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Election Commission to decide polls date: PM

We have no intention to prolong tenure of the caretaker government; Action against smuggling would continue and the writ of the state would be established

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar Monday said Election Commission would decide about the date for the upcoming elections. In an interview with a private television, he said Parliament had passed a law according to which Election Commission had the power to announce the date for new elections. Speculation regarding the elections should end as these would be held according to the prevalent law, he said adding, "We have no intention to prolong tenure of the caretaker government."

He said as a student of history of Pakistan, he would express gratitude to Quaid-e-Azam for protecting rights of the Muslim minority and saving it from the domination of majority. After seeing the atti-

tude of bigger states against the minorities, he said he could see that it would have been difficult to protect the religious and cultural identity of Muslims if Quaid had not secured an independent state for Muslims. He said he admired Quaid-e-Azam for his constitutionalism, all-inclusiveness and for protection of rights of minorities. The prime minister assured that action against smuggling would continue and the writ of the state would be established. "We are taking these actions so that the new government with its mandate can easily continue our work for public interest."

He said the apex committee of Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC) included current military leadership, thus making the council a strong

constitutional and legal body which was taking firm actions and implementing decisions. The caretaker federal and provincial governments had good coordination which was helpful in implementing decisions, he noted. He said the SIFC was focusing on economic revival and on sectors of agriculture and mineral extraction. Work would be done on major plans of investment so that they could be at an advanced stage when the next government would take over, he told. He said Pakistan had multifaceted relations with Afghanistan and had regular discussions with it on issues of trade, terrorism, security and regional connectivity. Both sides were talking with the realization that neighbors could not be

changed, he added. To a question about rising incidents of terrorism in the country, he said the terrorists had now more latest weapons, night vision goggles and other equipment which had increased their capacity to fight. However, he made it clear that the terrorists could not take away an inch of territory of Pakistan and the security forces would respond and manage the situation. The state would show its firmness against terrorists as in no condition anyone would be allowed to resort to violence, he stressed. PM Kakar said there was no restriction on Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaf (PTI) for taking part in the elections. Talking about incidents of May 9, he said miscreants resorted to vandalism

and arson and the whole incident was reported by the local and international media. The accused involved in the incident would be dealt with according to the law of the land, he continued. He said Nawaz Sharif was thrice elected prime minister and when he would come back to Pakistan he would be treated according to law. He clarified that he had no intention to start meetings with the leadership of political parties. To a question about Pakistan's foreign policy, he said Pakistan had good relations with all countries, adding China was on the verge of becoming the largest economy of the world and the western world led by US was anxious about it and wanted to contain its influence.



ISLAMABAD: Balochistan's caretaker minister for inter provincial coordination, Mr. Asif-ur-Rehman called on caretaker prime minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar today. Former Chief Minister Balochistan Jam Kamal Khan was also present.

SC tested several times over constitutional matters in Feb 2023, says CJP

ISLAMABAD (INP): Speaking for the last time at a ceremony marking the commencement of the new judicial year on Monday, Chief Justice of Pakistan Umar Ata Bandial said that the court was tested several times in February 2023 with matters pertaining to the Constitution of Pakistan. He added that he did not want to repeat all that has happened but it is reflected in part in the decision for the audio leaks case. Commenting on his differences with incoming CJP Qazi Faez Isa, Justice Bandial maintained that the latter was an admirable man. The media is the eyes

and ears of society, said the CJP, but, he added, incorrect reports were published about him. He referred to the use of his phrases "good to see you" and "short and sweet" and said they were taken out of context. He doesn't hold this against the media, he added. The outgoing CJP said that this might be his last address as the chief justice, and mentioned that the ongoing political situation has also affected judicial performance. Commenting on the performance of the apex court, CJP Bandial said that the SC disposed of 23,000 cases in the past year, breaking a previous record of disposing of 18,000 cases in one year. He added

that he had wished to reduce the number of pending cases by 50,000 but managed to address only 2,000 cases from the backlog. Justice Bandial took office as CJP in February 2022 and is due to retire on September 16, 2023. The Supreme Court has been marred with controversies this year against the backdrop of a political crisis which has garnered the attention of international media and much uncertainty surrounding the next general elections. The top court has decisions pending in several political and constitutional cases as CJP Bandial begins his last week in office.



ISLAMABAD: President, Dr. Arif Alvi administering the oath of office to Dr. Kausar Abdullah Malik as caretaker federal minister during oath taking ceremony held at Aiwan-e-Sadr in Islamabad.

Responsible journalism need of the hour: Solangi

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Murtaza Solangi on Monday appreciated the services of court reporters in providing awareness of legal matters and important court decisions to the masses. During a meeting with a delegation of the Press Association of the Supreme Court of Pakistan which met with him here, the minister said the main objective of the media was to convey correct information to the general public. He stressed that responsible journalism was need of the hour which could help the society move forward in the right direction. The role of court reporters in journalism, he

said, was very important. Court reporting was a technical field and like lawyers, journalists covering court proceedings should be well versed in law, he added. Covering the Supreme Court's proceedings was equally important and sensitive, and the court reporters were doing the job very efficiently, the minister remarked. Solangi said the caretaker government fully believed in freedom of press and it would solve the problems of journalists working in the field. The minister congratulated the newly elected office-bearers of the Press Association of the Supreme Court.



QUETTA: Former Provincial Minister Nawabzada Zafarullah Khan Zehri meeting with caretaker Chief Minister Mir Ali Mardan Khan Domki

Khurram Agha directs Work on Pinjra Bridge to be completed within stipulated time

Independent Report QUETTA: Secretary Communications and Chairman NHA Capt. (Retd.) Muhammad Khurram Agha paid a detailed visit to Balochistan in order to inspect and review the progress of various ongoing development projects and the restoration works on flood-affected road infrastructure. Acting on directions of the Hon'ble caretaker Prime Minister Mr. Anwar ul Haq Kakar, Secretary Communications along with Member West Zone Mr. Shahid Ihsanullah and his team, made a comprehensive visit to various sites in Balochistan. Secretary Communica-

tions reviewed the developments on already issued instructions regarding expeditious progress on PSDP projects and maintenance schemes including Pinjra Bridge (N-65), Quetta Western Bypass (N-25), Khuzdar-Kuchlak Dualization (N-25), and Zhub-Kuchlak Dualization projects (N-50). During his visit to Quetta Western Bypass, he acknowledged the efforts of the contractor and NHA's workforce for the quality and efficiency of work. Similarly, he pointed that restoration work on Pinjra Bridge N-65 shall be completed within the stipulated time of four months.

Balochistan Caretaker Minister calls on PM Kakar

ISLAMABAD (APP): Balochistan Caretaker Minister for Inter Provincial Coordination Asif-ur-Rehman on Monday called on caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar. Former chief minister Balochistan Jam Kamal Khan was also present during the meeting. PM Office Media Wing said in a press release.

Deputy Chairman NAB resigns

ISLAMABAD (Online): Deputy chairman NAB Zahir Shah has resigned from his office. After chairman NAB Aftab Sultan, Prosecutor General Asghar Haider, Deputy chairman NAB too has resigned. Deputy chairman NAB has filed his resignation with chairman NAB. It has been said in the resignation that he does not want to continue his job due to personal reasons. Therefore, his resignation was accepted.

One soldier martyred in IED attack on forces in Warsak

RAWALPINDI (Online): On 11 September 23, an Improvised Explosive Device (IED) exploded on a vehicle of Security Forces in general area Warsak, Peshawar District. Consequently, Lance Naik Abdul Rehman, 29 years, resident of District Bannu embraced Shahadat, while three soldiers got injured.



