

Independent

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PM Kakar says Task force to determine sizes of federal, provincial govts

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar Sunday said a task force headed by the finance minister would determine the sizes of federal and provincial governments, look at options to better manage pension funds, besides making efforts to rationalize public expenditure and increase revenue.

In an interview with a private television, he said, "We are convinced that there is a need to rationalise expenditure and increase the revenue of the government to create a viable state and lessen existential threats due to economic vulnerability." He said the Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC) was attempting to help achieve appropriate governance and address the reasons for ill governance in the past.

The civil institutions were lax in their working in the past but now the army leadership with its organizational strength had increased the level of confidence of civil service which had renewed energy to implement policies and achieve goals, he added.

The prime minister said the government was optimistic about investment from Saudi Arabia in the backdrop of talks between Crown Prince of Saudi Arabia Mohammad Bin Salman and Pakistan's chief of army staff.

The government was planning for a visit of the Crown Prince of Saudi Arabia, adding the visit would be aimed at fully exploiting economic opportunities in the country.



KARACHI: Caretaker Balochistan Minister for Information and Public Relations Jan Achakzai addresses a press conference at Press Club.

Drive to curb drug cultivation, Iranian oil, currency smuggling underway: Jan Achakzai

KARACHI (INP): Balochistan Caretaker Information Minister Jan Achakzai has said that drive to curb drug cultivation, smuggling of Iranian oil and currency was underway. He said, 60 Afghan nationals have been arrested to control drug cultivation.

Addressing a press conference on Sunday, he said that to promote healthy activities, steps will be taken to promote sports in the province.

Jan Achakzai said, "Balochistan government is taking steps to eliminate currency smuggling. Money earned through smuggling is used for terrorism."

"We have seized nearly 117 illegal currency businesses and more than 500 stations selling Iranian petrol. During the anti-currency smuggling drive, over \$10 million was recovered in Quetta. We are also taking steps to secure the supply line of Sindh and Balochistan borders."

"60 Afghan citizens have been arrested to stop drug cultivation. We want to make Balochistan an international investment hub. We are also addressing the complaints regarding the law and order."



KILLAABDULLAH: Commissioner Quetta Division Muhammad Hanza Shaftaqat inspecting ongoing operation for elimination of narcotics

20 more godowns abolished, drugs burnt. Grand operation continues against narcotics in K. Abdullah

Independent Report QUETTA: The grand operation remained continued against narcotics in Killa Abdullah district on third consecutive day, Sunday.

During the operation, 20 more godowns were abolished and different drugs stored there were set ablaze by the concerned agencies.

Needless to mention here is that Pak Army, Frontier Corps (FC), Levies and



ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Provincial Minister Sardar Asifur Rehman Dummar meeting with Caretaker Chief Minister Balochistan Mir Ali Mardan Khan Domki

Nation observes death anniversary of Quaid-e-Azam today

ISLAMABAD (Online): Pakistani nation will observe death anniversary of the founder of nation Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah today.

Various organizations will hold ceremonies to pay tribute to the father of nation and political and social leaders will address these ceremonies.

Newspapers will publish additional additions and PTV and other national and regional channels will broadcast special programs to honor the founder of nation.

Seven terrorists killed, six critically injured in Chitral fire exchange

RAWALPINDI (APP): As many as seven terrorists were killed while another six got critically injured during an intense fire exchange that took place between the security forces and terrorists in the general area Ursoon, Chitral District on Sunday.

According to the Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR), the Army troops effectively engaged terrorists location.

The sanitization of the area was being carried out to eliminate any other terrorists found in the area.

The locals of the area appreciated the operation by the security forces and expressed their full support to eliminate the menace of terrorism from the country, the ISPR said.

No country has recognized Kashmir as part of India: Jilil Abbas

ISLAMABAD (INP): Caretaker Minister for Foreign Affairs Jilil Abbas Jilani has said that Kashmir is a disputed territory and no country of the world has recognized it as a part of India.

Jilil Abbas Jilani in a media interview said Pakistan wants a peaceful neighbourhood and peaceful relations with all its neighbours, including India.

He said for peaceful relations, India must create a conducive atmosphere, including withdrawing August 5 2019 actions in the occupied territory, release of all illegally detained Kashmiri Hurriyat leaders and activists languishing in different jails of India and the territory and withdrawal of troops from Kashmir.

To a question the foreign minister said the Kashmir dispute has been pending with the United Nations for the last several decades and legislation by India cannot affect its disputed status.

Bugti says No mercy for smugglers, vows to eliminate terrorism

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Interior Minister Sarfraz Ahmed Bugti said on Sunday that the government has adopted zero tolerance policy to curb smuggling of US dollars, sugar, fertiliser and petroleum products.

"The federal government has started action by registering cases against the elements involved in illegal activities," said Bugti while addressing a press conference here.

The interior minister said law will take its course if anyone found guilty in crimes like, Hundi, Hawala, Smuggling of sugar, wheat, fertilizers and other illegal activities.

It is prime responsibility of the people to keep a vigilant eye in their surroundings, said Bugti urging the masses to report such activities for timely action.

He stated that the government has taken a tough stance on terrorism, adding all resources were being utilized to purge the menace of the country.

Regarding the Chitral attack, Bugti commended the Pakistan Army's swift response and the people's resilience against terrorism.

He stressed that the government would not allow anyone to impose their agenda through force and will defend every inch of the territory.

Interior Minister expressed hope that the Afghan government would uphold its Doha agreement, ensuring that Afghan soil was not used against anyone.

Furthermore, Bugti mentioned ongoing efforts to address illegal immigration, with plans to repatriate illegal immigrants in the near future.

Allies may be running away from elections: Bilawal



HYDERABAD (Online): PPP Chairman Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari said on Sunday it may be the case that his party's allies in the erstwhile Pakistan Democratic Movement-led ruling coalition were "scared" and "running away from elections". "I have been telling my allies for the past 18 months that if you get scared, you die [in politics]."

Massive crackdown launched to combat power theft

ISLAMABAD (APP): A massive crackdown has been launched by the Caretaker Government to combat the alarming surge in power theft and to take stern actions against the culprits involved.

On the directives of the government, the Islamabad Electric Supply Company (IESCO) has expedited the drive against power pilferage and caught 105 meters and imposed fine of Rs

5.767 million for stealing electricity in various areas of the company in the current month.

IESCO chief Dr Muhammad Amjad said that during the current crackdown against electricity thieves, the field formations checked 5,743 meters and found 105 meters of the electricity consumers involved in power theft through various means.

Big action of FIA, seized a huge consignment of dollars

QUETTA (Online): Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) has raided a house in Quetta and dollars worth one crore were recovered.

According to sources, FIA acted on a tip-off and the accused Mushtaq Khan and Agha were arrested from the house in Hazara Town area of Quetta. Ijaz was taken into custody.

On the identification of the accused, a huge amount of dollars hidden in the house was recovered, the value of which is said to be one million dollars.

It was told that efforts were being made to smuggle these dollars abroad. Further investigation of the accused is underway.

Caretaker GoB decides to take wholehearted measures against hoarding, smuggling of edible items

CM Mir Ali Mardan Domki issues standing directives to all secretaries, Divisional commissioners, deputy commissioners and Balochistan Food Authority high ups to provide immediate relief to general public

Independent Report

QUETTA: The interim government of Balochistan has decided to take wholehearted measures against smuggling and hoarding of the edible items as well as for prevention of adulteration and price control in the province.

In this regard, the caretaker Chief Minister Mir Ali Mardan Khan Domki has issued standing directives to all administrative secretaries of provincial government departments, divisional commissioners, deputy commissioners and Balochistan Food Authority (BFA) to take necessary action in this regard.

