just members of the minority community, but also free thinkers and individuals who otherwise wish to be vocal against the misuse of religion. Islam is a religion of peace which codifies every aspect of human life and presents before us the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) as the embodiment of kindness, serenity, respect and love. Yet, its weaponisation by politic o-/socio-religious leaders for their own petty political, social or monetary gains has meant that entire generations have been led to believe that they are the 'true protectors of faith', when in reality they are individuals with a flawed sense in their practice of religion.

If there are any words of comfort — although even these would be ironic — for Pakistan's minorities, it is that they are not the only ones bearing the brunt of unbridled lawlessness. Many among the Muslim community have also had to, and continue to, live in constant fear of the violation of their person, life and livelihood. The pages of newspapers are filled with incidents of rape, torture and the general degradation of human values being committed with impunity by feudal lords and the privileged classes. The recent alleged rape and torture of Fatima, a 10-year-old girl in Sindh, or the alleged inhu-

mane treatment of Rizwana, an adolescent in Punjab, are all examples of the diminishing fear of one's actions.

All these incidents constitute crimes punishable with lengthy sentences if not death, and yet they continue to be committed one after the other, without fear of accountability. The reason is simple: the diminishing writ of the state.

The writ of the state or the fear of accountability by the state of one's actions lies at the heart of a successful country. It is as important for the functioning and existence of a country as a country's territorial integrity. Yet, the state here appears to be at a loss when it comes to enforcing such writ on the religious, political and economic elite.

It is not that there is insufficient legislation or that the Penal Code lacks effective measures to protect the fundamental right to life, and the freedom to practise and propagate religion; instead, the ruling elite lacks the will to ensure these rights, or fears antagonising powerful groups that could lead to retribution or losing their voter base.

This is where the other limbs of the state should come into the picture. The august Supreme Court and other state institutions that are perceived to hold sway and authority in the running of this country must realise that radicalisation, religious intolerance and the unmitigated abuse of power harm the very fabric of society and need to be dealt with as much firmness as the vehemence with which state property is damaged or desecrated. For what is Pakistan if not a collective of its people, a bouquet of flowers made up of the followers of different religions, and diverse ethnicities and circumstances all coming together to emit the fragrance of unity, togetherness and love? -- Courtesy Dawn

Skeletons in your closet

Hassan Kamal Wattoo

For a country that discovers fresh, unique ways to fail its people every day, we're awfully weird about acknowledging failings of the past. Consider one of the greatest failures in modern history: 1971.

I'll admit, this is something I hesitate to bring up. See, as a patriot, love for one's country is often persistent and inexplicable. This place has its flaws, but it's ours. The subject of our loyalties. The sole friend in a crowd of strangers. And if a friend has been through a bitter divorce, one's immediate reaction isn't to start interrogating. We listen to their version of events, nod along (even when we notice holes in their story), and offer our assurances that they are wonderful and deserve better.

But what if it transpires that our friend isn't too innocent? Say, if the other side alleges unspoken evidence, and points to a pattern of behaviour that persisted long after things fell apart? If all signs point to our friend being a bit messed up in the head, and emboldened by lack of consequence, we might not feel very safe in their presence either.

In April this year, the Guardian published the following report: "We lay like corpses. Then the raping began: 52 years on, Bangladesh's rape camp survivors speak out." It features eyewitness accounts of the women who lived through Pakistan's violent

break-up with its East. The stories they tell are so dark, anyone with a heart would shiver.

But let's assume for a moment that they're a pack of lies. That these war-surviving old women are conning imposters, and this 200-year-old British newspaper is conspiring to malign our glorious, angelic past. Did the Foreign Office issue a rebuttal? Has any government body contradicted the testimonies? If we don't deny them, do we have an ounce of shame to address the living, breathing proofs of our country's sins?

Of course, Pakistan isn't the only country with a sinful past. America had the slave trade. Britain had colonialism. Germany was Germany. Where we are unique is being the only major country that views 'shut up, act cool, and pretend it never happened' as a viable policy decision.

We'll teach our kids that the split with East Pakistan was infinitely complex; one of the profound mysteries of the universe, riddled with nuances like 'actually, we only killed 30,000 people'. Everything except 'the narcissistic authoritarians in charge of this country treated their own people like idiots who wouldn't mind their rights being robbed from them'. What does this accomplish?

In 2008, the US Congress formally apologised for slavery and the Jim Crow laws. In 2018, Justin Trudeau apologised for Canada's failure to help a ship of Jews escaping the Nazis. One ship. Seventy-nine years ago. Did these countries lose anything by acknowledging a mistake? Did some humility and self-reflection make them weak, or did it strengthen their moral position?

Pakistan has an honesty problem. Mostly with itself. One grounded in childlike insecurity and pathetic chest-thumping hubris. But here's my ques-

tion: what is there to be so insecure about? Have you ever seen the Germans trying to hide, censor or downplay the dark parts of their history? If they did, would it not be a lingering reminder of their willingness to do it again?

These persistent cruelties evoke the kind of anger these pages would struggle to carry the weight of. But we know that the folks running this country don't take nicely to bitter truths. So, I'll address it like a friend that's made terrible mistakes, but can still correct course. To quote a modern lyricist, T. Swift, "it must be exhausting always rooting for the anti-hero". We do it anyway. Because critique can come from a place of love, and this struggling young nation has been through a lot.

In its history, it's seen wholesale assaults on its peoples' civil liberties. Some who dissented, shot dead. Others, many others, gone missing. Politicians persecuted until they folded. Collective punishment on those around them until they bent and broke. It's seen fundamental rights treated like suggestions, discardable at a whim. The will of millions displaced by a handful of men in Islamabad drawing rooms. It's seen the Constitution treated like a joke, judges taking its butchered, bloodied remnant and rewriting its most basic principles. It's seen the persistent delusion that free speech can be crushed into submission. The hubris of the powerful declaring at every juncture that they know what's better for you, not you. And, it has seen columnists unable to speak freely about any of it. But you know what's wonderful? That we earned so much from all this history, and never allowed it to repeat itself. Of course, we can continue questioning our friend with unquenching, unconditional love and support. Surely, he'd never turn on us. -- Courtesy Dawn-- Courtesy Dawn

Governor KP for collective efforts to promote country's development, prosperity, peace

PESHAWAR (APP): Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Haji Ghulam Ali on Tuesday emphasized the need for collective efforts to promote the country's development, prosperity and peace.

He said that those with intentions of weakening the state and spreading negativity, especially among the youth, cannot contribute positively.

He urged the younger generation to foster a positive mindset, uphold traditions, and promote values.

He expressed these views during a meeting at the Governor's House, where a delegation of 45 members from the district of Dir Upper, led by former provincial minister Shafiqullah Khan, convened.

The delegation included representatives from various political and social circles, such as ANP, PPP, JUI, and PTI, among others.

The delegates discussed issues concerning the region's population,

particularly related to notifications in Dir Central District, education, healthcare, gas supply, municipal representative powers, funds, and other challenges.

The delegates appreciated the Governor's receptive approach and thanked him for being a public servant focused solely on addressing citizens' concerns without bias. They highlighted that this was the first time in history that a public-serving Governor was directly accessible to the province's people for dialogue and assistance. During the conversation, the Governor underscored his commitment to resolving public issues impartially and selflessly.

He said that serving humanity was a significant form of worship and that the provision of non-discriminatory public service was a crucial aspect of his belief.

The Governor acknowledged that engaging with the people and institutions dedicated to social

service brings him immense joy.