ISLAMABAD: Secretary Communication and Chairman NHA Captain (Retd) Muhammad Khurram Agha paid a detailed visit to Balochistan to review the ongoing development projects and progress of flood-affected road infrastructure restoration work

Establishing law and order topmost responsibility, says caretaker CM

Mir Ali Mardan Domki says office of Chief Executive has basic importance in resolving public issues; exhorts Chief Minister's secretariat to work hard with dedication and sincerity

Independent Report QUETTA: The caretaker Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Ali Mardan Khan Domki has stated that it is topmost responsibility of the interim government to establish law and order in the province. It is mandate of the caretaker government to conduct free and fair elections in the peaceful manner. This was stated by the caretaker Chief Minister while presiding over a meeting of the officers of CM secretariat here on Monday. Basically it was an introductory meeting of the CM secretariat officers with the caretaker Chief

Minister Balochistan. Mr. Domki was briefed about the affairs of CM secretariat by the Principal Secretary, Lal Jan Jaffar. He said that it is responsibility of the officers to perform the professional duties well. He said that the responsibility which has been given to us requires we work hard and with sincerity. He said that the officers of CM secretariat are his team, and adding he expected that they would strengthen his hands. The caretaker Chief Minister stressed that service of the province and masses should be our first priority.

Senate of University of Balochistan meets: Kakar emphasizes on reducing unnecessary expenditures of public sector universities

Independent Report QUETTA: The Governor Balochistan, Malik Abdul Wali Khan Kakar has categorically emphasized upon reducing the unnecessary expenditures of the public sector universities at every level, which is necessary to put them at the path of real development. He also called for taking solid measures for increasing sources of income of the universities. The Governor was chairing meeting of the senate of University of Balochistan here on Monday. Also present in the meeting were the caretaker Provincial Minister for Education, Qadir Bakhsh Baloch, senior judge of Balochistan High Court, Mr. Justice Hashim Khan Kakar, Vice Chancellor, UoB, Professor Dr. Shafiqur Rehman, adminis-

trative secretaries, Abdul Saboor Khan Kakar, Zahid Saleem, Dr. Hafeez Jamali, Principal Secretary to Governor, Hashim Khan Ghilzai, representative of Higher Education Commission, Dr. Zahoor Bazaia. Speaking on the occasion, the Governor stressed that implementation of the rules and regulations of HEC is very important to run affairs of the University. He also stressed the need to make conscious efforts for bringing universities and industries together. Moreover, he directed to strictly follow rules and regulations in new recruitments and promotions in the University. Meanwhile, certain important decisions were made on recommendations and proposals made by the participants in the senate's meeting.

250 tons of sugar, 750 tons Urea recovered from three godowns in Kuchlak

Independent Report QUETTA: The district administration continued operation against the smuggling and hoarding of sugar and Urea fertilizer in Quetta and its surrounding areas. According to an official hand out issued here on Monday, an intelligence

based operation was conducted in Kuchlak by the administration in collaboration with concerned agencies. During the IBO, three godowns were raided and recovered some 250 tons of sugar and 750 tons of Urea fertilizers from there. During the IBO, around



QUETTA: Governor Balochistan Malik Abdul Wali Khan Kakar presiding over meeting of Senate of Balochistan University

PM hails WB's role in dev. of backward, especially remote areas of Balochistan

ISLAMABAD (INP): Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar has recognized the role of the World Bank in playing a role for the development of the backward areas, especially the remote areas of Balochistan. This was stated by him while talking to Country Director of World Bank Najay Benhassaine who called on him in Islamabad on Monday. Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar said that putting backward areas of the country on the path of development was the priority of the government.

Corps Commander visits Gulistan; appreciates operation against narcotics by forces

Independent Report QUETTA: The Corps Commander 12 Corps, Lt. General Asif Ghafoor visited Gulistan area of Killa Abdullah on Monday. During the visit, the Corps Commander reviewed the operation

against narcotics and termed it a great service of the society. He said that it is our national responsibility to save our children and drug addicts from the curse of narcotics, and this obligation would be fulfilled too. Lt. General Asif



launched by the security forces against narcotics in Gulistan. Also present on the occasion was Commissioner Quetta, Muhammad Hamza Shafaqat. The Corps Commander highly appreciated the performance of forces

Ghafoor said that action is also being taken against the distributors as well as the cultivators and producers of the narcotics. He also hailed the support of local population for launching operation against narcotics in the area.

Pakistan will not allow Afghan Transit trade agreement to be misused: FO

ISLAMABAD (Online): Pakistan while expressing concern over Afghan authorities statement has said we wonder on giving such statement despite knowing the facts. "Construction of any structure within our territory is not acceptable. Construction of structure in our territory is against our sovereignty" this was said by Foreign Office (FO) spokesperson, Mumtaz

Zahra Baloch here Monday. She went on to say Afghan forces resorted to firing instead of peaceful resolution of the issue on September 06. Afghan forces not only damaged infrastructure but they put at stake the lives of people. She held unprovoked firing has encouraged terrorist elements. We welcomed Afghan people openheartedly for several decades.

Daily Voice of Masses
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Tuesday September 12, 2023

Vulnerable Chitral

The Chitral region of KP has been in the headlines of late due to the Sept 6 deadly cross-border incursion in which a large band of TTP militants reportedly crossed over and attacked Pakistani positions before being pushed back into Afghanistan.

Though the authorities have not given any numbers, the raiders were reported to be in the 'hundreds'. The interim foreign minister insists this was an "isolated incident" and that the Afghan Taliban rulers did not sanction the attack, while the Foreign Office has repeated the mantra that Pakistan's concerns have been communicated to the relevant quarters in Kabul. State functionaries may be giving the impression that all is well in the region, but more information is needed on the exact details of the attack, while the local people need to be reassured that their lives and properties will be protected by the state. Chitral lies in a strategically sensitive area, bordering Afghanistan and with only the Wakhan Corridor separating it from Tajikistan. China's Xinjiang region is also in the vicinity.

This makes it an attractive location for transnational jihadists looking to expand their operations, even though Chitral itself has largely been shielded from terrorist activity.

Moreover, the region is culturally, linguistically and ethnically distinct from the rest of KP. While Swat and erstwhile Fata suffered the most during earlier waves of terrorism, Chitral managed to weather the storm. The area where the incursion took place is close to the traditional lands of the Kalash people, and Chitral also has a significant Ismaili population.

Therefore, the state needs to beef up security in the area, as the banned TTP and sectarian militants thrive on targeting minority communities. While there have been reports of small-scale infiltration from Afghanistan, the last major incursion occurred in 2011 when reportedly a very large number of terrorists staged attacks, leading to several fatalities among security men.

Simply expecting the Afghan Taliban to 'do more' may not be enough, especially when there is speculation that some Taliban factions may actually be encouraging attacks within Pakistan.

The best option is for the military to provide iron-clad security to all vulnerable border regions, and ensure that no groups are again able to violate Pakistan's territory.

A jirga in Chitral has asked the army chief to visit the area, and called upon the authorities to fence the border with Afghanistan. Reports indicate that the Afghan Taliban had started relocating TTP fighters from the border area; the process must be sped up so that this ever-present threat on the country's frontiers is neutralised. The terrorist threat on the borders must be handled proactively. In the past, the country has suffered immensely by allowing malevolent actors to establish fiefdoms on Pakistani territory. This mistake must never be repeated.