The caretaker Chief Minister has also directed all the concerned to provide immediate relief to the general public without any delay.

In addition to this, the Chief Minister also directed to take stern action against profiteers making the price control committees effective. Similarly, result-oriented action should be taken against those involved in hoarding and smuggling of Urea, sugar and other edible goods in the districts. Mr. Domki directed the district administration.

He also directed to the BFA high ups to deal with those involved in the adulteration of the food items with iron hands.

The caretaker Chief Minister directed the police to provide security to the teams of Food Authority engaged in the action in this regard.

He asserted that it is right of the people to get quality food free of adulteration and it is responsibility of the government to ensure it.

He said that those involved in hoarding, smuggling and adulteration are stigma of the society. He stressed that all concerned departments and administration should ensure protection of rights and interests of the masses.



Caretaker Federal Minister for Interior Sarfraz Ahmed Bugti and Caretaker Federal Minister for information and Broadcasting Murtaza Solangi addressing a press conference in Islamabad.

CM's education friendly initiative Rs. 1.25 b released 11 public sector universities

Independent Report QUETTA: The caretaker provincial government led by Chief Minister Mir Ali Mardan Khan Domki released the budget of 11 public sector universities of the province.

According to an official hand out issued here on Sunday, the budget of Rs. 1.25 billion has been released to the public sector universities of the province on directives of the caretaker Chief Minister.

The initiative of caretaker Chief Minister regarding release of funds for the universities is being dubbed as the education friendly and appreciated by all concerned. This also means that the caretaker provincial government is determined to resolve the financial issues of the universities under leadership of the Chief Minister.

20 injured in Zhub bus, truck collision

ZHOB (INP): At least 20 people including women and children were injured in collision between passenger bus and a truck at D.I Khan National Highway on Sunday.

According to details, a Zhub bound passenger bus coming from Peshawar got out of control of driver due to failure of brakes and rammied into an onion laden truck near Sarah Khawara area of Zhub.

As a result of accident, 20 people including four women and eight children were injured.

The injured were shifted to hospital where condition of some wounded people was stated to be critical.

GoB decides to back QESCO in anti-power pilferage drive

Independent Report QUETTA: The Government of Balochistan has decided to back the Quetta Electric Supply Company (QESCO) in its campaign against electricity pilferage campaign launched all over the province.

According to an official notification issued here, the task force has been formed at the provincial and divisional level.

The provincial task force would be headed by

the Additional Chief Secretary Home while divisional task force would be led by the respective divisional commissioners.

The task forces would monitor the anti-power theft drive in the province, mentioned in the notification.

It may be mentioned here that QESCO had launched massive campaign against the power theft in the province three days back.



A man carries belongings out of his damaged house, in the aftermath of a deadly earthquake in Moulay Brahim, Morocco

9,234 appear in tests conducted for admission in four medical colleges of Balochistan

Independent Report QUETTA: In all 9,234 candidates were appeared in the entry test (MDCAT) conducted for admission in four different medical colleges of Balochistan province here on Sunday.

The candidates including 5,249 males and 3,983 females appeared in the entry tests conducted at the main campus of Balochistan University of Information Technology, Engineering, Management Sciences (BUIEMS), under the arrangements of Bolan University of Medical and Health Sciences (BUMHS).

The caretaker Provincial Minister for Health, Dr.

Amir Muhammad Khan Jogezi inspected the entry test and expresses satisfaction over the arrangements made for it.

According to the organizers, the answer keys of the entry test would be issued at the website of BUMHS.

It may be mentioned here that there were 200 MCQs in the entry test and the duration of test was of three hours and 30 minutes.

The chief coordinator for MDCAT 2023 for Balochistan, Professor Dr. Shabbir Ahmed Lehri and professors of the University monitored the entry test.



QUETTA: Caretaker Provincial Health Minister Dr. Amir Muhammad Jogezi inspecting entry test (MDCAT) for medical colleges

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Lack of clarity

The chaos and confusion within the ranks of those hoping for the Constitution to be upheld has weakened their hand. Consider the PTI, which has recently demanded that President Arif Alvi exercise his constitutional power and announce a date for the general elections forthwith.

According to a press release, the party's core committee passed a unanimous resolution to this effect during a recent meeting. Interestingly, there was no mention of who actually attended the meeting or where it was held.

With most of the party's senior leadership currently in prison or on the lam, the PTI is trying to put up a brave face. However, it clearly is in no position to be making demands.

Then there is the PPP, which seems rather confused about its commitment to constitutional principles. Just days ago, the party's central executive committee said it would push the Election Commission — legally, if need be — to ensure elections were held within the stipulated time frame.

Publicly, however, top PPP leaders have seemed a lot more flexible on election dates. It is, therefore, unsurprising that many believe the party's sudden remembrance of democratic values is little more than a bargaining chip.

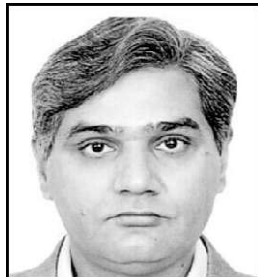
Meanwhile, the legal fraternity, too, has entered the fray. But while the Supreme Court Bar Association and the Pakistan Bar Council both seem to be in agreement that elections must not be delayed, they stand divided on other matters. The former recently hosted the All Pakistan Lawyers Convention to put forth the legal community's demands from a single platform, but the PBC chose not to attend.

President Alvi stands at the centre of the crisis, but he, too, seems to be having second thoughts after a tentative attempt to assert his position. With the pressure building on him to announce a date, rumours have been circulating that a recent visit from two high-profile officers might be the reason why he has been keeping a low profile.

Whatever the separate challenges being faced by each of these stakeholders, they need to demonstrate some unity of purpose if they are truly committed to upholding the Constitution. There are some in this country who view the law as an inconvenience in the way of their grand plans.

Much damage has already been done thus far because the resistance to their unlawful actions has been weak and unorganised. Now, the only hope for those who wish to see the constitutional order restored is to refocus their energies on the core demand — free and fair elections within 90 days.

The ongoing assault on the Constitution must be resisted if the nation is to continue hoping for a democratic future. It may yet be an attainable goal. The mistake made in allowing the KP and Punjab elections to be delayed must not be repeated.



Muhammad Amir Rana

The recent cross-border infiltrations and operational strikes by terrorist networks operating from Afghanistan have raised concerns about the Afghan Taliban's direct involvement in these attacks. A terrorist group cannot launch massive cross-border attacks involving a significant number of terrorists inside Pakistan without the support and approval of the Taliban regime. If these doubts have any substance, this is tantamount to declaring war against a state.

Social media and online media reports are also circulating about the Haqqanis' direct involvement in these intrusions, citing security officials. This may surprise those who believed that close ties

existed between the Haqqanis and the Pakistani security establishment, as the relationship between the two has now apparently become strained. The extent of this perceived bitterness in relations is not known, and neither the Haqqanis nor the Pakistani establishment have officially indicated the nature of any dispute between them. However, Pakistan has officially registered its protest concerning the involvement of Afghan fighters in the attack on the military cantonment in the Zhob district of Balochistan.

Only if there is official confirmation from one of the parties about the dispute, can we speculate about its nature based on several factors.

It is a fact that the TTP has a close relationship with the Haqqanis that has overseen the negotiation process between the government and the TTP. This process failed, causing some initial dents in the confidence of Pakistan's security institutions. Religious, ideological, tribal, and political factors are also important from various perspectives. The

organisational relationship between the Afghan Taliban and Pakistani militant groups has evolved over time, especially after the resurgence of the former in their country. The Afghan Taliban developed a nexus with the Pakistani establishment and militant groups, which, while not mutually exclusive, involves complex relationships among the three actors.