He assured the delegates that the problems faced by local governments would be resolved soon, allowing them to initiate developmental activities in their areas.

Furthermore, Governor Ghulam Ali expressed his willingness to visit Dir shortly in response to the invitation extended by the delegation. The delegation from Peshawar Public School and College, headed by Principal Iftikhar Ahmed, also met with the Governor.

The delegation discussed matters concerning institutional improvement and exchanged ideas for enhancement.

In a separate meeting, a delegation led by former provincial assembly member Israr-ul-Haq met with the Governor. The delegation discussed local issues, reaffirming the Governor's commitment to collaborate and assist in finding solutions.



PESHAWAR: 45-members Qaumi Jirga consisting of tribal elders from Dir Bala meeting with Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Haji Ghulam Ali.

Governor Punjab orders renaming of Bahawalpur zoo

Independent Report

LAHORE: Governor Punjab Muhammad Balighur Rehman has directed concerned department to restore old name of Bahawalpur zoo and rename it as Sherbagh.

During a briefing to the Governor Punjab on Jamia Masjid Al-Sadiq, Bahawalpur Zoo and the remains of ancient civilization Ganveriwala in Cholistan at the Governor's House here on Tuesday, he said the zoo should be equipped with state of the art facilities, new animals should be brought here, and the old animals should be well taken care of.

Commissioner Bahawalpur Dr. Ehtisham Anwar, Additional Deputy Commissioner Bahawalpur Jam Afritab, Secretary Tourism

Asif Bilal Lodhi, Head of Archeology Islamia University Bahawalpur Dr. Khalil Ahmed, Secretary Auqaf Tahir Raza Bukhari, DG Wildlife Mubeen Elhi, Secretary Forest Mudassar Waheed Malik, Administrator Auqaf Bahawalpur Ghulam Abbas, Principal Secretary to Governor Nabeel Awan, Special Secretary to Governor Umar Saeed and DG Walled City Kamran Lashari attended the briefing.

The Governor Punjab further said that matters relating to ticketing, parking, living conditions of animals inside cages should be improved.

Balighur Rehman directed to turn Sherbagh into a modern zoo with state of the art facilities.

It was also decided that the Lal Suhanra National Park Bahawalpur will also be improved.

It was further decided excavation work regarding discovery of Ganveriwala archeology in Cholistan will be started in October.

"By discovering ancient heritage and civilization buried in Cholistan more information can be found about the ancient Indus Valley Civilization," Balighur Rehman observed.

He expressed the hope that cities as big as Mohenjo-Daro and Harappa in the ancient Indus Valley Civilization can be discovered in Cholistan, adding, it will give Pakistan international recognition and also create opportunities for tourism.

KP caretaker minister chairs meeting on tourism, culture, archaeology

PESHAWAR (APP): A meeting regarding tourism, culture, archaeology and Museum was held under the chairmanship of the Caretaker Provincial Minister for Tourism, Culture, Archaeology and Museum, and Department of Information Barrister Feroze Jamal Shah Kakakhel here on Tuesday.

Addressing the participants of the meeting, he said that new recreational parks, tourist parks, skiing, new chairlifts, new tourism tracks and other measures are being taken for the safety of tourists. The environment and trees at tourists' spots will not be harmed, he added.

Kakakhel said that a ski resort will be built at Biyun (Kalam) which will generate income to the tune of millions of dollars annually and benefit the economy. He said that the

security of the tourists is being ensured through the tourism police so that there is peace in the tourist areas. Tourists should also take care of the environment and avoid littering the tourist spots. He said that the immediate impact-oriented projects should be completed as soon as possible so that the people could benefit from them. We are here for good governance so that the people could benefit from it. Barrister Kakakhel said that a tourism helpline 1422 has also been set up for tourists to call in case of any problem.

He said that work on the preservation of archaeological sites is being carried out on various sites in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. He invited the people to visit the archaeological sites wherein the guides would inform them about their history.



LAHORE: Governor Punjab Muhammad Balighur Rehman briefed by officials of the relevant departments on Jamia Masjid Al-Sadiq, Bahawalpur Zoo and the remains of ancient civilization Ganveriwala in Cholistan.

Mayor Karachi terms digitization of land records as major challenge

KARACHI (APP): Mayor Karachi Barrister Murtaza Wahab has said that the major challenge of the city is the digitization of land records, which has been started by the Karachi Metropolitan Corporation (KMC) land department.

He said this on the occasion of inaugurating the Land Management and Digital Archive System operations at the head office of KMC's Land Department.

He said that with the computerization of land records, it will not be possible to make any fabrication in this record in the future. The land department challan will be issued along with a QR code that would bring transparency in this process while the amount of challan will be credited to the KMC's account, he added.

BoD meeting of autonomous bodies held

PESHAWAR (APP): A meeting regarding Boards of Directors (BoDs) of autonomous bodies was held here at Chief Minister's House on Tuesday with Caretaker Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Muhammad Azam Khan in the Chair.

Legal matters related to the functions of the BoDs were reviewed in the meeting with a special focus on the decisions taken in the 34th board meeting of the Provincial Housing Authority.

Caretaker Provincial Minister for Law, Justice (retired) Arshad Hussain Shah, Chief Secretary Nadeem Aslam Chaudhry, Secretary Law, Advocate General and other concerned high ups were present.

LHC moved against charging taxes to consumers thru electricity bills

LAHORE (Online): Inflated electricity bills and collection of taxes through these bills have been challenged in Lahore High Court (LHC).

Petition was filed by a citizen Sheikh Muhammad Latif making chairman WAPD and Chairman NEPRA respondents. The petitioner has taken plea in the petition diverse taxes are being received from the consumers in electricity bills. FC surcharge, GST, TV fee, electricity duty and other taxes are being charged to consumers in electricity bills.

It has been said in the petition the superior courts have declared collection of different taxes of electricity illegal. Thousands of rupees is increased on the difference of one unit in bills. He prayed that unprecedented hike in electricity bills has made the life of people miserable.

ECP seeks proposals for transfer/posting of key officials in Sindh

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP), in a bid to ensure free, fair and transparent elections, on Tuesday directed the Sindh Chief Secretary and Inspector General of Police to suggest transfers/postings of key provincial government officials.

In a meeting, chaired by Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Sikandar Sultan Raja, it was emphasized that ensuring transparency and impartiality in the elections was the foremost duty of Sindh government's top officials.

"As an initial measure, the transfers and appointments of crucial officials are necessary to ensure non-controversial elections. Subsequently, the process will involve the appointment of district returning officers, returning officers, assistant returning officers, and monitoring officers," it was further stressed. The Election Commission extended its full support and protection to the Sindh Chief Secretary and IGP.

Two more ministers included in KP caretaker cabinet

PESHAWAR (APP): The caretaker cabinet of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government was further expanded as two ministers were included in it on Tuesday.

The two new ministers Engineer Aamir Nadeem Durrani and Engineer Ahmad Jan were administered oath by the Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Haji Ghulam Ali here at Governor's House.

Caretaker Chief Minister Muhammad Azam Khan also attended the oath-taking ceremony.



KARACHI: Mayor Karachi Barrister Murtaza Wahab inaugurates the operations of Land Management & Digital Archive System computerized land record at KMC Head Office.

Dr. Jamal Nasir says: Pakistan had become fifth most populous country in the world

RAWALPINDI (APP): Caretaker Provincial Minister for Health and Population Welfare Dr. Jamal Nasir said that according to the latest census results, Pakistan had become the fifth most populous country in the world after India, China, America and Indonesia.

