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PM Shahbaz says

Terrorism trans-national threat, instrumentalised by enemies to stymie Pak progress, development

Chairs a high level emergency meeting; Orders to conduct joint investigation of Besham terrorist attack; Army vows to take all-out measures for safety of Chinese citizens in Pakistan; COAS reiterates the resolve of armed forces to eliminate the scourge of terrorism afflicting the country

ISLAMABAD, (APP): Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Wednesday instructed to conduct a thorough joint investigation of the Besham terrorist attack on Chinese nationals working on Dasu Hydel Power Project, utilizing all resources of the state.

The prime minister offering deepest condolences to the families of the innocent victims of the attack assured that the perpetrators of this barbaric act would be brought to justice swiftly.

Chairing a high level emergency meeting in the aftermath of Besham terrorist attack on Chinese nationals, the prime minister appreciated the alacrity

with which law enforcement agencies and locals responded to the attack, saving many precious lives which could have been lost. The meeting was attended by the Federal Ministers, Chief of the Army Staff, Chief Ministers, Chief Secretaries and Inspector Generals of Police of respective provinces, a PM Office press release said.

The meeting discussed in detail the heinous attack on innocent civilians working on a development project, meant to contribute to energy and water security of Pakistan.

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif underscored the enduring bond of brotherhood between the people of Pakistan and

China and conveyed that the whole nation was saddened by the loss of Chinese lives.

He stated, "Terrorism is a trans-national threat that has been instrumentalized by the enemies of Pakistan to stymie Pakistan's progress and development. The acts targeting Pakistan-China friendship are particularly aimed at creating mistrust between the two iron brothers". Participants of the meeting expressed resolute commitment to completely rooting out terrorism from this country.

The participants expressed serious concerns over sanctuaries available

to terrorists across the borders and emphasized upon the need for a regional approach for countering terrorism.

During the meeting, the COAS reiterated the resolve of armed forces to eliminate the scourge of terrorism afflicting the country. COAS stated that the nation had steadfastly fought the war on terror for the last two decades and had defeated the nefarious designs of Pakistan's adversaries.

Noting the recent surge in terrorist incidents, COAS remarked that the enemies of Pakistan had once again underestimated the resilience and grit of the

State and the people of Pakistan.

He said, "we shall fight terrorism till every terrorist casting an evil eye on Pakistan, its people and their guests, is eliminated; we shall not leave any stone unturned to ensure that every foreign citizen, especially the Chinese nationals, contributing to the prosperity of Pakistan, is safe and secure in Pakistan. We shall fight terrorism with all our might, to the very end." The meeting concluded with the participants reiterating resolve to comprehensively combat terrorism employing all resources available to the state.



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif chairs a high level security meeting.

Pace of work expedited on Gwadar Safe City Project: Proposed SOPs of Interior Ministry being implemented strictly for establishing peace, says CM

Independent Report

QUETTA: The Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Sarfraz Ahmed Bugti has stated the proposed standard operating procedures are being implemented strictly for establishing peace in the province. This is the reason that the intensity of loss remained less in the incidents of terrorism occurred in the province last week.

While on the other hand, the speed of work has been expedited on the Gwadar Safe city project.

The Chief Minister was addressing the meeting through video link regarding security of the Chinese nationals held with Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif in Islamabad

on Wednesday.

The Chief Secretary Balochistan, Shakeel Qadir Khan, Principal Secretary to Chief Minister, Imran Zarkoon, Additional Chief Secretary for Home, Zahid Saleem and Inspector General of Police, Abdul Khaliq Sheikh were also present on the occasion.

The Chief Minister informed the meeting about a total of 892 Chinese nationals are working in seven different projects under China-Pakistan Economic Corridor in Balochistan.

However, some other Chinese are also working who came through different private companies in the province, he added.

For security of the Chinese nationals, a total of

5690 personnel of the security forces are deployed, he further informed.

The standard of security is rightly according to the SOPs proposed by the Ministry of Interior, he explained.

However, there is a need to enhance the professional capacity of the CTD for effectively dealing the menace of terrorism.

He said that war against terrorism is not of anyone but it has to be fought by all of us together.

The Chief Minister also mentioned that the SOPs of Interior Ministry would continue to be reviewed fortnightly, in light of which the decisions would be made for improving security further.



ISLAMABAD: President Asif Ali Zardari meeting with the Ambassador of the People's Republic of China, Mr Jiang Zaidong, to offer his condolences over the killing of Chinese citizens in Bisham, at the Chinese Embassy.

Visits Chinese Embassy 'Shangla attack criminals will be brought to justice', President assures Chinese envoy

ISLAMABAD (APP): President Asif Ali Zardari on Wednesday visited the Embassy of People's Republic of China and offered condolences, on behalf of the Government and people of Pakistan, over the killing of Chinese citizens in a terrorist attack in Bisham.