Pakistan has strategic interests in Afghanistan and has often been accused of paying no heed to the presence of the Taliban on its soil. The Taliban, in turn, have relied on safe havens, financial support, and fighters primarily from Pakistan and other neighbouring states like Iran. Militant groups in Pakistan have provided human resource to the Taliban; many of these fighters became disillusioned due to shifts in the state's policies on jihad. While the 'Quetta shura' hesitated to recruit Pakistani fighters, the Haqqanis and 'Peshawar shura' actively incorporated them, creating both combat units and financial and logistical supply chains. Al Qaeda has also influenced these Pakistani militants, further radicalising them

against the state.

Historical accounts may reveal more surprising details, but so far, the most comprehensive research on the Taliban movement has been conducted by Antonio Giustozzi. In his book *The Taliban at War*, Giustozzi notes that a unique aspect of the Haqqani Network is its direct recruitment of Pakistani fighters. As of 2015, around 10 per cent of the 'Miranshah shura's' forces were Pakistani, primarily drawn from other jihadist groups such as TTP, Lashkar-e-Taiba, and Lashkar-i-Jhangvi.

According to reports, the significant presence of volunteers from Pakistan as well as other countries has contributed to the Haqqanis' image as being more aligned with global jihadist movements like Al Qaeda, as opposed to the Quetta shura. The Peshawar shura is also believed to have been heavily reliant on Pakistani militants, expanding its reach to other cities in the country, where it's said to have recruited hundreds of Pakistanis.

In summary, Pakistan has underestimated the potential problems posed by

fighters who have been part

of the Afghan Taliban, especially compared to the TTP and its affiliate groups with whom it initiated talks under the Haqqanis' supervision. Reports are that thousands of these fighters may have returned to Pakistan, many of them apparently joining the TTP and its factions, and the rest remaining under the patronage of various Taliban commanders, including the Haqqanis. News has appeared about the TTP and its allied social media accounts about faction mergers or small militant groups joining the TTP, usually involving militants who were once directly engaged with the Taliban.

The Haqqanis have accommodated many in their government and security forces, including Adnan Rasheed, a former Pakistani Air Force employee, who joined Al Qaeda and specialised in jailbreaks. Adnan Rasheed was released from Bannu jail in April 2012 by militants. However, the Taliban cannot accommodate all these fighters, and with their return to Pakistan increasingly likely, they are supporting their cause for fight-

ing within Pakistan.

Pakistan had concerns that these returning militants would continue their terrorist activities. During talks with the TTP, it became clear that the TTP and other terrorist groups had no intention of ceasing their activities. If these individuals were to be integrated into the general population, they would pose a greater risk, not just through terrorist activities but also by spreading the ideological influence of the Taliban and Al Qaeda.

These terrorists, now led by the TTP, are exploiting Pakistan's vulnerabilities with regard to territory, resources, and support base. The recent terrorist attacks in the Zhob and Sherani districts of Balochistan, along with the intrusion into Chitral, are all components of a broader strategy. Al Qaeda apparently had an eye on the region which borders Chitral since long for establishing a new base for supporting terrorist movements in the region, including China. This situation is precarious for Pakistan and the Taliban regime, and they must find a solution before it worsens. -- Courtesy Dawn

Presence of militants**Looking homeward, dizzily**

Ghazi Salahuddin

As the poet said: 'They are not long, the days of wine and roses'. Any extravagant retreat from the daily rigours of our lives, if we are at all able to secure it, does come to an end. And so I have to return to the raw winds and old wounds of Pakistan after an absence of about six weeks. This, to be sure, is not an unusual experience for me. Since both our daughters live abroad, these trips have become an annual feature for many, many years. There is generally no great excitement about leaving Pakistan and coming back after an interval. But why am I so anxious about it on this occasion? What is different now, in my personal state of affairs or in the larger context of the country's social, political and economic circum-

stances?

Yes, the thoughts that I feel burdened with as we leave our elder daughter's house in southern California are somewhat unusual, even scary. Strangely, this apprehension relates to both personal and collective concerns. At one level, there is this pain that I share with a large number of ageing parents living away from our children and grandchildren. It poses the existential question of whether to emigrate to be with the loved ones or stay, nearly unattended, in Pakistan. The cost of living apart is horrendous, and not just in a material sense.

Somehow, this sensation of getting precariously old has deepened. At the same time, the idea of shifting to an alien territory is to be decisively rejected, in spite of passionate persuasions and sober arguments that we have to deal with. That Pakistan has become a great place to go away from is valid for younger people who are fearful of raising their children in a society that has apparently lost its bearings.

It is truly disconcerting to find Pakistanis, in the country and abroad, who have little faith in the future of their country. For many, it is the problem of making ends meet. For others, it is law and order. I know a family that left the country because of what they perceived was the drug scene in the elite schools of Karachi. Actually, it is a system that is broken — administratively, morally and intellectually.

Then, the country is at present passing through a specific phase when the caretakers, who are being taken care of by superior forces, are in office and the process of cleaning the PTI stables, in the aftermath of May 9, is continuing. Meanwhile, the army leadership is getting into gear to mend Pakistan's economy, as some developments have certified this week.

On Wednesday, Chief of Army Staff Gen Asim Munir asserted, on Defence Day, that "a strong economy is a must for the country's impregnable defence". This linkage between economy and military defence was further clarified the next

day, on Thursday, when the top brass resolved, in a Corps Commanders' meeting, to "wholeheartedly" assist the government in curbing all illegal activities that hamper economic growth and stability.

Earlier, on Sunday, the COAS had assured the business community, in a widely covered session, of fostering transparency in dollar exchange and interbank rates. This contributed to some strength in the value of the Pakistani currency, though not enough to raise the spirits of an economically ravaged populace. In any case, it will be interesting to see how the military can play a role in GDP growth.

I have just become aware of the army's intended advance into the battlefield of the economy because I had resolved to by and large keep away from news from Pakistan during this vacation. I also avoided political conversations with Pakistani expatriates.

A large number of Pakistanis in the US are ardent supporters of Imran Khan and, considering their lack of under-

standing of the existing realities, it is pointless to talk to them.

For that matter, I have not carefully been watching Pakistan. There has been no conscious attempt to catch on with realities that are emerging in the public domain. In a vague sense, I do suspect that some kind of change is in progress. Conventionally they say that the more things change in our country, the more they remain the same. But it should also be true that the more they change, the more they cannot be the same.

This would mean that I am not returning to the same Pakistan that I had left. Hence, it is fair to wonder if there is more hope now or less. In other words, what direction do perceptive observers see the country moving — and it would be fine if they say that it would be worse before it gets better. Ah, will things ever get better?

Why not? An eternal optimist may argue, with a disdain for what he can see with open eyes and think with an open mind. In fact, this is what the rulers must do; see and

think. And, to compensate for their inadequacies in this regard; listen. Listen to those certified social scientists, historians and scholars who are becoming an endangered species in our political habitat.

You see, a kind of gloom is intruding on my mind as I return to Pakistan. I should instead be looking back at the time I have spent with the family in settings that felt like a dream. We were, for that brief interval, not concerned about the worries of the world and what I was reading about the epidemic of anxiety spreading in the United States did not affect our joy of being together. One is to be very lucky indeed to be able to steal such moments of bliss in a life that is generally not very rewarding.