Malecha Lodhi

Are 'middle powers' more important today in geopolitics? Which countries are middle powers and why do they have rising clout in the present era? How do we define them and assess their influence on the international stage? Is soft power also a factor in their global standing?

The notion of middle powers has long been around. But it has acquired new relevance in the current geopolitical context whose defining features are increasing multipolarity and the US-China competition. There is no consensus in the growing literature about how to define middle powers. However, there is general agreement that these countries are neither among the world's superpowers nor are they small powers as

they have the ability to influence geopolitics.

This is due to their economic strength, military muscle or other attributes, including demographic characteristics, regional weight, soft power, diplomatic conduct and activism. This gives them significant leverage in global affairs and ability to build multiple relationships.

They include countries from the developed world and Global South, such as Germany, Japan, Canada, Brazil, India, South Africa, Turkey, Saudi Arabia, Singapore and Indonesia. They are a heterogeneous group of countries with varying governance systems as well as political and strategic interests. Pakistan is in some respects a middle power but its economic weakness has significantly limited and diminished its global influence.

The global debate about the role of middle powers has intensified as a consequence of the US-China stand-off. This hasn't mimicked the Cold War in terms of dividing the world into a 'tight' bipolarity. But, as several analysts have noted, it has, instead, offered opportunities and le-

way to countries to increase their leverage by playing off that rivalry and pursuing an 'independent' path.

Moreover, structural changes and dispersal of power in the international system—the very currency of power also having changed—has created an enabling environment for middle power activism and for them to wield influence. As Alec Russell recently wrote in a thoughtful Financial Times op-ed, "The age of the Western set menu is over. And the new menu, while heavily influenced by two lead chefs, is still being written"—a reference to middle powers who now seek a seat at the table.

Last month's BRICS summit in South Africa renewed focus on middle powers and their aspiration to reconfigure the global order and rewrite the rules of the game. Expansion of the group by addition of Saudi Arabia, Iran, Egypt, Argentina, UAE and Ethiopia, with China working for enlargement, underlined how these emerging economies were seeking a bigger role by using the bloc as a countervailing force to US-led Western groupings, such as G7.

They also advocate reform of the international financial system and Bretton Woods institutions. As widely acknowledged, this expansion has increased the weight of BRICS, which represents over a quarter of the global economy and accounts for a major share of the world's oil resources.

Among decisions to emerge from the Johannesburg summit was for finance ministers of member countries to explore how to reduce dependence on the US dollar. As Cyril Ramaphosa, South Africa's president put it, "BRICS has embarked on a new chapter to build a world that is fair" and "inclusive". Whether or not that ambition is realised, the bloc has become an important platform for middle powers to make their global presence felt.

While many middle powers are capitalising on the US-China competition to strengthen their bargaining position they also seek to enhance relations with both global powers. They want to avoid getting in the crosshairs of that confrontation but to also reap advantages from it. This has urged both the US and China

to pay more attention to middle powers to ensure they don't get entrenched in their rival's camp.

Under Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, Saudi Arabia has pursued initiatives that have set a new foreign policy direction and raised its diplomatic game. Riyadh loosened its traditionally close ties with the US to significantly boost its economic ties with China. Its rapprochement with long-time regional rival Iran, brokered by China, greatly increased its leverage with Washington.

This development so alarmed the Biden administration that it urged Washington to hasten plans to pursue a 'grand bargain' in the Middle East. This involves Saudi Arabia normalising relations with Israel in return for a mutual security pact with the US and Riyadh committing to scale back ties with China. In fact, Riyadh is driving a tough bargain by making several demands—a defence pact with Washington, a civilian nuclear deal, missile defence system/other high-tech weapons and substantial Israeli concessions for the Palestinians.

Turkey is another

country adept at the middle power diplomatic game, which has been widely commented on. A member of Nato, Turkey under Recep Tayyip Erdogan, has followed an assertive foreign policy in the region and beyond, maintaining ties with both the US and Russia. Ankara has played off the Ukraine conflict to further project its power and increase its leverage. It sought to mediate between Russia and Ukraine and (with the UN) brokered the Black Sea Grain Deal between them in July 2022. This allowed safe passage for shipment of grain from Ukraine, a big exporter, through the Black Sea, whose maritime routes are controlled by Turkey. Ankara also used its leverage over the issue of Nato's expansion to secure concessions from the US and EU.

Other middle powers including India have derived similar benefits from their activist diplomacy in a multipolar world. Indeed, their growing role in shaping geopolitics has led some analysts to describe this as the 'new normal' at a time when the world is in a state of flux. -- Courtesy Dawn

Dealing with the Taliban



Dr Naazir Mahmood

The 1990s saw the emergence of the Taliban and in the 2000s the TTP appeared to be distinct from the Taliban in Afghanistan. In this story we have had to shift our focus from our eastern borders to the western and vice versa; then you see the emergence of some patterns. You put on boots purportedly made to protect your feet but in actuality they may be erasing your footprints. All is fair in love and war, or is it? Then the chief threat starts coming from your own creations, and you end up losing hundreds of thousands of your own people. In over seven decades, nearly all voices of sanity have disappeared—or rather have been made to disappear.

By way of habitat loss, any potential species in society that could stand

up to extremism whether the TTP's or TLP's is either migrated or keeps silent. The insanity of extremism is not new, neither is it spontaneous; it is home-grown and self-nurtured. The Taliban and many other outfits operating now with impunity have been able to adapt and evolve in the past couple of decades. They have been receiving shots of home-made energizers, which promise good performance in time of need. But now the time of need is not controllable and the outfits themselves decide when and where to strike.

From the mujahideen to the Taliban these outfits can claim many achievements, including the disintegration of the Soviet Union and the defeat of the US. The creators of these outfits may also feel elated at the strategy their successive leaders have been following. But at what cost? Look at the plight of the Afghans—and of course Pakistanis themselves. The sky looks overcast for all of them from Kabul and Kalash to Karachi. Just peer down the main thoroughfare leading to the international arena of economic and human develop-

ment, and you don't see us anywhere.

What we see is streets in Afghanistan and Pakistan where stooped men and women beg for a bowl of rice. People in their 70s and 80s are left without care but fed with songs of nationalism and patriotism. What our children get in colleges and schools is not good quality education but an overdose of tales about past victories, which perhaps we never scored. Afghanistan and Pakistan are now tottering across a bridge leading to despotism and destitution. Afghanistan has already reached there and we are on our way; the Taliban and their creators have a lot to do with it.

The dynamic society that we could have had once is now strangled and hollowed out. Afghanistan's path after the Taliban victory two years ago, foreshadows what's coming in Pakistan. The Pyrrhic victory that former prime minister Imran Khan and his facilitators eulogized and welcomed in no uncertain terms has changed the fabric of society in ways both obvious and subtle. The hard-scrabble neighbourhood has sprung up in the past two years

during the Taliban boom, with aging infrastructure and declining economy. The system is strained and the increasing insularity of the Taliban is rubbing off on the youth of Pakistan.

It is a daunting list of failures that has led Pakistan to its sorry state now. No amount of sugar-coating or whitewashing can hide the stark contrast between what is on the ground and what the state wants us to believe. Had there been an incremental pace of reform in defence and foreign policies, Pakistan could also have witnessed corresponding economic and fiscal improvements. The state has scrunched all possibilities of activities and communication in society, other than the ones it approves. Those who have moved out of the country are called for their kin, and the caretaker prime minister says "so what?" with a sombre demeanour.