He was addressing as the chief guest at a seminar on "Alarming population growth rate and family planning" held in collaboration with the District Population Welfare Department Rawalpindi at the Punjab Arts Council (PAC) titled here on Tuesday.

The minister said that this year, the total population

of the world was increased by eight billion people while the current rate of population growth in Pakistan was about 2.7 percent which was very high compared to international standards. He further said that the Punjab government was taking all necessary steps to prevent overpopulation.

District Population Officer Shireen Sukhan, while speaking said that population growth was the main cause of development challenges faced by Pakistan resulting in an alarming increase in poverty, illiteracy, gender inequality, environmental pollution, maternal and child mortality.



GILGIT: Minister Law & Prosecution Gilgit-Baltistan Syed Sohail Abbas, Chief Secretary Gilgit-Baltistan Mohyuddin Ahmad Wani and IGP GB Afzal Mehmood Butt inaugurating the Public library at old Jail Kashrote.

Court extends physical remand of Parvez Elahi till Sept 2

LAHORE (APP): An accountability court on Tuesday extended physical remand of former chief minister Punjab and Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) President Chaudhry Parvez Elahi till September 2 in a case of receiving kickbacks in development projects.

Earlier, the National Accountability Bureau (NAB) team produced Chaudhry Parvez Elahi before Accountability Court Judge Sajid Ali Awan on expiry of physical remand term.

A prosecutor represented the bureau and pleaded with the court to extend physical remand of Parvez Elahi as investigation could not be completed from him. He submitted that Parvez Elahi was not cooperating with the investigation team.

However, Parvez Elahi's counsel Advocate Amjad Parvez opposed the physical remand plea besides questioning the arrest of his client by the bureau. Subsequently, the court extended the physical remand of Parvez Elahi for another 4 days and directed for producing him on September 2.

French CG calls on Mayor Karachi

KARACHI (APP): Consul General of France in Karachi Alexis Chahatinsky called on the Mayor of Karachi Barrister Murtaza Wahab on Tuesday and discussed matters of mutual interest.

The Mayor Karachi welcomed the French Consul General at the KMC head office and informed the details regarding various civic affairs including the local government system.

He said that Pakistan and France have long friendly relations and France can help Pakistan in medical, nursing, and other fields.

KP Relief Department, IRC sign MoU to strengthen disaster response efforts

PESHAWAR (APP): The Relief, Rehabilitation and Settlement Department (RRSD) Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and the International Rescue Committee (IRC) on Tuesday signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) to enhance the disaster management and fortify the emergency response efforts.

Secretary Relief, Abdul Basit and Country Director of IRC, Shabnam Baloch signed the MoU.

This moment marked that the IRC was committed to an enhanced collaboration with RRSD-Provincial Disaster Management Authority (PDMA) across

all phases of disaster management. The collaborative initiatives encompass rapid response strategies, anticipatory actions, capacity-building projects and reinforcement of disaster preparedness programs.

The successful execution of this partnership hinges on the availability of essential resources to facilitate joint endeavors.

Throughout this collaboration, RRSD and IRC maintain their distinct missions and responsibilities, ensuring the preservation of their individual objectives.

Commenting on this development, Secretary of

Relief, Abdul Basit, stated, "By harnessing the resources at our disposal, RRSD and IRC are poised to identify shared areas of interest in aiding communities affected by disasters or conflicts through targeted program interventions."

He further added, "I strongly believe in the significance of building and strengthening local capacities in disaster preparedness and response. Additionally, he said we need to establish efficient mechanisms to streamline humanitarian efforts and prevent duplication of work during emergencies."



HYDERABAD: Fishermen are hunting into Indus river as the water level increases due to low flood that may cause any life risk for them, near Jamshoro.

Flood-prone areas Authorities directed to safeguard schools' infrastructure

MULTAN (APP): Secretary School Education for South Punjab, Rana Saleem Ahmad Khan, directed the officials to take all possible measures to safeguard schools vulnerable to flooding in Sutlej river. He was addressing a conference at Civil Secretariat here on Tuesday. The Chief Executive Officers (CEOs) of respective districts have been tasked with ensuring comprehensive protection against water-related damages by implementing robust measures.

The conference was participated by key education stakeholders, including Additional Secretary Agha Zaheer Abbas Shirazi,

Deputy Secretaries Khawaja Mazharul Haque Saifur Rahman Khan, DPI (Secondary) South Punjab Zahida Batul, DPI (Elementary) Parvez Iqbal, and other officials.

The Secretary emphasized the paramount importance of restoring damaged school structures and providing essential amenities. He underscored the necessity of proactive measures to avert flood-induced harm, highlighting effective communication with the district administrations concerned. He stressed the need for an enhanced coordination mechanism with relevant authorities to bolster preparedness.



MULTAN: Rescue workers evacuate people from the villages as water from the Sutlej River continued to inundate settlements along its banks, near Multan.

IT sector has potential to address Pak trade imbalance: IT minister

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Minister for Information Technology and Telecommunication Dr Umar Saif on Tuesday highlighted the potential of the IT sector in addressing the country's trade imbalance.

Talking to a private TV channel, the minister said that the IT sector held an almost 80 percent trade surplus, making it an attractive industry for boosting the country's economy.

He emphasized that the untapped potential within the IT sector could significantly contribute to the country's economic ad-

ancement. Dr Saif pointed out that the current value of Pakistan's IT exports stood at \$2.6 billion, providing employment opportunities for around 150,000 individuals within the sector.

He noted that software developers presently earned an annual income of approximately \$17,000 to \$18,000, whereas their Indian counterparts earned around \$30,000.

Discussing the academic landscape, the minister revealed that Pakistani universities currently produced 20,000 to 22,000 IT

graduates, of which only 2,000 to 2,200 secured jobs. He mentioned a disparity in skills, often falling short of international standards. To bridge this skill gap, he stressed the necessity of collaboration between Pakistani IT experts and universities. Dr Saif proposed that several IT companies channel funds abroad out of which a significant amount could be repatriated to Pakistan by offering incentives to them.

According to the minister, these incentives could potentially bring an additional \$1 to \$2 billion to the

country. He also acknowledged Pakistan's global standing as the seventh-largest mobile phone market, boasting an impressive usage of 190 million mobile phones.

Dr Saif shared the government's vision of fostering local manufacturing of affordable, high-quality mobile phones.

"This strategic step aims to diminish the reliance on imported phones, thereby mitigating the outflow of foreign exchange," Dr Saif said emphasizing that this initiative had a two-fold potential



PESHAWAR: Traders of Peshawar protesting against the high rate of electricity bill at G.T road.



ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Federal Minister for IT and Telecommunication Dr. Umar Saif in a meeting with Chairman Pakistan Telecommunication Authority (PTA) Maj. Gen. (R) Hafeezur Rehman.

5.2m SMEs active in Pakistan contributing 20% to GDP

SBP plans liberal loan disbursement to SME sector

MULTAN (APP): Around 5.2 million Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) were active in the national economic sphere contributing 20 per cent to country's GDP and State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) is planned to enhance loan disbursement to this sector on softer terms by more than double the existing level to accelerate the national economic growth.

This was stated by SBP Multan officials at a seminar organized by SBP at Multan Chamber of Commerce and Industry (MCCI) to upgrade level of awareness of SMEs and women entrepreneurs on banks' refinance facility, credit guarantee scheme for women entrepreneurs and

Prime Minister's Youth Agriculture financing scheme for renewable energy to enable SMEs and women entrepreneurs to bring their business and industrial activity more productive and profitable on modern lines.