However, I should admit that there was usually an undercurrent of melancholy in meetings with old friends and close relatives. Like in novels and arty movies, such close encounters can reveal new truths about relationships that, ultimately, are our real sustenance. -- Courtesy TheNews

Sleepless in Karachi

Muna Khan

When I moved to Hanoi in 2008 to work at a newspaper as a copy editor, my toughest challenge was re-adjusting my meal timings. Our shifts began at 2pm, ended at 9pm and we received a half-hour break to grab dinner around 6pm, so we could only really go in the neighbourhood to eat. Vietnam is a diner's delight especially when it comes to street food and affordable cafés all over cities, towns, villages. You're never starved for options.

Hanoi awoke by sunrise and was dead by 9pm. So of course, I adjusted. I ate breakfast by 8am, lunch at noon and dinner at 6pm, even on my days off. Everyone did. I have continued this habit, with exceptions and only in Pakistan where I'm convinced we're all owls. Whenever I have struggled with sleep, I have modified my routine to accommodate it — sometimes with supplements, tweaking diet, exercise, not watching television news past 8pm, etc. But for the last year or so, I am struggling to sleep again and am sicker, slower, unhappy.

I suspect I am not alone. I am consumed with thoughts about the economy, the country's security, the speed at which we seem to be moving towards martial rule and how this impacts my family's future. I do not know what else to disconnect from without living in a world oblivious to one's surroundings.

There is a saying how sleep is a luxury few can afford; I think the same is true for living in delusion,

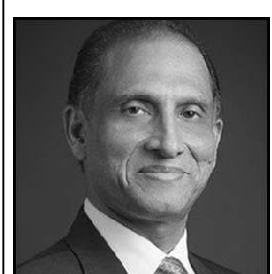
homo sapiens ate but there are new studies to show our ancestors ate grains and carbs and gluten — things that cause fear today.

We can return to practising our ancestors' habits but can we break our reliance on our devices which play a major role in disrupting our sleep environment and behaviour? It's not about X hours of sleep a night but consistent hours of sleep.

Light majorly impacts the circadian rhythm which is why the neuroscientist podcaster Andrew Huberman (must watch) recommends spending 20 minutes in natural light within an hour of waking to regulate mood and energy levels. Most of our internal clocks follow the sun's pattern. The more exposure you have to artificial light post sunset, the more disrupted your circadian rhythm and sleep.

I have avoided all doctors' following advice because I know it will be my next toughest challenge: switch off screens at least two hours before bedtime. The device's blue light disrupts the sleep cycle as it suppresses the production of melatonin, a natural hormone which helps us feel sleepy. I admit whenever I read a book in bed, I fall asleep quicker but I'm struggling to break the Netflix habit.

While it will be hard, it is also the only advice I can truly afford to do along with drinking three litres of water (12 glasses a day), most of it in the day, the last glass being two hours before I sleep. And eating my last meal four hours before I sleep if it is meat and two hours if it is plant based. However, hearing my doctor's number one advice had a profound impact on me and inspired this column: practice happiness. It is key to good sleep. -- Courtesy Dawn

Redefining defence

Aizaz Ahmad Chaudhry

Every Sept 6, Pakistan marks Defence Day to celebrate the determination of the nation and its armed forces to defend the country against India's aggression in 1965. The war lasted only 17 days, and peace was restored by the Tashkent Agreement of 1966. As happens in most wars, there were no real winners. India was unable to penetrate Pakistan's defences. Pakistan could not liberate Jammu and Kashmir illegally occupied by India.

Regrettably, the experience of 1965 war did not prevent the two countries from fighting another war in 1971, leading to the separation of East Pakistan. In 1999, another limited war took place on the Kargil heights. However, in this century, the two neighbours have never fought a major war though they came close to it during the military stand-off of 2001-02. One reason is the nuclear deterrence that both countries established in May 1998. The other main reason is that the nature of war has changed. We are living in the age of hybrid wars, where kinetic action is the last resort, and much of the battle is waged in the information, economic and other domains to break the will of the enemy. This is sometimes referred to as the fifth-generation of war.

With the advent of artificial intelligence, we are witnessing the onset of sixth-generation warfare. Defence Day should be an occasion to prepare

the nation to guard against today's complex wars that blend conventional, unconventional, economic, cyber, and psychological warfare, media manipulation, cultural invasions, and relentless propaganda to create confusion about the core values that hold a nation together. On most occasions, the target may not even know it is under attack.

An argument is often made that much of what Pakistan is facing is because of its own doing; we should, therefore, not blame others, and instead, address our own vulnerabilities. Others, however, believe we cannot disregard the possibility of hybrid war imposed by our detractors, manifested vividly in concerted disinformation campaigns, economic coercion, lawfare, and even cyberattacks. The National Security Policy, that was announced last year, advised a comprehensive approach to national security, comprising not just traditional defence but also economic and human security.

Hence we must be reminded that Pakistan needs a robust defence strategy that employs all elements of national power. Fortunately, our diplomacy is resilient and can serve as the first line of defence. Our armed forces are disciplined and organised. Our nuclear capability deters possible aggression. The entire nation got together against the menace of terrorism. We have a young intelligent human resource, which if educated and trained can serve the nation well. We are also blessed with agricultural and mineral wealth. And our diaspora is dynamic and ready to serve the motherland.

These are notable strengths. However, we need a strategy that integrates all these elements of national power. First and foremost, we need a whole-of-the-nation approach on matters of national security.

No decisions should be taken by any institution in isolation, nor by any leader on a whim. The chain is only as strong as its weakest link. To that end, forging broad political consensus on national security imperatives is an absolute must.

Secondly, most of our vulnerabilities stem from our weak economy. We spend more than we earn, obliging us to depend on foreign donors. Internal and external debts are mounting. Exports are stagnant. Doing business in Pakistan is not easy. Corruption is pervasive, and the inflation rate so high that the life of the common man has become miserable. The need of the hour is to give the highest priority to reviving our economy and building a national political consensus on economic policies. Unless we are economically resilient, modern warfare against us will remain a serious threat to national stability.

Thirdly, in a hybrid warfare environment, image is as important as reality. Since 9/11, Pakistan's image has been associated with terrorism and extremism. Hostile lobbies ensure that this image remains, despite the fact that Pakistan has fought against terrorism like no other nation has. Creative cultural diplomacy can help change the way the world looks at Pakistan, building on our strengths: glorious civilisational heritage, mighty mountains, and multiple faiths. Our film industry, academia, and diaspora can also help project our true image to millions of people around the world.

Addressing our vulnerabilities and inculcating good governance is the best way to defend our country in the years ahead. Our problems are monumental and may appear insurmountable, but failure is not an option. As Nelson Mandela said: "It always seems impossible until it's done." -- Courtesy Dawn

Interim CM Punjab will consider upgrading major hospitals with support of Muslim Hands Pak

LAHORE (Online): It has been decided in principle to hand over the management of 1000 schools of Punjab from Muslim Hands Pakistan.

A 6-member delegation of Muslim Hands Pakistan met the Caretaker Chief Minister of Punjab Mohsin Naqvi, Chairman of Muslim Hands Pakistan Syed Lakht Hasnain gave a briefing about welfare activities.

The Caretaker Chief Minister of Punjab was informed in the briefing that Muslim Hands Pakistan is running 117 schools in Punjab, health and education welfare projects are being run in various districts of South Punjab, market-based IT to guide the youth towards self-reliance.

18 schools of excellence and 35 model schools are being run in Punjab.

On this occasion, it was decided in principle to entrust the management of 1,000 schools of Muslim Hands Pakistan to Pakistan.