The youth are indignant and panicked; they feel abandoned and have no education and skills that can underpin their future. But the state is more interested in the housing societies and authorities that dot the outskirts of many of the larger cities in Paki-

stan; while a vast majority of Pakistani people cannot even afford mud constructions of their own, let alone a concrete structure. Just look at the millions that the floods affected not long ago, and ask yourself what gateway the state is providing them. Some of the abandonment of traditional state responsibilities may simply be a function of changing state priorities.

You prioritize backward groups over active citizenry and you get a conservative society devoid of initiative. Our communities have become more communal than inclusive; they suffocate individuality the way the Taliban have been doing in Afghanistan. The Talibanization of society presents a particular challenge that requires a drastic change in state priorities in policies from education and defence to foreign affairs. Just by reviving the memories of past sacrifices and victories—both real and imaginary—we are not heading anywhere. The state has already lost its grip on public imagination and now it is a formidable task to restore it. Cross-border infiltration by militants is in-

creasing by the day and tensions on the borders are a disturbing reality. Just by fighting on the security front, the situation will not change. The state of Pakistan believed that bilateral ties would improve after the Taliban takeover in Afghanistan. Independent observers including this writer had no such hope and kept writing about a possible upsurge in militant activities if the Taliban captured Kabul. Now we see that AfPak relations have become more dysfunctional than they were during the past two decades under the Hamid Karzai and Ashraf-Ghani governments.

The ruling structure in Pakistan has consistently miscalculated its ambitions and the balance is even now out of place. Those who cautioned against nurturing the mujahideen and the Taliban did not get a sympathetic ear from the state as it wanted a favourable dispensation in Afghanistan. Now those expectations have fallen flat and the Taliban takeover in Afghanistan has worsened the situation which some still refuse to acknowledge. -- Courtesy TheNews

Undoing exclusion



Arooj Waheed Dar

Lack of equal opportunities and innovation has suffocated the growth capacity of Pakistan, limiting investment to buying and selling of real estate and dollars by the elite. Inequality of opportunity (IOP) evident across provinces, gender, religion, and the rural-urban spectrum presents itself as a major impediment to growth in Pakistan. This IOP largely stems from poor governance and exclusive institutions that have over time perpetuated the culture of elite capture. It is an endemic situation that mars society by curtailing social mobility, thereby killing all incentive for development.

IOP across gender keeps women at the sidelines, excluding them from work and education prospects. Statistics from the World Bank show that of the 22 million out-of-school children in Pakistan, 12m are girls. Of those going to school, learning outcomes remain poorer for girls compared to boys due to lack of focus. Access to work opportunities also remains disproportionate for women.

The Labour Force Survey (LFS) 2021 shows that female labour force participation stands at a depressing 21.4pc; of this, around 94pc women are employed in the informal sector. Owing to cultural norms, female workforce participation goes down as household unpaid care responsibilities mount. Using the Pakistan Social And Living Standards Measurement Survey 2014-15, we can see that

on average, the number of weekly hours worked by women goes down by approximately 4.5 hours once they become mothers. This translates into widening pay gaps over the years, simultaneously isolating women from leadership positions.

IOP is also blatant across provinces; statistics from ASER 2021 show that learning outcomes remain poorest for Sindh, closely followed by Balochistan. This finding is mirrored in LFS 2021 which shows that 56pc people in Balochistan, and 46pc people in Sindh cannot read a simple sentence in any language with understanding. According to Unicef, 52pc of the poorest children in Sindh (58pc girls) are out of school; meanwhile in Balochistan, 78pc girls are out of school. Within provinces, an urban premium exists that favours those living in urban areas.

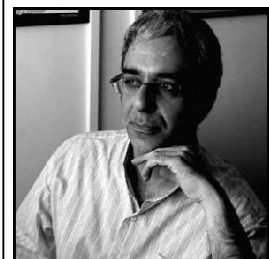
The recent cable car incident at Battagram highlights the hypocrisy of living in a country where on the one hand, inadequate infrastructure in poorer districts puts lives of school-going children at great risk; in contrast, you have cities like Lahore where multiple projects have been aimed at reducing commute time to the motorway. This bifurcation has increased the incidence of rural-urban migration, thereby resulting in a concentration of population in major cities. Using LFS 2021, we can see that around 58pc of all migrants have moved to Punjab in search of better health, education, and employment opportunities.

Favouring certain groups based on circumstances that are beyond one's control is an impediment to growth. It disincentivises individuals from investing in entrepreneurship and human capital formation. In a country where around 31pc of uni-

versity graduates are unemployed, lack of opportunities becomes a major cause of brain drain.

The goal should be to 'enable' marginalised groups, rather than to aid them unsustainably. This includes policies such as incentivising work-from-home models by providing tax breaks to businesses that facilitate it. This will make employment opportunities accessible to women and to persons living in indigenous regions. Remote learning opportunities also need to be created so that equitable education levels can be ensured for all. The biggest challenge in this regard will be to overcome the great digital divide which can be achieved through public-private partnership. Overcoming the digital divide is also crucial to allow us to fully reap the benefits of artificial intelligence, such as for education and health endeavours.

Additionally, financial inclusion needs to be ensured by creating incentives for women to open bank accounts and by making credit facilities readily available for marginalised groups. For this, it is vital to formalise the undocumented sector; however, it should not be done under the purview of raising taxes, but rather to support entrepreneurship by facilitating, counselling, and encouraging new business ventures. Instead of directing tax breaks and subsidies towards the same old cronies, subsidies should be given as a reward for innovation to new and emerging businesses. In conjunction, an impartial mechanism for registration of trademarks and copyrights should be ensured. Lastly, social programmes need to be expanded to ensure decent basic standards of living. In short, inclusivity is key to achieving SDGs by 2030. -- Courtesy Dawn



Zarrar Khuhro

I'm one of those people who scoff at health trends, especially when a new dietary villain is found every other day. That's because I remember when butter was bad for you and the magic bullet solution was touted to be margarine. Then they flipped on that without so much as an 'oops' and then we were told that margarine was the devil's spread and to be avoided. Then it was eggs that humans have eaten for millennia but which were now the devil's droppings and a surefire way to give yourself a heart attack. From full-fat milk to desi ghee, everything that received the alarmist treatment ended up being endorsed as actually good for you, considering the alternatives.

So, when my wife, who devours such news with the same gusto as I devour nihari, sent me an article about the dangers of trans-fatty acids (or trans-fats as they're usually called) my first instinct was to dismiss this as yet more of that 'West-centric wellness eat clean live love pray hippy-dippy' grift that's so virally popular these days.

But, to my infinite regret and a few dozen 'see I told you so's', it turns out that not only are trans-fats as dangerous as they're made out to be, they are also very much a desi problem, and not an upper-class elite desi problem but one that affects the masses more than it does others.

Trans-fats are found in just about everything we like to eat, from deep-fried

Unfriendly fats

street food like samosas to breakfast cereals, bakery goods, cookies, chocolates and processed foods. The main culprit seems to be partially hydrogenated oils like Vanaspati ghee and other refined oils, along with margarine and bakery shortenings, all used in food preparation in Pakistan. In fact, in the WHO's Eastern Mediterranean region, Pakistan accounts for the second highest consumption of trans-fats, amounting to six per cent of our daily energy intake, while the recommended 'safe' level is meant to be less than 1pc.