MCCI president Mian Rashid Iqbal thanked SBP Multan on their awareness initiative, aimed at empowering women entrepreneurs and encouraging budding investors to take advantage of the government schemes to propel the national economy to new highs.

Assistant Director SBP Multan Kiran Amjad gave a detailed briefing to the participants through multimedia and said that loan disbursement to SMEs

was only 6-7 per cent of the total volume but given their importance, SBP has started taking steps to increase soft term loan disbursement to SMEs to 17 per cent. "Easy loan schemes have been launched and SBP would achieve this target in cooperation with commercial and Islamic banks."

She said that small scale businesspersons can get up to Rs 150 million while medium scale investors can avail up to Rs 800 million loan and that too only on 5-7 per cent mark up rate.

She disclosed that SBP has given Rs 100 million per month loan disbursement target to commercial and Islamic banks.

Business leaders call for focusing on hydro power to provide cheap energy

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chaudhry Abdul Majeed, Chairman, of Faisal Town said that Pakistan has the potential to generate 100,000 MW of hydropower, which is a very cheap source of power generation.

Addressing a Business Role Model ceremony organized in his honor by the Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry (ICCI), he urged the government to build small and medium-sized dams to produce hydropower in order

to provide cheap energy to businesses and industry that would help boost the economy.

Ch. Abdul Majeed also called upon the government to ensure fair spending of tax money to improve the confidence of taxpayers and promote tax culture.

He said that 90 percent of loans taken by the country have been spent on non-productive activities due to which the Pakistanis now facing huge foreign debt of USD 140 billion.



HYDERABAD: Labourers along with their tools waiting for daily work while sitting along road at Latifabad.

New FAO Office helps strengthen partnerships for agriculture

HYDERABAD (Online): The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations (UN) inaugurated a new provincial office in Tando Jam, Hyderabad District, on Monday, August 28, 2023 marking a significant milestone and a new partnership to drive positive change in communities.

"Universities and academia play a key role to help shape sustainable agricultural practices through research and innovation," said Prof. Dr. Fateh Muhammad Marri, Vice Chancellor Sindh Agriculture University, Tando Jam who attended the ceremony.

This new FAO provincial office underscores the Organization's commitment to forging enduring

partnerships with academic institutions in support of agriculture in Pakistan.

"This new office is the UN that we need for Pakistan, one that brings our staff and support close to the people and the local governments that we serve," said Julien Harnes, UN Resident Coordinator for Pakistan. "It is particularly exciting to see the office in the Sindh Agricultural University, where we can combine research and action." The new office in Tando Jam is a pivotal step toward strengthening ties with local stakeholders throughout Pakistan.

"FAO's strategic focus is to build long-term collaborations with universities," said Ms. Florence Rolle, FAO Representative in Pakistan.

Afghan bound China cargo termed good omen for enhancing regional trade

PESHAWAR (APP): President Frontier Custom Agents Association (FCAA), Zia-ul-Haq Sarhadi while welcoming crossing of first ever China cargo for Afghanistan via Khunjerab border, has termed it a good omen for enhancing trade in the region. In a press statement issued here on Tuesday, the President FCAA said that it was really heartening to know that Afghanistan bound China goods had started crossing through Pakistan.

This development, Zia added, will not only increase volume of trade at

regional level, but will also create a large number of livelihood opportunities for people associated with customs clearance, goods transportation, fuel business, daily wagers etc.

It merits an insertion here that Pakistan Customs has recently facilitated the first ever cargo from China to Afghanistan via Khunjerab border under the Transports Internationaux Routiers (TIR) Convention, which provides an easy and economical route for trade between countries across the world.

The first consignment

started its journey from Kasghar, China and after crossing over to Pakistan via the Khunjerab pass, it will reach Kabul in Afghanistan. This transit route will reduce the travel time to almost 70% and is also economical as it is expected to reduce the logistics costs by more than 30 percent, Zia opined. He said that presently, the flow of bilateral and transit trade between Pakistan and Afghanistan was not up to mark and inclusion of China cargo in the business would improve commercial activities in the region.

NPO to organize webinar on 'Crisis Management'

ISLAMABAD (APP): The National Productivity Organization (NPO) would conduct a training course on "Crisis Management" on August 30 (Wednesday).

Crisis Management is an organization's process and strategy-based approach for identifying and responding to a threat, an unanticipated event, or any negative disruption with the potential to harm people, property, or business processes, according to an NPO document.

The objectives of crisis management include prevention - preventing the

occurrence of a negative situation, avoidance - avoiding the negative consequences associated with a potential crisis and assessment - understanding the effect or impact of an unfortunate situation or circumstance.

The workshop would provide information about enhanced preparedness, developing crisis management strategies, risk management techniques, stakeholder management, and learning from case studies.

The webinar has been designed for team leaders, supervisors, and office management.

Gold rates increase by Rs.500

ISLAMABAD (APP): The per tola price of 24 karat gold increased by Rs.500 on Tuesday and was sold at Rs. 233,500 as compared to its sale at Rs. 233,000 the previous day.

The price of 10 grams of 24 karat gold also increased by Rs.429 to Rs.200,189 from 199,760 whereas the rate of 10 gram 22 karat went up to Rs. 183,506 from Rs. 183,113, the All Sindh Sarafa Jewelers Association reported.

The price per tola silver remained unchanged to close at Rs 2,850 and Rs 2,443.41 respectively.



SIALKOT: President and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Faisal Bank Limited, Yusef Hussain, Mufti Muhammad Najeeb Khan, President (SCCI) Abdul Ghafoor Malik are addressing to seminar on Islamic Banking.

SCCI raised an alarm regarding soaring energy prices plaguing the industrial landscape

SIALKOT (APP): President Sialkot Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCI) Abdul Ghafoor Malik has raised an alarm regarding the critical issue of soaring energy prices plaguing the industrial landscape.

In his assessment of the prevailing crisis, President SCCI Abdul Ghafoor Malik highlighted the adverse impact of exorbitant electricity costs on Pakistan's manufacturing and export sectors.

President SCCI emphasized that the recent surge in energy prices, as evidenced by the issuance of electricity bills with an alarming hike of up to 80 to 100%, was a substantial setback for the manufacturing cum export sector of the nation. "This escalation, attributed to an assortment of taxes and levies, presents a formidable challenge that cannot be ignored," he added.

Malik highlighted the compounding effect of this crisis on the competitiveness of Pakistani exporters on the global stage.

He said that the substantial increase in the electricity component within the manufacturing cost, effectively doubling the burden, would place exporters at a disadvantage amidst intense international competition.

Expressing his grave concerns, President SCCI Abdul Ghafoor Malik said that the skyrocketing energy costs had made it arduous for exporters to maintain their competitive edge and sustain international commitments.

Malik also expressed apprehensions about the potential cancellation of orders and the subsequent implications on exporters' capacity to meet their international obligations.

Drawing attention to the recent statement by

Caretaker Minister for Commerce and Industries, Dr. Gohar Ejaz, wherein he underscored the need to attain a significant export target of \$80 billion to fuel Pakistan's economic momentum, the President said that while the government had called for exporters to reach an ambitious goal, the simultaneous escalation in energy costs had placed them in a challenging predicament, where in sustenance seemed highly improbable let alone increase the exports.

In light of these critical circumstances, Malik urged Prime Minister of Pakistan Anwar-ul-Haq Kakar to take immediate cognizance of the situation.