The Secretary Schools Education was directed to fix the rules and regulations with Muslim Hands Pakistan and to settle the issues regarding the MoU between the Government of Punjab and Muslim Hands Pakistan within a week.

In the meeting, the proposal to entrust the management of orphanages and Darul Aman to Muslim Hands Pakistan was also reviewed. Caretaker CM said that with the cooperation of private

sector and welfare organizations, the standard of education in government schools will be raised, with the cooperation of Muslim Hands Pakistan, consideration will be given to upgrade the emergency rooms of major hospitals.

This will encourage private organizations to improve the education and health sectors.

Chairman Muslim Hands Pakistan Syed Lakht Hasnain has said that they are ready to work together with the Punjab government to serve the people. Provincial Caretaker Information Minister Aamir Mir, Program Director Khalid Mehmood Qureshi, Syed Javed Jilani, Mian Umar Farooq, Rana Umar, Raja Arsalan Nusrat were present on the occasion.



HYDERABAD: Peoples Party (PPP) Chairman, Bilawal Bhutto Zardari along with Kashif Ali Shoro, Mayor Hyderabad offering Dua after unveiling the plaque during the inauguration ceremony of 6 MGD Water Filter Plant, at Hussainabad in Hyderabad.

Pakistan leadership urged to go along global changes with competence, unity

LAHORE (APP): International Human Rights Movement Central Chairman Muhammad Nasir Iqbal Khan has stressed the need for Pakistan's leadership to address the profound global shifts currently under way.

In a statement, issued here on Sunday, he highlighted the importance of eradicating incompetence and establishing a distinctive national position through wisdom and competence.

He pointed out that influential global powers, including the United States, have shown evident inclinations concerning Pakistan and India. He

urged Pakistan's leadership to abandon complacency and naivety, urging immediate action. He stressed the necessity for political and defence leaders to reevaluate their strategies in light of recent developments in neighboring countries.

Khan underlined the importance of ending retaliatory politics and fostering unity within Pakistan. He called for swift organisation, strategic planning, and correct prioritisation to reshape the nation's destiny. He also emphasised the significance of Pakistan's economic independence from the dollar as a harbinger of a

new era for the national economy.

Regarding external pressures and threats, he asserted that Pakistan must make independent decisions about its future without compromising its sovereignty. He highlighted the pivotal role of the Pakistan Army in countering external pressures and economic hostilities. Addressing critics of the Pakistani military, Khan warned that those who fail to recognise reality would be seen as remnants of ignorance. He emphasised that political and economic stability of Pakistan relies on the strength of the Pakistan Army.

Transport Minister inquires after those injured in metro bus accident

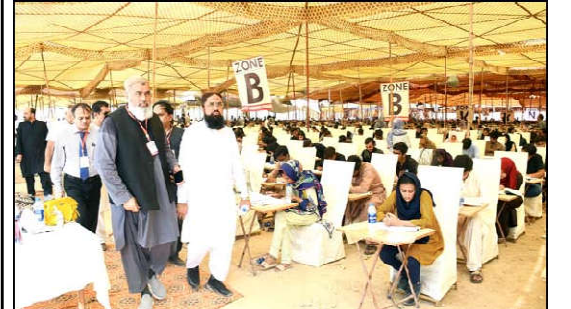
LAHORE (APP): Provincial Caretaker Minister Transport Ibrahim Murad conducted a visit to the emergency department of Ganga Ram Hospital, here on Sunday.

He inquired about the wellbeing of individuals injured in the metro bus accident and assessed the available medical facilities. The minister directed the hospital administration to provide the best medical facilities to the injured.

During the visit, Minister Ibrahim Murad stated that as a result of the incident, 10 individuals were injured, and the hospital was currently providing the best medical

treatment to the patients. An order has been issued to initiate an investigation into the incident. Action would be taken against those responsible for negligence in the metro bus incident, he warned.

Ibrahim Murad emphasised that the Punjab government would bear all expenses for the treatment and care of the injured citizens. He also mentioned that comprehensive planning and necessary measures would be taken in the future to prevent such incidents. "May Allah grant a speedy recovery to all the injured individuals in this incident," he prayed.



JAMSHORO: VC LUMHS Prof. Dr. Ikram Din Ujjan visiting during the entry test for admission held at Liaquat University of Medical and Health Sciences (LUMHS) in Jamshoro.

HEC invites applications for London Commonwealth scholarship programme

LAHORE (APP): The Higher Education Commission (HEC) has invited applications for the London Commonwealth Scholarship Programme, in Masters and PhD disciplines.

The HES local chapter sources told APP on Sunday that the Commonwealth Scholarships are funded by the Commonwealth and Development Office in London. Out of 30,000 scholarships, 26 programmes are available for Masters and 30 programmes for PhD. Application deadline for the current HEC Commonwealth Masters and PhD scholarships is October 17, and applications must be submitted on both the HEC and Commonwealth portals.

Moreover, the

Government of Switzerland, in collaboration with the Higher Education Commission (HEC), has also announced an 'Excellence Scholarship Programme' for Pakistani students for the upcoming academic year 2024-25.

The HEC sources further told APP that one-year post-masters research, three-year post-masters, PhD and one-year Post-Doctoral Programmes (PDP) have been announced for the aspiring candidates.

The last date for submission of applications with the Swiss embassy is September 30.

More details are available on the official website, the HEC local sources told APP. The main purpose of the Swiss Government Excellence Scholarships.



MUZAFFARABAD: Deserving women showing their Rashan cards as stands in a queue for collecting free food package distributing from Mohammed Bin Rashid Al-Maktoum Global Initiatives.

Crackdown on illegal sugar hoarding launched in Faisalabad

FAISALABAD (APP): The district administration has launched crackdown on illegal storage of sugar in the revenue limits of Faisalabad to check its artificial shortage and sale in black.

A spokesman for the local administration said here on Sunday that sugar was an essential commodity for human consumption, but some elements created its artificial shortage to mint money. Therefore, the district administration had launched a vigorous drive against hoarding of sugar so as to ensure its availability in the market in addition to its sale on government fixed rate.

He said that Assistant Commissioner (AC) Sammundri Suleman Mansha conducted surprise raid at a godown

near Salooni Jhal and recovered more than 300 bags of sugar. These bags were stored illegal to sell them in the black for profiteering.

The AC sealed premises of the godown while further action against sugar-dealer was under progress, he added.

He further said that district administration on other hand also started negotiation with the management of sugar mills and business community so that this commodity could be sold out to the general public at government-fixed rate.

The first round of the negotiation remained successful and it was hoped that this commodity would be available easily for the people in Faisalabad on its fixed rate very soon, he added.

Two killed, 4 injured in firing incidents

FAISALABAD (APP): Two persons including a teenager boy were killed while four others sustained multiple injuries in two separate firing incidents in Faisalabad during the past 12 hours.

Rescue 1122 spokesman said here on Sunday that two rival groups exchanged fire in Chak No 30-JB on Narwala Road to avenge an old enmity.

In this clash, 18-year-old Abdullah Akram of Chak No 28-RB received serious bullet injuries and died on-the-spot whereas Rescue 1122 shifted 60-year-old Akram, 27-year-old Bilal Akram and 38-year-old Umar Farooq to Allied Hospital in a critical condition.

In another incident, 55-year-old shopkeeper Aslam Jan of Chak No 105-GB Bangay Jaranwala was killed when in-laws of his daughter opened indiscriminate firing at him in his shop.

ANF recovers 10 kg drugs in 5 operations

RAWALPINDI (APP): Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) while conducting five operations across the country managed to recover 10 kg drugs and arrested two accused including a woman.