The consequences are deadly and can be seen all around us. Pakistan has one of the highest incidences of diabetes in the world, with an estimated 27pc of adults suffering from this disease. Then there's heart disease, which is already a top killer in Pakistan, along with obesity and a variety of cancers—all of which are also on the rise across the country, with many going undiagnosed until it's too late.

There's more: take a look at the wall-chalkings in any town or city in Pakistan and you'll see advertisements of treatments for increasing male potency (or 'strength' as the Urdu euphemism puts it) plastered everywhere. It's no surprise then that excessive consumption of saturated fat is also linked to erectile dysfunction and trans-fats in particular are closely linked to male infertility. If that doesn't get your attention, I don't know what will.

The cost isn't just to our health—every incidence of disease means yet more financial burden on those afflicted—this is especially worrisome considering how overburdened our healthcare system is and how stretched household finances are. The medicines required to treat these illnesses are increasing in price and many are already beyond the reach of most people.

Take diabetes alone: if we continue as we are, the number of diabetics in Pakistan will likely reach 62 million by 2045. That would mean a staggering burden on those suffering; note that the International Diabetes Federation estimated that in 2021, the cost of treating diabetes in Pakistan was \$2,640m.

So, what can be done? One approach is of course to spread awareness in the hope of inducing behavioural change, but this can't be the main thrust as most people will continue the way they always have, and consume what they are already consuming, simply out of a lack of access to alternatives.

That leaves legislation and enforcement, and some progress has been made on this front: in 2020 the Pakistan Standards and Quality Control Authority imposed a limit of 5pc on trans-fatty acids in Vanaspati ghee, and then three years later set a limit of 2pc in Vanaspati ghee, margarine, bakery goods, biscuits and rusks etc. However, as always, enforcement is an issue and the industry has also successfully approached the courts to buy time. Moreover, this only covers the organised sector and cannot thus include the vast majority of the sources of trans-fats, such as street food and so on.

I realise that flagging a concern like this at a time of severe and deepening national crisis may seem a bit odd, but this is a literal time bomb that the whole nation is sitting on and, with so many issues, it is a crisis that disproportionately affects those in a lower socioeconomic stratum. The well-to-do not only have access to more information, but also have the fiscal ability to use alternatives. The poor, as usual, are on their own. -- Courtesy Dawn

Governor directs GIT to furnish detail report regarding varsities

PESHAWAR (APP): Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Haji Ghulam Ali has directed the Chairman, Governor Inspection Team (GIT) for furnishing a detailed report regarding the academic programme, financial resources, staff, and number of students in the public sector universities and to present it to him.

He issued these directives during a meeting with the Chairman GIT, Dr Saad Sikandar Khan here in the Governor's House on Monday.

During the meeting, the Chairman GIT informed the Governor regarding the overall performance of the organization, financial & administrative

irregularities in different universities, and inquiries conducted on the complaints filed by the students and general public.

During the meeting, they also discussed matters relating to surplus staff and less number of students in the universities.

Speaking on the occasion, Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa said that offices are sacred trust of the county and nation, saying performing duties with honesty should be the mission of all of us.

He said that the prevailing financial problems of the universities are a matter of concern and that the situation of the public universities is hurting him.



ABBOTTABAD: People standing near an accidental vehicle, on sherwan road as several people sustained serious injuries during the accident due to the over speeding.

Advisor stresses for best project design, durability within limited resources

PESHAWAR (APP): Advisor to the caretaker Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa on Irrigation, Planning, Development, Communication and Works, Dr Syed Sarfaraz Ali while referring to the engineers and technical staff on Monday said the best design and durability of a project within less possible funds should be the prime objective during executing of a project of people welfare.

He said the newly inducted engineers would be provided the necessary training to make their work praiseworthy.

Talking to newly inducted SDOs at a five-day training workshop at the Pakistan Academy for Rural Development (PAR), he said the

engineers who have been imparted training should work as the servants of the people.

He said engineers for the posts were selected through merit as all the newly inducted SDOs have passed their competitive examinations. The capacity of the Irrigation Department would be further boosted with the induction of these successful engineers.

The engineers at the five-day training workshop were imparted training on technical sanctions, procurement, general financial rules, provincial rules of business, office management, official letter writing, central public account rules, vision of the Irrigation Department and project management.

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IG Islamabad neither appeared in LHC nor filed reply despite court's orders

LAHORE (Online): IG police Islamabad neither appeared in Lahore High Court (LHC) nor filed reply despite court's orders in contempt of court case against not safely escorting former Chief Minister (CM) Punjab Chaudhry Pervaiz Elahi back to his residence.

The contempt of court petition filed by Qaisara Elahi wife of Pervaiz Elahi came up for hearing before single bench of LHC led by Justice Chaudhry Waqas Rauf.

DIG Investigation and DIG Operation Lahore appeared in the court.

The police officers filed replies to the contempt of court show cause notices in the court.

IG Islamabad did not appear in the court despite being summoned.

The court remarked it did not deem proper to us that we should summon IG Islamabad through some other way.

The court remarked you should check how IG Islamabad would come.

IG Punjab filed report after getting the matter

investigated under court's orders.

The state counsel told the court SP Imran Aslam investigated the matter. As per report police arrested Pervaiz Elahi as per law. The officers had upheld LHC order fully.

The state counsel requested the court to give time to see the report and replies filed by the two officers.

LHC adjourned the hearing of the case till September 18.

Qaisara Elahi has taken the plea in her petition that LHC accepted bail of Pervaiz Elahi in all cases. Pervaiz Elahi was got released after recovering him from NAB custody.

The court summoned DIG operation and DIG Investigation and gave them written order. The court ordered these police officers to safely escort Pervaiz Elahi back to his residence.

It was further said in the petition that Pervaiz Elahi was lifted in the presence of both of the police officers.

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KARACHI: A large number of workers, heirs of the martyrs, political and social workers and civil society activists gather during condolence ceremony in connection of the 11th anniversary of Baldia factory fire tragedy arranged by National Trade Union Federation (NTUF) held in Karachi.



MULTAN: Caretaker Chief Minister Punjab Mohsin Naqvi presides over the 25th session of Punjab cabinet South Punjab Secretariat Multan.

Caretaker Punjab cabinet decides free journeying for students, senior citizens

Independent Report
MULTAN: Caretaker Punjab cabinet in its first-ever meeting in the history of the city on Monday extended a big relief to free metro and orange line train services for students, senior citizens and differently-abled people.

The notification of the decision was also issued soon after the meeting.

Chaired by Punjab caretaker Chief Minister, Mohsin Naqvi, the meeting among others was attended by ministers, advisors,

chief secretary, IGP, ACS South Punjab and secretaries.

The cabinet also approved Rs 32,000 as minimum wages for labourers and sanctioned recommendations of a committee on admission policy to public medical and dental colleges 2023-24.

It gave the go-ahead to constitute a cabinet committee to devise a policy to tackle smog.

The CM ordered to initiate of effective steps to implement the policy on smog.

The cabinet decided to set up an endowment fund with Rs one billion for journalists and their families.

For the School Adoption Programme, it decided to extend the school landscape in the province besides extension in contractual employees of Violence Against Women Centres (VAWC) in Multan.

The appointment of the Chairman and members for the LDA commission was also approved in addition to handing over Haji Abdul Qayyum

teaching hospital Sahiwal control from SHC&ME to the P&SHC department.

It also approved names for presidential and Qaid-i-Azam Police medals.