He appealed for urgent relief for the export sector through the re-introduction of Regionally Competitive Energy Tariffs tailored specifically for the five crucial export-oriented sectors.

OGDCL workshop on energy explores latest trends, future prospects

ISLAMABAD: The Oil and Gas Development Company Limited (OGDCL) on Tuesday hosted a dynamic workshop on energy in collaboration with the Lahore University of Management Sciences (LUMS).

The workshop, held at the OGDCL headquarters, provided a platform for industry experts and thought leaders to convene and deliberate on the current landscape, future prospects, and collaborative initiatives within the energy sector.

The workshop was graced by the presence of Mr. Ahmed Hayat Lak, the Managing Director of

teemed speakers, prominently featuring LUMS Energy Institute (LEI) luminaries - Dr. Fiaz Ahmad Chaudhry, Prof. Nauman Ahmad Zaffar, and Dr. Naveed Arshad. The sessions encompassed a diverse range of topics, spanning the power sector's challenges and prospects, the significance of advanced batteries in national energy security, and the role of Innovation and Entrepreneurship in Disruptive Energy Technologies.

These discussions not only expanded horizons but also underscored the potential for innovation-driven solutions to shape the future of energy. Speaking at the event, Mr. Ahmed



OGDCL, alongside all Executive Directors of OGDCL, and other senior officers. The gathering facilitated constructive exchanges of insights and perspectives on the advancements in the energy domain, fostering a deeper understanding of ongoing projects, challenges, and emerging opportunities.

The three-session workshop was enriched by presentations from es-

Hayat Lak, MD/CEO OGDCL, expressed his enthusiasm about the collaborative potential between OGDCL and LUMS and said, "This workshop signifies a remarkable opportunity to bridge industry and academia, paving the way for innovative partnerships. By synergizing efforts, we can collectively drive the energy sector towards sustainable growth and resilience."

Tanveer reviews Dev. works in Bahawalpur Industrial Estate

LAHORE (APP): Caretaker Provincial Minister for Industries and Commerce SM Tanveer visited Bahawalpur Industrial Estate (BIE) and reviewed the progress on the developmental works there.

Punjab Industries Department spokesman told media here on Tuesday that Bahawalpur Chamber of Commerce and Industry (BCCI) President Zulfikar Ali Khan, Vice President Chaudhry Jabbar, Deputy Commissioner Bahawalpur Zaheer Anwar Jappa and other relevant officers were also present.

The Provincial Minis-

ter directed the authorities concerned to gear-up developmental works in the BIE and to complete this task by the end of this year.

He was of the view that industrialization would reduce economic problems and create employment for the people, adding that BCCI should give suggestions regarding speeding up the process of industrialization.

Later, Provincial Minister visited the flood-affected areas of Bahawalpur district to review the flood situation, rescue operations and relief activities for the flood victims.

Palm, soybean oils import reduced by 5.40%, 6.82% in 1st month

ISLAMABAD (APP): Imports of edible oil including palm and soybean into the country during the first months of the current financial year decreased by 5.40 percent and 6.82 percent respectively as compared to the imports of the corresponding month of the last year. During the month of July 2023 about 12,575 metric tons of soybean costing \$14.955 million were imported as against the import of 11,000 metric tons valuing 15,809 million of the period last year, according to data of the Pakistan Bureau statistics.

Over 277,801 metric tons of palm oil worth \$278.939, million was also imported in the first month

of the current financial year to fulfill the local requirements of cooking oil and vegetable ghee as compared the imports of 194,081 metric tons valuing \$299.395 million of the same month last year. However, during the period under review, imports of sugar into the country grew by 20.09 percent as 574 metric tons of sugar costing \$593,000 were imported as against the imports of 550 metric tons valuing \$449,000 of the same month last year.

It is worth mentioning here that during the first month of the current financial year food group imports into the country decreased by 18.13 percent as food commodities.



ISLAMABAD: Senator Hidayat Ullah, Chairman Senate Standing Committee On Aviation presiding over a meeting of the committee at Parliament House.

North Korea denounces 'gang bosses' of US and allies amid drills

Monitoring Desk
SEOUL: The United States, South Korea and Japan staged joint naval missile defence drills off the Korean peninsula on Tuesday, as North Korea denounced the "gang bosses" of Washington and its allies for increasing the risk of nuclear war. The three nations staged exercises in international waters off South Korea's southern Jeju island to improve their ability to detect and track targets, and share information in the event of provocation by Pyongyang, South Korea's military said.

"gang bosses" of the United States, Japan and South Korea announced regular joint military exercises, news agency KCNA reported, apparently referring to their Aug. 18 summit at Camp David, Maryland. "Owing to the reckless confrontational moves of the U.S. and other hostile forces, the waters off the Korean Peninsula have been reduced to the world's biggest war hardware concentration spot, the most unstable waters with the danger of a nuclear war," Kim was quoted by KCNA as saying.

of information on ballistic missiles was part of the drills on Tuesday. "The exercises will strongly facilitate trilateral cooperation and demonstrate the commitment of Japan, the United States, and the Republic of Korea to protect a free and open international order based on the rule of law," Japan's defence ministry said in a statement.



U.S. Commerce Secretary Gina Rai Monardo and Chinese Premier Li Qiang have a light moment during a meeting at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing, China.

Ukraine claims retaking town, eyes gains in south

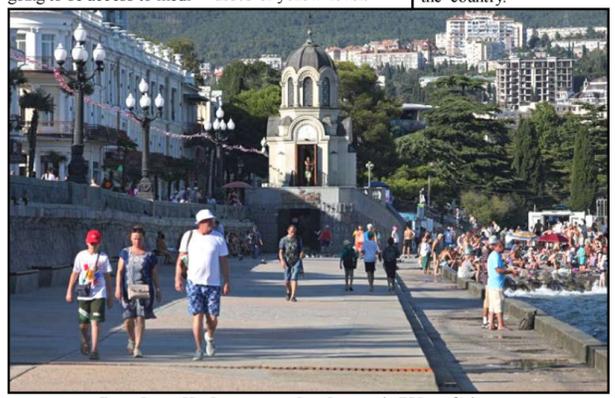
Monitoring Desk
KYIV: Ukraine said on Monday its troops had liberated the south-eastern settlement of Robotyne and were trying to push further south in their counteroffensive against Russian forces. The Ukrainian military said last week that its forces had raised the national flag in the strategic settlement, but were still carrying out mopping-up operations.

10 km (six miles) south of the frontline town of Orikhiv in the Zaporizhzhia region on an important road towards Tokmak, a Russian-occupied road and rail hub. Tokmak's capture would be a milestone as Ukrainian troops press southwards towards the Sea of Azov in a military drive that is intended to split Russian forces following Moscow's full-scale invasion in February 2022.

UN seeks Niger sanctions relief amid aid blockages

Monitoring Desk
GENEVA: United Nations officials said on Tuesday that sanctions on Niger were blocking vital humanitarian aid such as food and medicine, saying that requests for exemptions had been submitted to regional bloc ECOWAS. Trucks with food and humanitarian aid have been piling up at Niger's land borders since a military coup on July 26, driving up food prices, in a sign of the impact of the sanctions. The blockade is designed to pressure the junta to restore ousted President Mohamed Bazoum to office.