According to an ANF Headquarters spokesman, 60 grams of weed was recovered from two parcels confiscated from a courier office in Rawalpindi.

Both the parcels were booked from the UK for Azad Kashmir.

In another operation, Ice drug was recovered from a parcel booked for Australia at a courier office in Gulberg, Lahore.

1550 grams of Ice drug was concealed in sheets, bags and other items.

A woman resident of Lahore and a Nigerian national who booked the parcel were arrested.

In the fourth operation, 1 kg hashish was recovered from a parcel booked for Karachi at Lahore Airport. In the fifth operation, 8320 grams of hashish concealed for smuggling were recovered from Zakhra Khel area of Khyber. Separate cases under the Anti-Narcotics Act were registered against the accused while further investigations are under process.

Father, son shot dead over old enmity

MANDI BAHAUDDIN (INP): Two including father and son were killed and another person injured in firing of armed men over old enmity here on Sunday, police said.

According to details, armed men of rival group opened fire at members of opponent group in Sohawa Dera Mandi Bahauddin.

As a result of firing, 60-year-old Muhammad Akram and his son Anas 18, were killed on the spot while another person sustained bullet wounds. The attackers fled the scene. The bodies and injured were shifted to DHQ hospital.

RDA lodges FIR against owners of 'Ruden Enclave'

RAWALPINDI (APP): Rawalpindi Development Authority (RDA) has lodged a FIR in Saddar Baroni police station against the owners of an illegal housing scheme namely 'Ruden Enclave.'

According to a RDA spokesman, Metropolitan Planning and Traffic Engineering Directorate (MP&TE), RDA on the directives of the Director General Muhammad Saif Anwar Jappa lodged FIR No. 1260/2023 in Saddar Baroni police station against the owners namely Rahimuddin and Usman Shahid.

He informed that the sponsors were also warned to immediately stop marketing of illegal housing scheme.

The owners of the illegal housing were

illegally advertising the project which was not approved. The housing society was also running a social media campaign for publicity of the project, using pictures of a meeting with Commissioner Rawalpindi Division, he said adding, the RDA enforcement squad was sent for an operation against the housing scheme but, the representatives of the illegal housing scheme presented a stay order.

He said that the illegal housing scheme was misleading the general public as it's not an approval project.

The spokesman said that the RDA on the special instructions of the DG had advised the citizens not to invest in illegal and unauthorized housing schemes.

DC assures normalcy in Chitral

PESHAWAR (APP): Deputy Commissioner Lower Chitral, Muhammad Ali Khan, stated on Friday that the law and order situation is normal in the district, and tourists can visit any tourist destination without any fear. In a video message from his office, along with DPO Ikramullah Khan, he mentioned that additional reinforcements of FC, police, and Levies personnel have been deployed in the border area with Afghanistan, where terrorists attacked an FC checkpoint. He further stated that our security forces successfully repulsed the attack, resulting in the death of a large number of terrorists. The deputy commissioner emphasized that life is normal in the Chitral district.



MULTAN: Members of Punjab Teachers Union are holding protest demonstration for acceptance of their demands, at Multan press club.

Bid to smuggle non-custom paid goods foiled; worth Rs 519mln goods seized

PESHAWAR (APP): The Customs Collectorate Enforcement Team, in cooperation with DI Khan police on Friday conducted a successful operation and foiled a bid to smuggle non-custom paid goods worth Rs 519 million to different parts of the country.

The spokesman of the customs collectorate, Sohail said that three trucks and five containers were also seized in the Darazinda area of district DI Khan.

He said that the

trucks and containers were full of smuggled goods, including imported cloth, electronic gadgets, black tea, and other precious items, adding that the local police and customs authorities were jointly investigating the seized goods. He said that the value of smuggled goods, including vehicles, was estimated at Rs 519 million, including goods worth Rs 389 million and trucks and containers worth Rs 130 million.

Sohail said this was one of the biggest cases made by customs.

Police constable laid to rest

RAWALPINDI (APP): A police constable was laid to rest who embraced martyrdom during an encounter with dacoits in Bahria Town Rawat.

According to a police spokesman, Regional Police Officer (RPO) Syed Khurram Ali, City Police Officer (CPO) Syed Khalid Hamdani, SSP Operations Faisal Saleem, senior police officers, the family of the martyred constable, and numerous police personnel participated in the funeral prayer.

Constable Adeel Zafar had bravely confronted dacoits during an encounter in Bahria Town Rawat, where he was martyred due to dacoits' gunfire.

Best possible security arrangements made for Chehlum: CPO

RAWALPINDI (APP): Best possible arrangements including security were made for the Chehlum of Hazrat Imam Hussain (RA), said City Police Officer (CPO) Rawalpindi Syed Khalid Mehmood Hamdani.

The CPO said that over 4,000 well-equipped cops and officers were deployed to ensure security foolproof.

Similarly, 250 traffic wardens and officers were also deployed for the smooth flow of traffic on city roads and to facilitate the mourners, he informed.

Monitoring of the main procession was ensured with the help of CCTV cameras besides

aerial surveillance. Police personnel were also deployed on top of high-rise buildings on the route of the Chehlum procession, he mentioned.

The CPO also appreciated the efforts of the cops to maintain peace and order on the Chehlum.

The processions of Hazrat Imam Hussain (RA) Chehlum, taken out from different localities of the city after passing through their traditional routes culminated peacefully on Thursday night.

The main 'Zuljinnah' procession was taken out from Imambargah Ashiq Hussain. It passed through its traditional routes.



KARACHI: Jamat-e-Islami (JI) Karachi Chief, Hafiz Naem-ur-Rehman addresses to media persons during press conference held at Idara-e-Noor-ul-Haq in Karachi.

Factory owners, citizens warned against burning of trash

LAHORE (APP): Environmental experts have issued a stern warning to both factory owners and citizens, urging them to refrain from burning trash due to its detrimental impact on human and animal health. The Deputy Commissioner's office had previously imposed a ban on the incineration of various materials, including trash, tires, shoes, plastic, and raw wood in all brick kilns throughout the district.

According to environmentalist Mahmood Khalid Qamar,

the combustion of prohibited materials, such as trash, plastic, and treated wood, poses a grave threat to the environment. These substances release toxic chemicals into the atmosphere, resulting in air pollution. This polluted air, when inhaled by both humans and animals, gives rise to severe health risks and leaves deposits in the soil, surface water, and on plants. Qamar emphasizes that open burning, in general, poses a significant risk to the environment and public health.

Director General

Mazhar Zaheer Abbas Malik, in a recent statement to the media, issued a stern warning to factory owners, cautioning against the use of plastic and shoes as fuel sources in combustion.

He emphasized that strict actions would be taken against those who fail to comply. Additionally, he urged farmers to refrain from burning rice crop residues, as this practice leads to soil, groundwater, lake, river, and stream pollution. Furthermore, outdoor burning of crop residues

carries the risk of sparking wildfires. Malik stressed the importance of burning only approved materials and adhering to state regulations to mitigate these harmful effects.

Naseem-ur-Rehman Shah, the Director of the Environmental Protection Department (EPD), pointed out that burning trash not only results in the production of polluted ash and smoke but can also release hexachlorobenzene (HCB) into the environment. HCB is a highly persistent toxin that degrades slowly in the air,

enabling it to travel long distances in the atmosphere.

Shah noted that any violation of garbage burning regulations would lead to immediate consequences, including the sealing of the unit or kiln, imprisonment, fines of up to Rs100,000, and the initiation of legal proceedings against industrial unit or kiln owners. Furthermore, he emphasized that brick manufacturing is only permitted using the new eco-friendly zigzag technology.