The cabinet in its 25th meeting decided to establish Mental Health Authority under the Punjab Mental Health Amended Act 2014. Earlier, the CM was briefed about the development and road network projects of South Punjab while he directed the department concerned to accomplish these at the earliest.



KARACHI: Caretaker CM Sindh Maqbool Baqar talking to media persons after laying floral wreath at the mausoleum of the founder of Nation Quaid-i-Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah to mark his death anniversary as The 75th death anniversary of Quaid-i-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah was observed throughout the country with reverence and solemnity.

CM for quality treatment to poor kid with heart outside chest

MUZAFFARGARH (APP): Muzaffargarh DHQ Hospital witnessed the birth of a child having a heart outside of the chest and Chief Minister Punjab Mohsin Naqvi ordered quality treatment for the infant.

The infant, whose heart astonishingly protruded from its tiny chest naturally, left the medical staff utterly bewildered. Muhammad Qasim, the father of the kid, found himself in a deeply distressing situation, lacking the resources required to ensure the critical medical care needed for his newborn. In a desperate bid to save his beloved child, Muhammad Qasim was urgently referred to a hospital in Multan, seeking emergency medical attention.

NATCO bus plunges into ravine in Kohistan kills one, injures 43

KOHIKISTAN (APP): At least one passenger died and 43 others were injured when a tragic bus accident occurred at Shorghar Lower Kohistan as a Northern Areas Transport Company (NATCO) bus fell into a deep gorge due to certain reasons.

Rescue 1122 Lower Kohistan and local law enforcement agencies swiftly provided medical assistance to all injured individuals at the accident site. Subsequently, they were transferred to the Basham Hospital for further treatment and later most of the injured passengers were shifted to Ayub Medical Complex (AMC) Abbottabad.

The ill-fated bus was en route from Gilgit to Islamabad when the accident occurred. Authorities are working diligently to manage the situation and provide necessary support to the victims and their families.

Due to the substantial number of injured, Rescue 1122 requested additional ambulance services in Lower Kohistan to ensure prompt medical attention for all those affected.

Initial reports indicate that the accident has resulted in injuries to approximately 40 to 43 individuals in Lower Kohistan.

Minor girl drowns in canal

FAISALABAD (APP): A minor girl drowned in Gugera Branch Canal in the area of Jaranwala Sadar police station.

Rescue-1122 spokesman said here on Monday that three-year-old Sonia Yousuf fell into the Gugera Branch Canal near Punj Pulla on Nankana Road and drowned.

Receiving information, divers of Rescue 1122 rushed to the spot and fished out the corpse from the canal which was later on handed over to her relatives for burial after completing necessary formalities, he added.

ANF recovers 70 kg drugs; nets 11 accused

RAWALPINDI (APP): Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) while conducting 11 operations across the country managed to recover over 70 kg drugs and arrested 11 accused, said an ANF Headquarters spokesman here on Monday. He informed that over 600 grams Ice drug concealed in two water coolers was recovered from a parcel reached at a private cargo office in Jhelum. The parcel was sent from Peshawar.

2.2 kg hashish was recovered from a local

CM Baqar says: Govt promotes tech improvements, upgradation to improve agriculture sector

KARACHI (INP): Caretaker Sindh Chief Minister Justice (ret) Maqbool Baqar has said that his priority is centered on promoting continuous technological improvements and upgradation to increase the competitiveness of the agriculture sector, including the sugar industry.

He said that the Government of Pakistan recently established a high-powered 'Special Investment Facilitation Council' to attract investments from Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries in the

fields of Defence, Agriculture, Minerals, IT, and Energy.

The caretaker CM said that as a member of SIFC's Apex Committee, he was determined to focus on channeling investments to boost the productivity and competitiveness of Sindh's agriculture sector, including the sugar industry. He is also a firm believer in fostering cross-sectoral collaborations for improving the lives of our population which has been struggling with soaring inflation in a stagnant economy.

This he said while speaking at the Inauguration Session of the 55th Annual Convention of Pakistan Society of Sugar Technologists organized at a local hotel. The CM was welcomed by Mr. Zahid Mahmood Qureshi President of Pakistan Society of Sugar Technologists (PSST) Mr. Zahid Qureshi, sugar industry and professional experts.

He said that the PSST was founded for the overarching purpose of sharing and disseminating knowledge among sugar technologists. He appreciated the Society for conducting workshops.

KPC CM condemns blast on FC vehicle

PESHAWAR (APP): Caretaker Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Muhammad Azam on Monday strongly condemned the explosion near the vehicle of the FC force on Warsak Road and termed it a cowardly attack by anti-state elements. In his message, the Chief Minister expressed his best wishes for the recovery of the blast victims and directed the hospital.

PDMA relief activities underway in flood-hit areas

LAHORE (APP): Provincial Disaster Management Authority (PDMA) Director General Imran Qureshi said on Monday that relief measures were going on in the flood affected areas of the province.

In a statement, he said more than 595 villages were affected by the flood in Sutlej River, out of which routine life was completely restored in 145 villages.

He informed that more than 1,000 rescue personnel participated in round-the-clock relief operations, adding that people were transferred to safer places by 236 boats in the affected districts.

The DG elaborated that 106 medical camps were set up to provide medical facilities to the affectees. Around 16

Several Karachi SHOs blacklisted

KARACHI (INP): In the wake of significant changes within the Sindh Police, the authorities decided to blacklist over 65 Station House officers (SHOs) from different police stations across Karachi.

According to the details, lists have been prepared at the Karachi Police Headquarters where the performance of all officers and personnel in each district has been reviewed.

After the review of the performance report, the higher authorities decided to blacklist over 65 police station chiefs across all three zones in Karachi.

Provision of interest free loan to judges: LHC directs petitioner to file petition again with attested documents

LAHORE (Online): Petition filed against approval of interest free loan of Rs 360 million for 11 judges of high court came up for hearing in Lahore High Court (LHC) Monday.

The court directed the petitioner to file the petition again after removing the objections.

Justice Shams Mehmood Mirza heard the petition filed by Mashkoor Hussain.

Chief secretary, secretary finance and others have been made respondents.

Nadeem Sarwar

HYDERABAD: HESCO workers busy in disconnection of illegal connections in Latifabad.



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HYDERABAD: Leaders and workers of HDA Labor Union (CBA) hold a sit in protest after suspend water supply from the filter plants at Jamshoro road filter plant against non-payment of their salaries and pensions as water supply is suspended in Qasimabad and Latifabad area of the City.



HYDERABAD: Leaders and workers of HDA Labor Union (CBA) hold a sit in protest after suspend water supply from the filter plants at Jamshoro road filter plant against non-payment of their salaries and pensions as water supply is suspended in Qasimabad and Latifabad area of the City.

Governor's IT Initiative Programme set to be launched for promising youth today, announces Kakar

Independent Report
 QUETTA: The Governor Balochistan, Malik Abdul Wali Khan Kakar has said that it has been his personal desire and endeavor to take concrete steps for making the bright future of new generation safe. Moreover, we have also paid full attention on how our youth may create potential of leading life as successful professional, IT expert, civil engineer, researcher or scientist.

The Governor said that the modern science and technology made it possible in the present fast and developed era of 21st century that the youth can earn thousands of dollars on the daily basis while sitting at their homes with quite minor mental work.

In the same manner, we can ensure building of bright future keeping in view the requirements of artificial intelligence and robotic technology.