He added that a formal letter from U.N. aid chief Martin Griffiths had been addressed to ECOWAS for exemptions. U.N. aid flights have also been grounded because they cannot get access to jet fuel because of the sanctions, complicating aid efforts in the giant country. Some agencies are using trucks, said World Food Programme regional spokesperson Djoussede Madjjangar, but that takes extra time. Requests for special ECOWAS clearance for aid supplies have so far not been granted, he added.



People walk along an embankment in Yalta, Crimea.

India-held Kashmir to host Miss World contest

Monitoring Desk
SRINAGAR: The Miss World beauty contest will be held in the disputed territory of occupied Kashmir as part of a month-long series of events across India, organisers have said. India has been promoting tourism in the disputed region — home to spectacular mountain scenery — and more than a million Indian citizens visited it last year.

More than 1,000 schools destroyed in Ukraine since war began - UNICEF

Monitoring Desk
GENEVA: More than 1,300 schools have been totally destroyed in government-held areas of Ukraine since Russia's 2022 invasion and others have been badly damaged, the U.N. children's fund UNICEF said on Tuesday. Persistent attacks mean that only about a third of school-age children there are attending classes fully in person and many are forgetting what they have already learned, it said.



North Korean leader Kim Jong Un visits the Naval Command of the Korean People's Army (KPA) on the occasion of the Navy Day, in North Korea, in this picture released by North Korea's Korean Central News Agency (KCNA).

Fighting in eastern Syria between US-backed fighters and Arab tribesmen kills 10

Monitoring Desk
BEIRUT: Arab tribesmen clashed with U.S.-backed Kurdish fighters in several areas of eastern Syria on Tuesday, leaving at least 10 people dead and others wounded, opposition activists and pro-government media said.

The clashes first broke out Monday, a day after the U.S.-backed and Kurdish Syrian Democratic Forces detained the commander of a formerly allied group and several other members of his faction after they were invited to a meeting in the northeastern city of Hassakeh.

Libyan PM sacks FM after storm over Israel meeting

Monitoring Desk
TRIPOLI: Libya's prime minister sacked the foreign minister on Monday in an effort to contain a growing furor over Najla Mangoush's meeting with her Israeli counterpart last week, which prompted protests in several Libyan cities.

Turkiye after the furor, but others said she was in the country and had been put on a no-fly list. The meeting is contentious because Libya does not formally recognise Israel and there is widespread public support across the Libyan political spectrum for the Palestinian cause of creating an independent state in territory Israel occupies.

Obama, others warn Bangladesh over 'harassment' of Nobel laureate

Monitoring Desk
DHAKA: More than 160 global figures, including Barack Obama and Ban Ki-moon, published a joint letter on Monday warning of "threats to democracy and human rights" in Bangladesh ahead of upcoming elections.

Taliban ban on women in park condemned

Monitoring Desk
KABUL: Rights monitors condemned on Monday a ban on women visiting one of Afghanistan's most popular national parks, the latest curb shutting women out of public life under Taliban government rule.

US raises concerns over China curbs on American businesses

Monitoring Desk
BEIJING: US Commerce Secretary Gina Raimondo discussed concerns about restrictions on American businesses including Intel and Micron with Chinese Commerce Minister Wang Wentao on Monday in a meeting where the two countries also agreed to launch an export control enforcement information dialogue.

Private funeral held for Russia's Prigozhin - press service

Monitoring Desk
ST PETERSBURG: The funeral of Russian mercenary chief Yevgeny Prigozhin, who was killed in a plane crash last week, was held privately at a cemetery on the outskirts of his hometown St Petersburg, his press service said on Tuesday.

Putin to visit China in first trip abroad since his arrest warrant

Monitoring Desk
MOSCOW: Russian President Vladimir Putin has agreed to visit China as his first international trip since the International Criminal Court (ICC) issued an arrest warrant against him over war crimes in Ukraine, Bloomberg reported on Aug. 29, citing three undisclosed sources.

visit to the occupied parts of Ukraine. Earlier in August, he did not attend in person the BRICS summit hosted by South Africa, a country that is a signatory to the ICC's Rome Statute and therefore legally obliged to detain the Russian president.

Putin also refused to attend the Group of 20 summit held in India, and instead of his allegedly planned trip to Turkey, his Turkish counterpart Recep Tayyip Erdogan is scheduled to come to Russia's Sochi in the near future.

Notably, neither Turkey nor India are parties to the ICC. According to sources cited by Bloomberg, the Russian leader is willing to visit only those countries where his security service can completely guarantee his safety.

'Hundreds of thousands' trafficked into SE Asia scam centres - UN

Monitoring Desk
BANGKOK: Hundreds of thousands of people are being trafficked by criminal gangs and forced to work in scam centres and other illegal online operations that have sprung up across Southeast Asia in recent years, the United Nations said in a report on Tuesday.

Cambodian police spokesperson Chhay Kim Khoen said he had not seen the U.N. report but queried the number. "I don't know how to respond, where did they get the (100,000) number from? Have they investigated? Where did they get the data? Foreigners are just saying things."

The report cited "credible sources" estimating that at least 120,000 people across Myanmar and around 100,000 in Cambodia may be trapped in scam operations, with other criminal-owned enterprises in Laos, the Philippines and Thailand ranging from crypto-fraud to online gambling.

Myanmar's military-run government did not respond to requests for comment. The U.N. Human Rights Office report was one of the most detailed of the phenomenon that has emerged since the COVID pandemic, fuelled by closure of casinos that prompted moves into less regulated areas in Southeast Asia. The fast-growing scam centres are generating billions of U.S. dollars in revenue each year, the report said.

Britain delays post-Brexit border checks on EU goods till 2024

Monitoring Desk
LONDON: The British government will delay imposing full post-Brexit import controls on goods from the European Union by a further three months, it said on Tuesday, pushing the start date back to January 2024.

delay of three months for the introduction of remaining sanitary and phytosanitary controls, as well as full customs controls for non-qualifying Northern Ireland goods," it said in a statement.

Further requirements, such as physical checks and safety declarations are due to be introduced in stages through 2024. The date for some of these, such as checks on medium risk animal products and plants, is also being delayed by three months to give businesses time to prepare, the government said.

The government's new Border Target Operating Model, published on Tuesday, would make smarter use of data and technology and remove duplication, reducing the volume of data and paperwork required from businesses when importing goods. Those changes would save businesses around 520 million pounds (\$655 million) a year compared to the original import model which had been due to be introduced in 2022, it said.

Sibanye brings in Chinese partner for Mopani Copper Mines bid

Monitoring Desk
NAIROBI: South Africa's Sibanye Stillwater (SSWJ) plans to bring in a Chinese investor to form a partnership if it wins its bid to buy Zambia's Mopani Copper Mines, its Chief Executive Neal Froneman told Reuters.

joining Sibanye as an investment partner, Froneman said. "We will bring in the partner as soon as we've been successful and concluded the negotiations," he added.

The Johannesburg-based precious metals producer is on the shortlist of potential buyers for the copper mines owned by a unit of the Zambian government. The government had expected to have chosen the winning bidder by the end of July. "We are bringing in a partner we've already identified and are working with, but we didn't want to complicate the transaction by having two buyers negotiate with the government," Froneman said, without naming the investor or detailing the terms of the possible investment.

The CEO wants new assets as output from South African gold and platinum mines has been reduced by electricity blackouts and rising crime. Sibanye earlier reported a 37% slump in first-half profit to 7.8 billion rand (\$421 million) due to operational challenges and lower metal prices, sending its shares down more than 11%.