PESHAWAR: Safety wall of Faqirabad Bridge seen broken that may cause any accident and also inviting authorities to draw their attention towards issue, in Peshawar.

Biden administration not interfering in Pak politics: US senator

WASHINGTON (Online): Democratic Party Senator Chris Van Hollen said that the Biden administration is not interfering in Pakistani politics.

The US was instrumental in getting the IMF to come forward with emergency economic relief in the case of Pakistan.

According to the details, the DMV chapter of the Pakistan Doctors' Organization was held in Washington in which US Senator Chris Van Hollen participated as the chief guest.

Talking to the Pakistani media on this occasion, he said that he has been in contact with the Biden administration for a long time. I can say with full of my belief that US has not made any attempt to engineer anything in Pakistan's politics.

United States, other

democracies and people of Pakistan are interested in ensuring that elections are free and fair.

The Democratic Party senator said that it is up to the people of Pakistan to decide their leaders, to ensure that the will of the people of Pakistan is heard and reflected, elections must be absolutely free and fair.

Senator Chris Van Hollen further added that a good relationship with Pakistan is important for stability and security around the world, that is why the Biden administration wants to have a very strong bilateral relationship with Pakistan, to see the help of the United States after the floods in Pakistan. US played a very important role in ensuring that the IMF came forward with its emergency economic relief.



QUETTA: Caretaker Home Minister Mir Muhammad Zubair Jamali meeting with Syed Attaullah Shah Bukhari

Implementing principles of Quaid-e-Azam will lead Pak on path of development: Raja

ISLAMABAD (APP): While paying heartfelt and rich tribute to Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah on his 75th death Anniversary, Speaker National Assembly Raja Pervez Ashraf said, "following the principles outlined by Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah in letter and spirit will lead Pakistan on the path of development and progress."

In a message on the death anniversary of Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah, he said that Pakistan was passing through a challenging time and surpassing these challenges required implementing the

Quaid's teaching in their true spirit.

Raja Pervez Ashraf said that Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah never compromised on his principles. He also said every Pakistani needs to follow the principles of tolerance and forbearance for peaceful coexistence of a pluralist society.

He also said that Quaid-e-Azam always followed principles of democracy and his struggle was constitutional. He stressed on the need to follow the principles of democracy and tolerance to transform Pakistan into a prosperous and welfare state.



KARACHI: Caretaker Federal Minister for Energy Ali Muhammad Chairing a meeting with officers of K electric

Afghanistan ready to resolve all issues with Pak through dialogue

KABUL (Online): The detailed statement of the Afghan Ministry of Foreign Affairs on the continuous closure of the Torkham border has come out.

The Afghan Ministry of Foreign Affairs said that all issues with Pakistan are ready to be resolved through dialogue.

Our security team reconstructing an old outpost at Torkham was fired upon.

He said that border closure is not only bilateral but also detrimental to regional trade, our export containers are waiting for clearance at Karachi port.

Earlier, the Special Representative for Afghanistan Asif Durrani informed Pakistan's concerns and said that Afghanistan has tried to build a checkpoint inside Pakistan's border at Torkham border.

Pak-UAE to sign free trade agreement by September end

ISLAMABAD (INP): Caretaker Federal Minister for Commerce, Industries, and Production Dr Gohar Ejaz said that the South Asian country was expected to sign a free trade agreement (FTA) with the United Arab Emirates (UAE) during the upcoming visit of an Emirati delegation in the last week of September.

It is worth mentioning here that the UAE is Pakistan's third-largest trade partner after China and the United States. It is also viewed as an ideal export destination by policymakers in the South Asian country due to its geographical proximity to Pakistan which reduces transportation and freight costs. The Gulf country is also home to an estimated 1.8 million Pakistani expatriates and after Saudi Arabia, the second-largest source of remittances for

the South Asian nation of more than 240 million.

"Emirates delegation is planned for end September to finalize the FTA between Pakistan and UAE," Ejaz said, adding the visit would be focused on trade, investment, and economy, Arab News reported.

Pakistan's ambassador to the UAE, Faisal Niaz Tirmizi, said both nations were optimistic about signing the agreement, officially known as the Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA), during the upcoming visit. "There are some issues which are being negotiated and we would like to finalize the deal when they come," Tirmizi said.

The UAE had already signed FTAs with around nine countries and was working with Pakistan on it, according to the ambassador.



BAHAWALPUR: Rescue personnel evacuate people on a boat from a flooded Ahmedpur Sharqia area.

Rescuers hunt for survivors of Morocco quake with over 2,000 dead

MARRAKECH: Rescuers searched on Sunday for survivors of Morocco's deadliest earthquake in more than six decades, with more than 2,000 people killed by the disaster that has laid waste to villages in the mountains outside Marrakech.

Many people spent a second night in the open after the 6.8 magnitude quake hit late on Friday. Reliefworkers face the challenge of reaching the most badly affected villages in the High Atlas, a rugged mountain range where settlements are often remote and where many houses crumbled.

Large chunks of a cliff had broken off and fallen on to the road near the small town of Moulay Brahim, partly blocking a winding road connecting Marrakech to the Atlas Mountains.

The latest Interior

Ministry figures put the death toll at 2,012, with 2,059 people injured, including 1,404 in critical condition.

Morocco has declared three days of mourning and King Mohammed VI called for prayers for the dead to be held at mosques across the country on Sunday.

The World Health Organization said more than 300,000 people have been affected by the disaster.

"The next 24 to 48 hours will be critical in terms of saving lives," Caroline Holt, global director of operations for the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, said in a statement.

Search and rescue efforts would be prioritised alongside making sure survivors were taken care of, she said, noting the importance of providing safe drinking water.

The village of Tansghart in the Ansi area, on the side of a valley where the road from Marrakech rises up into the High Atlas, was the worst hit of several visited by Reuters journalists on Saturday.

Its picturesque houses, clinging to a steep hillside, were cracked open by the shaking ground. Those still standing were missing chunks of wall or plaster. Two mosques minarets had fallen.

Abdellatif Ait Bella, a labourer, lay on the ground, barely able to move or speak, his head bandaged from wounds caused by falling debris.

"We have no house to take him to and have had no food since yesterday," said his wife Saida Bodchich, fearing for the future of their family of six with their sole breadwinner so badly hurt.

Pak-Saudi joint naval exercise continue in Arabian Gulf

RIYADH (Online): Joint naval exercises of Pakistan and Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) Navy are going on in the deep sea of Arabian Gulf in Saudi Arabia.

According to the details, Pakistan and Saudi navies are continuing joint military exercises in the ongoing naval exercises called Al-Bahr 14 in the Persian Gulf of Al-Jubail region of Saudi Arabia.



WASHINGTON: Ambassador Masood Khan & Senator Chris Van Hollen attending the Annual Meeting & Gala Dinner of the DMV chapter of APPNA as Chief Guests

PPP supports elections in 90 days, Shazia Murri

MANANWALA (Online): Former Federal Minister Shazia Murri has said that Pakistan People's Party is in favor of elections in 90 days.

Benazir Income Support Program is nothing less than a blessing for the poor people of Pakistan, from which the women of the country are benefiting, she added.

She also mention the propaganda regarding him of the export of 97 billion dollars on social media is condemnable, which has nothing to do with reality.

These views were expressed by former federal minister Shazia Murri while talking to the delegation from Mananwala led by the provincial candidate PP 141 Sheikhupura Rana Rizwan

Ali Raffaqat of Mananwala.