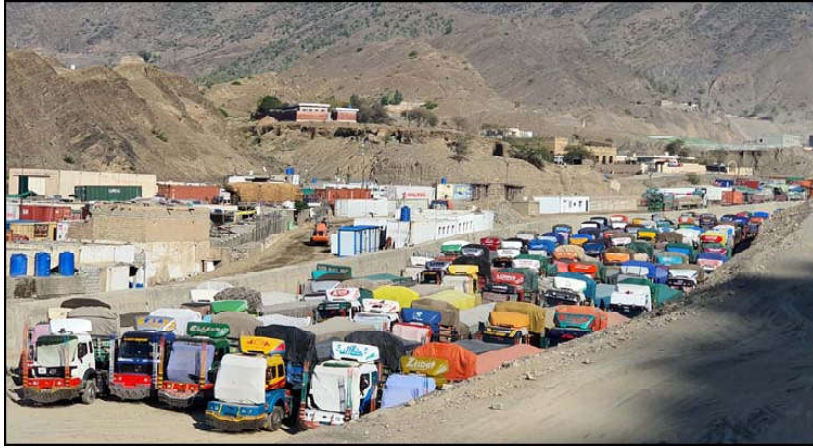
This and similar other views were expressed by the Governor Balochistan in a message issued especially for youth of the province. The Governor said that this is a fact that skilled person can't remain dependent on anyone and on the other hand, he can benefit his family and other people of the society.

He said that the artificial intelligence is effecting

economy, daily life and human behaviours, therefore, it is necessary that we may harmonize with the modern requirements of ever changing world. The Governor stressed that we have to be familiar with the modern information technology in order to meet the challenges of the world. The Governor announced to conduct the course of modern information technology to the unemployed youngsters.



QUETTA: Muhammad Khalid Jamali, Nazim Hussain Wardag, Asif Abbasi and Nasir Ali Jamali meeting with caretaker Chief Minister Mir Ali Mardan Khan Domki.



LANDIKOTAL: A large numbers of loaded vehicles standing in a queue as they are waiting for the reopening of Pak Afghan Torkham Border, in Landikotal.

Customs seize 2600 parcels of sugar from various vehicles

Independent Report
 QUETTA: The Pakistan Customs seized 2600 parcels of sugar from different vehicles during the routine checking near Ziarat cross and Lak pass area on Monday.

Lak pass area of Mastung. The Customs staff impounded the vehicles and started action against the alleged smugglers.

Further investigations are in progress. It may be mentioned here that Pakistan Customs and other concerned departments have launched massive campaign against smuggling and hoarding of the sugar and Urea fertilizer in the province as elsewhere in the country.

According to the spokesman of Customs, the parcels of sugar weighing 1,30,000 kilogram of sugar were seized from two trucks and different other vehicles being smuggled on the Quetta-Zhob route and

Ejaz Qureshi re-elected as President of Asian Ombudsman Association

ISLAMABAD (APP): Wafaqi Mohtasib Ejaz Ahmad Qureshi was re-elected unopposed as President of the Asian Ombudsman Association (AOA) at Kazan (Republic of Tatarstan) on Monday.

pan, Korea, Tatarstan and Turkiye were elected as members of the Board of Directors, a press release issued by the Ombudsman Office here said.

Following his election, Ejaz Ahmad Qureshi thanked the General Assembly for expressing confidence and trust in Pakistan's contribution in promoting the cause of ombudsmanship and the ultimate goals of good governance and the rule of law in Asia and beyond.

The elections to the various positions in the AOA Board of Directors were held in the 17th Meeting of the General Assembly. In addition to the election of Ejaz Ahmad Qureshi as AOA President, the General Assembly elected Heads of Ombudsman Institutions in Azerbaijan, Hong Kong and Iran as Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer of the Association respectively.

Heads of Ombudsman Institutions in China, Ja-

The Asian Ombudsman Association is a major non-political, independent and professional body of international character representing more than two thirds of the world population.



PESHAWAR: Pakistani security officers examine a damaged vehicle at the site of a roadside bombing in Peshawar.

Action continues against Hawala & Hundi: Instance action continues against hoarders of sugar; nine arrested in Quetta, says Commissioner

Independent Report
 QUETTA: The Commissioner Quetta Division, Muhammad Hamza Shafiqat has stated that instant action is being taken against those involved in profiteering and hoarding of sugar in the metropolis.

of Urea fertilizer were seized during the crackdown so far, he mentioned adding that nine persons were also arrested on the charges of hoarding.

He said that the sugar seized during the raids is being sold at the official rate. He informed that the sugar is being sold at Rs. 160 per kilogram in the open market, which otherwise, had jumped to over Rs. 220 per KG last week.

While addressing an urgent press conference at his office on Monday, the Commissioner said that the crackdown against hoarders is continued without any discrimination, and most of the raids have been conducted in Kuchlak and Sariab areas.

To a query, the Commissioner also told that action is also being taken against those doing the illegal business of hawala and hundi in Quetta. He said that FIA is engaged in crackdown against the

FIA raids illegal Money Exchange Dealer

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Investigation Agency's commercial banking circle on Monday, in continuation of the ongoing campaign against the hoarding of foreign currency, the Federal Investigation Agency's commercial banking circle raided illegal money exchange dealers in Rawalpindi and arrested four people.

The team led by Assistant Director Mehak Gul raised para traders in Rawalpindi and arrested four accused involved in illegal currency exchange businesses without having a license.

The FIA team registered a case under the Foreign Exchange Regulation Act against Abdur Rahman Parach, Bilal Kaleem, Tauseef Ahmad, and Muhammad Naveed.

The accused failed to satisfy the team on the recovered foreign currency worth 3 million.

Govt refutes reports about non-provision of financial support to PIA

ISLAMABAD (Online): The reports appearing in a section of media regarding non-provision of financial support to PIA by the government are inaccurate and misleading. Government of Pakistan has supported the national airline in the past and will continue to do so in the future as well.

The Ministry of Finance and Ministry of Aviation are fully assisting PIA in arranging the finances required for its operational requirements. PIA, has only recently negotiated fresh credit facilities from financial institutions under the GoP guarantee limit provided to the airline by the Government of Pakistan. These credit facilities will help PIA to pay any overdue amounts.

Energy Minister says: New electricity tariff to be introduced before Oct 31

KARACHI (INP): Caretaker Federal Minister for Energy, Power and Petroleum Muhammad Ali announced on Monday that the revised electricity tariff would be introduced before October 31. While addressing a press conference alongside Sindh Governor Kamran Tessori, Caretaker Energy Minister Muhammad Ali said the government is taking indiscriminate action against the electricity and gas thieves.

"We are making efforts to control everything. We will try to control the electricity tariff and provide low-cost power to industries from October 31. The inflated bills were received due to electricity theft, whereas, the tariff was hiked due to the increase in USD price."

The energy minister said that it is impossible to amend the previous agreements, however, the government would find a solution without violating the terms. He vowed that low-cost electricity would be provided to the industries in the winter season.

He admitted that no reduction was made to the prices of solar equipment, however, the government would formulate a strategy to promote solarisation.

Minister Muhammad Ali said the government is taking indiscriminate action against the electricity and gas thieves.

"We are making efforts to control everything. We will try to control the electricity tariff and provide low-cost power to industries from October 31. The inflated bills were received due to electricity theft, whereas, the tariff was hiked due to the increase in USD price."

"The [caretaker] government has a good team which would manage to

provide relief to the masses within the IMF agreement. The USD price has dropped below Rs300 and good days are not so far."

On Thursday, Caretaker Minister for Information and Broadcasting Murtaza Solangi said consultation with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) was underway for the relief in electricity bills.