Caretaker Federal Minister says: Pak needs to invest more in flood management, early warning amid growing vulnerability

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Federal Minister for Water Resources Ahmed Irfan Aslam on Tuesday said the country during the 2022 monsoon floods bore \$30 billion in economic and infrastructure losses that demanded to invest more resources in flood management and early warning systems for better disaster preparedness.

The Interim Minister delivered his keynote address at the launching ceremony of the National Master Plan on Flood Telemetry and National Consultation on Updated National Flood Protection Plan-IV which was supported by the Asian Development Bank (ADB).

Minister Ahmed Irfan Aslam said globally some \$2.93 trillion was lost due to natural disasters whereas during the 2022 monsoon floods, Pakistan faced huge economic losses as mentioned above and these were staggering statistics.

He said, "If we are to grow as a nation, as an economy we need to have strategic flood management plans. Water-related natural disasters can be managed

through informed forecast which is not possible without modern flood telemetry systems," he added.

Aslam said the flood-related departments were silently working without any recognition like the Federal Flood Commission (FFC) which should be acknowledged and appreciated. He also extended his gratitude to the ADB for supporting the upgradation of the National Flood Protection Plan-IV as the government had initiated the endeavour based on the lessons learned during the floods of 2022.

He said the exchange of knowledge and information had a long way aiming to protect more lives which would significantly contribute to the implementation of the updated Plan.

The Caretaker Minister also lauded the Secretary Water Resources for his dedication to the subject matter and termed it helpful in taking informed steps at the Division.

Secretary of Water Resources Division Syed Ali Murtaza in his opening remarks said that the country was highly vulnerable due to floods. However,

the recurring floods had incurred huge economic losses to the country whereas information and prevention of floods was a key driver for the country to ensure convincing flood management strategies on the ground.

The Pakistan Meteorological Department (PMD), Irrigation Departments of respective provinces, and other relevant departments realized the proactive role and devised the flood management plan.

He added that it would help take endeavours that were informed and the telemetry systems were to help monitor river flows.

He informed that the implementation process would include a total of 707 telemetry systems and some 457 systems would be installed in all the provinces and federating units of the country.

The Secretary thanked the technical and financial support to develop the master plan for telemetry systems and updated Flood Protection Plan-IV.

He felicitated all stakeholders on the success of the intervention.



ISLAMABAD: Country Director Asian Development Bank (ADB) Yevgeniy Zhukov presenting a souvenir to Caretaker Federal Minister for Water Resources, Ahmad Irfan Aslam during the launching ceremony of the National Master plan on flood telemetry at local hotel.

Bridging gap between policy, laws and practice key to lessen gender based violence: Advisor

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister's Special Assistant for Human Rights and Women Empowerment Mushaal Husse in Mullick Tuesday stressed the need for bridging gap between women empowerment laws and practice for lessening the gender discrimination and violence against them in the society. She was addressing at a national conference of service providers on gender based violence here.

Representatives of different stakeholders participated in the conference

and shared their valuable views on this occasion.

Highlighting the deplorable condition of women of Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK), the Special Assistant said that Indian armed forces had been committing heinous crimes especially, against women in the IIOJK for the last seven decades.

She said, rape was being used as a ferocious tool of weapon against Kashmiri women in order to demoralize them and suppress Kashmir's just cause for

the right to self-determination. Indian state authorities not only condone such condemnable acts but also encourage such nefarious crimes as a state policy, she added. Mushaal Mullick said that being the daughter of Kashmir, she had the true realization of the state of women rights in IIOJK which led her decision to become powerful voice of Kashmiri women.

She further said that she has also been advocating for rights of children and women in Pakistan for last many years.



KARACHI: Caretaker Chief Minister Balochistan Mir Ali Mardan Khan Domki offer Fataha at Mazar-e-Quaid

Caretaker CM visits Mazar-e-Quaid; pays homage to Father of Nation

Independent Report QUETTA: The caretaker Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Ali Mardan Khan Domki visited the Mausoleum of Father of Nation, Q u a i d - e - A z a m Muhammad Ali Jinnah in Karachi on Tuesday.

He offered fataha for the departed soul of Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah.

Speaking on the occasion, the caretaker Chief Minister said that he is feeling immense pleasure and satisfaction by visiting the Mazar-e-Quaid.

He said that we have to create spirit of love and service to Pakistan by our heart and soul for paying homage to the Father of Nation in true meaning.

He said that the whole Pakistani Nation is proud of their great leader, and they would never forget his legacy.

He also written his comments in the guests' book at the mausoleum.

Later, speaking to the media persons, Mir Ali Mardan Domki referred to the recent visit of caretaker Prime Minister Anwarul Haq Kakar to Quetta and said that there was no Prime Minister in the history, who spent three days and three nights in Quetta after.

He commented that the caretaker Prime Minister kept on holding meetings about the development of province and resolution of the issues of people dur-

ing his stay.

The caretaker Chief Minister said that it is the prime task of caretaker governments to hold free and fair elections in peaceful environment. He said that we would perform our responsibilities regarding elections as soon as the Election Commission of Pakistan announces to conduct the elections.

He said that an important issue of the province is to maintain law and order and it is our endeavor to ensure it.

In addition to this, it is also our responsibility to ensure timely completion of the development projects so that the general public may get relief, he maintained.

Asghar condemns incident of burning of goods' trawler

Independent Report CHAMAN: The Provincial president of Awami National Party (ANP), Asghar Khan Achakzai has strongly condemned the incident of burning of a goods' trawler by unknown miscreants in Loralai area couple of days back.

Mr. Achakzai asserted that we would not accept such incidents at all nor would sabotage the Pak-Afghan trader.

He assured his every possible cooperation to the Chaman Chamber of Commerce saying that his cooperation would always remain with them.

He also asked the government to compensate the losses caused due to the incident and take solid steps for prevention of such untoward incidents in future.

Meanwhile, taking notice of the incident, ANP's leader talked to the Additional Chief Secretary Home Saleh Muhammad Nasar on the issue and sought his immediate response for taking the culprits to task.

On this, the ACS Home contracted the Deputy Commissioner Loralai and directed him to take action against the culprits.

QESCO to close Grid Stations for works on Aug 31

QUETTA (APP): Quetta Electric Supply Company (QESCO) on Tuesday announced to close its power Grid stations in connection with the development works on electrical installations and lines, on August 31 (Thursday).

According to the statement of QESCO, Sariab Grid Station's Old Liaquat Bazar, Sirki Road, Joint Road, Khair Bakhsh, and the Express Feeder of Mirriabad Grid, while the Industrial Grid Station's Pashtunabad Express New Pashtunabad, Old Pashtunabad feeders would be suspended supply electricity from 10 am to 1 pm.



ISLAMABAD: PIO/MDAPP, Muhammad Asim Khichi in a group photo with the participants of the Training Workshop for the journalists of Balochistan organized by PUFJ Workers at PID.

Pakistan to submit VNR report at SDG summit next month

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan is all set to present its Voluntary National Review (VNR) report at a mid-term summit on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), scheduled to take place in September 2023 in New York.

According to a press statement, the SDGs Support Unit of the Ministry of Planning, Development and Special Initiatives while Chief SDGs, Dr. Ali Kemal presented an overview of Pakistan's progress on SDGs.

He said that Pakistan was reporting on 133 out of 247 indicators and has integrated the SDGs into its national development plans and policies. He also highlighted the role of various stakeholders in advancing the SDGs agenda in Pakistan, such as universities, private sector, civil society and media.

Dr. Kemal also discussed the major challenges faced by Pakistan in implementing the SDGs, such as macroeconomic and political economy challenges, uncertain global economic and demand outlook, increased frequency of natural disasters and weak governance system.