She said that the workers of Pakistan People's Party should prepare for the elections. The People's Party is the representative party of the poor people and the workers, which has always fought for the rights of the workers and the poor. People's Party's candidate for Provincial Assembly PP 141 Rana Rizwan Ali Raffakat made further recommendations regarding the Benazir Income Support Program in his constituency so that the women of the constituency can benefit more and twenty five thousand women from my constituency can benefit from the Benazir Income Support Program.



QUETTA: Activists of the newly regularized Joint Action Committee BDA hold a protest in favour of their demands alongwith their children in front of the Quetta Press Club.

Pakistan rejects holding of illegal, so-called elections in Karabakh

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan considered Karabakh as the sovereign territory of the Republic of Azerbaijan and any attempt to conduct the so-called elections there by the illegally installed regime was legally and morally reprehensible.

"Such an attempt is also a grave violation of the UN Charter and principles of established international law," Spokesperson, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Mumtaz Zahra Baloch said in a press statement, on Sunday, in response to a query regarding the so-called presiden-

tial elections in the territory of Azerbaijan. Azerbaijan on Saturday condemned the so-called elections held in the territories of its Karabakh region, calling it an "extremely provocative step."

"This is a clear violation of Azerbaijan's sovereignty and territorial integrity, is by no means admissible and tolerable," Azerbaijan Foreign Ministry statement maintained. It said that the "provocations by Armenia" had a detrimental impact on the normalization process and hindered the international efforts.

Mushaal asks G20 to focus on ending HR abuses in IIOJK

Demands to press India to settle Kashmir dispute

ISLAMABAD (APP): Special Assistant to Prime Minister on Human Rights and Women Empowerment Mushaal Hussien Mullick has urged the G20 countries to use the opportunity to force the worst human rights violations in the Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK) and ensure a lasting solution to the Kashmir dispute.

Mushaal, the wife of incarcerated Hurriyat Leader Yasim Malik, in a statement on Sunday pressed the G20 member countries, including US, UK, EU, China, France, Russia, Canada, Japan, Saudi Arabia, South Africa and Türkiye to play their proactive role to resolve the Kashmir dispute because regional peace could not be possible without settlement of the issue.

She stressed that the international community

should look at the ongoing human rights violations and massacres of innocent people instead of looking at their trade interests with India.

Mushaal demanded that the G-20 countries should make all political and social relations with India subject to the end of ongoing human rights violations in the occupied valley. "Let's say you had no G-20 statement, headlines would say G-20 is finished, G-20 could be replaced by blocs like BRICS and G-7. So in a way by having a statement we keep the platform and the organisation alive," she said.

The SAPM said the Indian fascist government crossed all limits of barbarism and state terrorism and the world powers were well-aware of the fact that the occupied valley was turned into a largest open

prisoner and torture cell.

She said many of the political figures, human rights defenders and journalists, including Yasim Malik, the Chairman Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front (JKLF), prominent political figures Shabbir Ahmad Shah, Farooq Dar and Khurram Parvez, the Program Coordinator of the Jammu and Kashmir Coalition of Civil Society (JKCCS) and the Chairperson of the Asian Federation Against Involuntary Disappearances (AFAD) and Irfan Meraj (journalist/human rights activist) were illegally detained in frivolous, bogus and politically motivated cases.

Mushaal said the notorious occupation authorities unleashed a reign of terror and used the rapes of women as the weapon of war, besides committing the worst war crimes.



KARACHI: Members of Ahle Sunnat Wal Jamaat are holding Azmat-e-Sahaba and Ahlebait rally, at Shahrah-e-Quaideen in Karachi.

Caretaker CM grieved over death of Chairman MC Zhob, 3 others in road accident

Independent Report

QUETTA: The caretaker Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Ali Mardan Domki has expressed grief over the death of Chairman Municipal Committee, Zhob, Khan Nasir Khan Nasar and three others in a road accident near Sora Pull in Zhob.

In a condolence statement issued here on Sunday, the caretaker Chief Minister expressed sympathy with the bereaved families.

He prayed that may Allah Almighty rest the departed souls into Its eternal peace and give enough strength and patience to the bereaved families to bear the tragic loss.

China, Pakistan to establish 'Joint Research Center on Earth Sciences' in Oct

ISLAMABAD (APP): China and Pakistan will establish a joint research center in October to promote the study of Earth sciences and sci-tech exchanges, an official in charge of the center's preparatory work said during the 2023 China International Fair for Trade in Services.

Hong Tianhua said, "China-Pakistan Joint Research Center on Earth Sciences will be established in Islamabad, the capital of Pakistan, in October as a high-level scientific and technological innovation platform between the two countries to promote sci-tech cooperation and talent cultivation."

"The center is being initiated by the Chinese Academy of Sciences (CAS) and the Higher Education Commission of Pakistan, and supported by the Institute of Mountain Hazards and Environment under the CAS and Quaid-e-Azam University in Pakistan," Xinhua reported.

Its establishment also involves CAS-affiliated institutes and other Chinese research institutions, as well as universities in Pakistan, such as the University of Peshawar. The center will carry out joint research in four areas: natural disaster and risk management; geological structures and tectonic activities; climate change and environmental effects; and resources.

Pakistan-Kyrgyzstan to collaborate in healthcare sector: Dr Zhumaliev

ISLAMABAD (APP): Dr Zhumaliev, Member Kyrgyz Republic Parliament and leader of the delegation currently visiting Pakistan on Sunday said that his visit signified demonstrating the highest degree of mutual interest between both countries in further strengthening bilateral trade relations, particularly in the healthcare sector.

Speaking at a reception hosted in his honour by Chairman Kyrgyzstan Trade House Meher Kashif Younis, he said the promotion of trade and industry between the two countries holds significant potential, said a news release issued here.

"By identifying areas of common interest and fostering partnerships, we can pave the way for increased economic cooperation and growth," he added.

He said it was a significant and promising development in the realm of bilateral relations between Pakistan and Kyrgyzstan.

"The possibilities for collaboration are vast and promising in the field of medical education, both countries can benefit from knowledge exchange, joint research projects, and student exchanges", he remarked.

He said, "It will undoubtedly contribute to the development of our respective healthcare systems."



QUETTA: People purchase used goods due to price hiking, at makeshift weekly market located on Benazir Flyover road in Quetta.

Seminar on women rights and gender based violence held in Quetta

QUETTA (APP): The Ministry of Human Rights on Friday held an awareness-raising event on women's rights and Gender-Based Violence (GBV) for the local communities of Quetta. The objective of the event was to enhance the understanding of communi-

ties, regarding the rights of women and GBV, its negative impact on society, and ways in which it could be addressed through community-based measures, and the role of the Ministry of Human Rights in addressing these issues.

The event focused on areas like women's rights, pro-women laws, institutional rehabilitation, referral, and other protective measures in place for survivors of GBV. More than 145 participants from various communities including women, students, transgender, civil society representatives, lawyers, education officers, health officials, district administration officers, and the me-

dia, participated in the session. Ambreen Guland and Rubina Zehri from the Women Development Department Quetta said that violence is not only physical but economic and psychological as well.

Shahzad Ahmad Khan, Director-IC, Ministry of Human Rights, explained in detail the laws for protection against GBV, their sections, offenses, and punishments. He said that women constitute more than half of the population of Pakistan. Economic, physical, and psychological violence prevents them from joining the formal or informal economy, which not only causes harm to the victims and their families but also hinders the economic progress of the nation as a whole. Fauzia Shaheen, Baluchistan Commission on the Status of Women, and Farkhanda Aurangzeb, NCHR member Baluchistan, explained various laws in Baluchistan related to women's rights.



QUETTA: Secretary Education Abdul Rauf Baloch presiding over a review meeting regarding progress of NGOs in education