Talking to a private television channel, the minister said some final decisions for the purpose were taken during the last meeting of the Cabinet presided over by Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar the other day.

He said the prime minister had directed the relevant stakeholders to hold a consultation with the IMF which was underway.

Training Courses completed for New Gwadar Int'l Airport

GWADAR (INP): As skilled manpower is a key prerequisite to operate New Gwadar International Airport (NGIA), which is highly likely to be operational in September, China has completed "Training Courses" for government officials.

It is the first of its kind human resource training courses aiming to train public office holders in a bid to help them hone their technical, administrative and managerial expertise.

A Civil Aviation Authority official told Gwadar Pro, the Government of Pakistan did not bear any

President condoles with family of soldiers martyred

ISLAMABAD (APP): President Dr Arif Alvi on Friday contacted the family members of the soldiers martyred in Jani Khel suicide attack via telephone and offered condolences to them.

During the telephonic conversation, the president paid rich tribute to the martyrs who sacrificed their lives for the sake of the country's security, said a press release issued by the President House press wing.

President Alvi shared sympathies with the family members of Naeb Subedar Sanoober Ali, Haladar Aftab Ahmed, and Havaldar Muhammad Arif.

He further said that on July 27, former Prime Minister Shahbaz Sharif officially inaugurated major component of NGIA, a high-priority project of CPEC, in a watershed moment of the tenth anniversary of Belt and Road Initiative (BRI).



ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Turkmenistan H.E. Mr. Atadjan Movlamov called on Minister for Finance and Economic Affairs and Privatization Dr. Shamshad Akhtar.

Australian envoy lauds Pak efforts for regional security & Afghan peace

ISLAMABAD (APP): Australian High Commissioner, Neil Hawkins called on Minister for Defence Lieutenant General @ Anwar Ali Hyder at the Ministry of Defence and appreciated Pakistan's efforts in maintaining regional peace and security, especially in the Afghanistan peace process.

whereas both the dignitaries discussed peace and security in regional and global contexts, a news release said.

Bilateral cooperation avenues in fields of counterterrorism and economics, also came under discussion. Pointing out enormous scope for strengthening and further cementing bilateral defence ties, both sides assured of taking specific practical steps in this regard.

Sustainable climate resilient health systems urged

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Minister for Health Dr Nadeem Jan on Monday said that there is a need to develop sustainable and climate-resilient health systems in the country.

British High Commission. The minister said that the government of Pakistan has developed a framework of action highlighting the agenda and objectives of COP-26.

He was presiding over a consultation initiated by the Ministry of National Health Services, Regulations and Coordination with the support of the

climate crisis and the health of citizens are interlinked and have many of the same solutions, especially when it comes to strengthening health systems.

Court orders to arrange Imran Khan conversation with his sons till Sep 15

ISLAMABAD (Online): The contempt of court plea against Superintendent Attock jail came up for hearing before special court established under official secret act.

Judge Abul Hasnat Zulqarnain heard the petition.

The court ordered to arrange the telephonic conversation of Imran Khan with his sons till September 15.

The court sought implementation report till September 15.

The court ordered to ensure implementation of its orders at every cost.

Imran Khan had filed contempt of court plea against superintendent Attock jail.

Aleema Khan sister of PTI chairman Imran Khan also reached the court. She said Chairman PTI telephonic conversation is not being arranged with his sons.

Gohar takes no salary, bears all official expenses

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Federal Minister for Commerce and Industry, Dr. Gohar Ejaz has announced that he will not accept any remuneration for his services.

"In an extraordinary act of selflessness and dedication, the minister has forgone his salary and bears all expenses related to his official duties, including travel, meals and office hita sessions," said a press release issued by the Ministry of Commerce on Monday.

Upon assuming the office, Dr Ejaz also donated one year of income from his personal business for the nation's improvement, a press release added.

Torkham border closure prolongs as authorities fail to sort out clash

KHYBER (INP): Torkham border could not be opened for the general public and business activities on the sixth consecutive day on Sunday as Pakistani and Afghan border security officials could not sort out the solution.

Sources said both sides met after an exchange of fire on Wednesday last which led to closure of the border.

Khyber Rifles Commandant Asim Kiyani, Lt Col Ahmad Mujtaba of Chitral Scouts, Lt Col Zainul Abideen and Maj Shahabuddin led Pakistan and Hafiz Asmatullah Yaqoobi from Gumrak (Customs), Qari Meraj of the border security forces, and Mulaevi Takal represented Afghanistan in the meeting.

Both sides discussed the border security situation and the Afghan officials alleged that Pakistani border forces started firing on Sept 6 while the establishment of new security post and old one was underway. The Afghan side dispelled the charges that they had started the firing.

Following agreements signed by both sides, the Afghanistan was bound to update Pakistan regarding establishment of new structure within a range of one hundred metres of the border.

The Pakistan officials said they had no objection to the rebuilding of old post or security building.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA) said that the closure of the Torkham crossing and fir



ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Prime Minister, Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar exchanging views with Najib Benhassaine, Country Director World Bank during meeting held in Islamabad.

PHE shifted 19 tube wells on solar system for supplying water to people in Quetta

QUETTA (APP): Public Health Engineer (PHE) Department's Xen Engineering Irfan Gichki on Monday said that the PHE department has shifted 19 tube wells to solar system while 21 more have been written to the department for transfer them to Solar.

He said that currently PHE has 117 community schemes out of which 100 are active and 17 are inactive.

He expressed these views while talking to journalists, Syed Jahangir Shah was also present on this occasion.

The official said that the PHE department is facing some difficulties due to high electricity bills while it is planned to shift all the tube wells to solar system in a phased manner in order to reduce burden of bills.

Irfan Gichki said that provision of clean drinking water to the people is among the priorities of the caretaker provincial government, on the special instructions of Provincial Minister PHE Ejaz Jafar, all available resources are being utilized to activate the inactive tube wells under

the control of PHE. He said that present PHE department has 71 departmental schemes out of which 4 are inactive was trying to activate them for facilitating of supply water to people.

He said that currently PHE has 117 community schemes out of which 100 are active and 17 are inactive.

He said that if the people have any complaints regarding the PHE department, they can contact him directly.



Chairman Gwadar Port handing over keys of coaster and van to Executive Director Pak-China Vocational Institute Gwadar University.

QESCO registered cases in respective police stations against 387 electricity thieves

QUETTA (APP): On the direction of the Government of Pakistan and the Ministry of Energy (Power Division), Quetta Electric Supply Company (QESCO) is engaged in operations against electricity thieves and defaulters in various operation circles in cooperation with the district administration and police throughout the province.

According to QESCO, so far, applications have been sent to the relevant police stations for registering cases against 387 electricity thieves in all areas of the province so that further legal action can be taken against them.

Similarly, operations were also carried out in the provincial capital Quetta city on Kirani Road, Sabzal Road, Hazarganji, Eastern

At least 37 people were arrested after disconnecting the illegal connections and their electronic devices were also taken into custody, out of which FIR has been registered against 35 thieves.

Apart from this, meters of various commercial plazas and domestic connections were also checked in the operation while one shop in Quetta Commercial Center, one shop in Pashtunabad and two petrol pumps in the city were also sealed for electricity theft.

The connections of the defaulters are also being disconnected.



QUETTA: Caretaker Minister for Sports and Culture Nawabzada Jamal Raisani expressing his views during a ceremony regarding Digital Influencer.