UNGA adopts Pak-backed resolution declaring Jan 26 clean energy day

UNITED NATIONS (APP): The UN General Assembly has adopted a Panamanian resolution, co-sponsored by Pakistan, proclaiming January 26 as the International Day of Clean Energy.

The text, which was adopted without a vote, underlined the 193-member Assembly's commitment to protecting the environment.

January 26 will become a platform to drive the adoption of policies and practices to promote awareness on the sustainable use of energy resources and to strengthen collaboration and cooperation to promote the global energy transition. Introducing the draft, Panamanian delegate Jaramillo said that transitioning to clean and renewable energy sources was essential to face current environmental and socioeconomic challenges and guarantee human survival and well-being on the planet.

The US representative said her delegation joined the consensus.

Directives of caretaker PM: Work on rehabilitation of roads and bridges started on emergent basis: Akbar

Independent Report QUETTA: The Secretary Communications and Works (C&W), Ali Akbar Baloch has stated that the work was started on rehabilitation of the highways and bridges affected due to the recent flood and rains in the province, on an emergent basis. He was chairing a meeting to review the steps taken for safety of the basic infrastructure and communications in the province, here on Tuesday.

The meeting, actually was in backdrop of the directives of caretaker Prime Minister issued recently during the visit of the province.

The highways of National Highway Authority as well as the Special Secretary Irrigation Department, Nadeem Samakiani and others were in attendance.

The meeting reviewed the matters about the channelization of the flood water, its effective use and protection of the roads and other infrastructure from

the flashflood caused due to the heavy rains.

The meeting was also briefed in detail on the progress of work started for rehabilitation of the roads and bridges besides their existing condition.

Speaking on the occasion, the Secretary C&W said that the heavy damages were caused to all important highways and bridges due to the recent rains and flashfloods, disrupting the communication network and traffic blockade in different parts of the province and to rest of the country.

However, the C&W department together with NHA started work on the affected highways and bridges on emergent basis. However, still there is a need of complete rehabilitation of the important highways in the province.

During the course of meeting, C&W department high ups provided details to the NHA about rehabilitation of the highways of the province.

ATC approves 3 days physical remand of Imaan Mazari

ISLAMABAD (Online): Anti Terrorism Court (ATC) has handed over Imaan Mazari daughter of Shireen Mazari to police on physical remand for 3 days.

Judge Abul Hasnat of ATC took up case against Imaan Mazari for hearing Tuesday.

Prosecutor Raja Naveed appeared in the court. Zainab Janjua appeared on behalf of Imaan Mazari.

Prosecutor Raja Naveed argued during the hearing of the case that a case has been registered against Imaan Mazaari in police station Bhara Kahu. The plaintiff has charged Imaan Mazari with inciting youths against the state.

The plaintiff alleged when he parted ways with Imaan Mazari party, threats were hurled on him.

Prosecutor Raja Naveed requested the court to grant physical remand of Imaan Mazari. The defence counsel while opposing the physical remand said new case was instituted the day Imaan Mazari was to be granted bail.

AJK PM urges world to take stringent notice of Indian atrocities in IIOJK

MIRPUR (AJK) (APP): Azad Jammu and Kashmir Prime Minister Chaudhry Anwar ul Haq on Tuesday emphasized upon the international human rights organizations to take stringent notice of the atrocities committed by the Indian occupational forces on civilians in Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu & Kashmir (IIOJK). In a statement, the PM, while voicing his grave concern over the fast-deteriorating political and human rights situation in the Indian-occupied territory of Jammu and Kashmir, said that Indian forces have crossed all limits of barbarism and savagery in Kashmir.

The Indian government, he said, had trampled the Kashmiris' fundamental human rights of Kashmir under the jackboots. He, however, maintained that despite its policy of oppression and suppression, India could not break the Kashmiris' spirit and their political will to achieve their cherished goal of freedom.

While urging the international community to come up with a solid plan of action to stop the bloodshed of innocent civilians at the hands of the Indian occupation forces, the PM said it was high time that the global community should influence the government of India to fulfill the promises and commitments its leaders have made vis a vis the settlement of the Kashmir dispute at the international level.

He said that it was the Prime Minister of India who took the issue of Kashmir to the United Nations. He said that it was quite unfortunate that India has not only backtracked from its commitments but also violated the UNSC resolutions that call for holding a referendum in Kashmir. He said that Kashmiris have associated their future with Pakistan. He said that accession to Pakistan was the Kashmiris' ultimate objective, for which they have been struggling at all levels with absolute determination and dedication.



ISLAMABAD: EU Ambassador Dr. Riina Kionka called on caretaker Federal Minister for Health Dr. Nadeem Jan.

Govt to utilize all available resources for polio-free country: Minister

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Federal Health Minister Dr Nadeem Jan said on Tuesday that the interim government was committed to actively implementing a special emergency response plan to eradicate all forms of polio in the country and reach children in remote areas.

Talking to a private news channel, he said that the polio vaccination campaign in remote areas and Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) was considered a major reason for the significant reduction

in the number of polio cases in the country.

"All the provinces would ask to pay special attention to ensure that every child is reached by the polio programme," he added. He said that the Ministry of Health is actively involved in the polio program and we will ensure that the focus on polio remains unwavering.

In response to a question, he said that the present government will maintain zero tolerance regarding the provision of quality medicines to patients in government hospitals.

Ji urges SC to direct ECP for ensuring elections within 90 days

ISLAMABAD (INP): The Jamaat-e-Islami (JI) has formally requested the Supreme Court to direct the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) to ensure the holding of elections within 90 days of the dissolution of the National Assembly.

The petition in apex court was filed by JI leader Liaquat Baloch on Tuesday.

The petition pleaded with the court to direct ECP to ensure the holding of general elections in the country within 90 days.

It is pertinent to men-

tion that this is the third petition filed with the apex court. Earlier, Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) and Supreme Court Bar Association President Abid S. Zubairi had filed the same petition in the apex court.

The PTI plea stated that Supreme Court should also direct the ECP to issue the schedule for upcoming general elections.

The top court was urged to declare the CCI decision regarding the delimitation and the census 2023 null and void.



Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) leaders speaking during a press conference in Islamabad

SP Manzoor says Sugar smuggling bid foiled, 8000 bags of sugars seized from 15 trucks in Shiran

QUETTA (APP) Superintendent of Police (SP) Shirani Mir Manzoor Ahmed Buledi on Tuesday said that on special directive of IG of Police Balochistan and DIG General Police Zhub Range, actions were taken against sugar smugglers and 8000 sacks of sugars were recovered from 15 trucks at Dhanasar check post.

He expressed these views while giving details about sugar smugglers to the media representatives.

Today's action is also a continuation of the same operation where the operation was conducted at the Dhana Sar check post.

He said that during the operation, a huge quantity of sugar has been recovered from 15 trucks and all the

truck drivers could not present any official permit to the staff on the spot and drivers told that initial investigation, these sugars were being smuggled to Afghanistan. The official of Police said that these sugars were handed over to Customs authorities for further investigation.

SP Sherani said that search operation was going on in the border areas to control the sugars crisis across the country which price was increased due to smuggling of sugars to neighbor country.

He reiterated that he would never allow traffickers to create problems for the public, strict measures would be taken to prevent smuggling for interest of public.



QUETTA: A view of 3-day training workshop regarding Role of Media in Promoting Anti-corruption Practices and Good Governance.