He strongly condemned yesterday's terrorist attack, saying that the Pakistani nation shared the grief of the Chinese people.

He said that the people of Pakistan stood in solidarity with the Chinese people in this hour of grief.

Upon his arrival, the president was received by Ambassador of the People's Republic of China to Pakistan Jiang Zaidong. The Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs was also present on the occasion, President Secretariat Press Wing said in a press release.

During the meeting, the president said that enemies in the region couldn't accept the fact that Pakistan and

China were further strengthening their bilateral ties.

He assured the Chinese ambassador that the criminals involved in the gruesome act would be apprehended and brought to justice. He further said that all necessary measures would be taken to ensure the security of the Chinese citizens working on various projects in Pakistan.

The Chinese ambassador thanked the president for personally visiting the embassy to offer condolences.

He appreciated that Pakistanis from all walks of life had condemned the terrorist attack.

Jiang Zaidong highlighted that Chinese workers had made outstanding contributions towards Pakistan's socio-economic development. He said that terrorists were enemies of humanity and needed to be hunted down for targeting innocent people.

Acting Governor visits DHQ Hospital Chaman: Negligence & carelessness not to be tolerated in healthcare sector, asserts Achakzai

Independent Report

QUETTA: The acting Governor Balochistan and Speaker Provincial Assembly, (Retd) Abdul Khaliq Achakzai visited the District Headquarter Hospital Chaman on Wednesday.

The Deputy Commissioner Chaman, Captain (Retd) Raja Athar Abbas and other high ups were also present. The District Health Officer Chaman, Dr. Aimal Mandokhail and Medical Superintendent of the Hospital, Dr. Abdul Rasheed Nasar briefed the visiting acting Governor about the overall functioning and services of the hospital.

During the briefing, it was informed that hardships are being faced in the operation theatre due to the on-going long time power load shedding. It was also informed that some 120 posts are lying vacant after upgradation of the DHQ Hospital, which is causing shortage of staff there. He was informed that the new posts have been given to the Abdul

Rehmanzai district Killa Abdullah. Similarly, the medicines have also been distributed among the two districts.

While speaking on the occasion, acting Governor said that negligence and carelessness would not be tolerated in duties.

He on the occasion expressed anger over allotment of the quarters allocated for the out of district districts to the local staff. He also issued directives to advertise the vacant posts of night watchmen to meet their shortage in the hospital.

Meanwhile, the acting Governor visited the mother child health center established in the old media hospital. Speaking to the media persons, Abdul Khaliq Achakzai said that it is priority of the government to provide basic health and other facilities to the people.

He said that he has directed to the concerned high ups that there should be no hurdle in provision of better health facilities to the masses.

All possible steps to be taken to root out scourge of terrorism: Tarar

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Attaulah Tarar on Wednesday reiterated the commitment of the government that all possible steps would be taken to root out the scourge of terrorism from the soil of the motherland.

Addressing a press conference after a high level meeting on security chaired by Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, He said that Prime Minister expressed the firm re-



solve to eliminate terrorism and make Pakistan a peaceful state.

Tarar said that all the participants of the meeting were on the same page regarding ensuring security for all. He said today's high level meeting was attended by Federal Ministers, Chief of Army Staff, Chief Ministers of all four provinces, Chief Secretaries, Inspector Generals of the provinces, Chief Secretaries and IGs of Azad Kashmir and Gilgit-Baltistan. Attaulah Tarar said that the meeting had the consensus that an integrated strategy should be adopted to wipe out terrorism from this country.

"A message of unity was given to the nation today that all units are on the same page with the Federation", he informed the media. All were on the same page on the integrity and national interest of Pakistan, he said adding, "We know how to defend ourselves and our old friends".

20 candidates withdraw nomination papers from Senate elections

Independent Report

QUETTA: In all 20 candidates have withdrawn their nomination papers from the Senate elections in Balochistan.

According to the data shared by the spokesman of Provincial Election Commissioner, eight candidates withdrew their papers from general seats of Senate from the province.

Similarly, seven candidates withdrew papers from the seats allocated for technocrats in the Senate from Balochistan while five candidates announced to withdraw their candidatures from the seats allocated for women in the senate.

candidates are in the competition run for 11 seats of Senate from the province.

Now at the outset, eight candidates are in the competition run for seven general seats of Senate while three candidates are in run for two seats of technocrats.

For women, two candidates are contesting elections for the even number of seats allocated for the same category. With this, Rahat Jamali of PML-N and Husna Bibi of PPP are expected to be declared successful unopposed. The final list of candidates would be issued today.

The election on 11 seats of Senate is scheduled to be held on April 2, 2024.

No attempt to undermine China-Pakistan cooperation will succeed: Jian

BEIJING (APP): China has categorically stated that no attempt to undermine China-Pakistan cooperation will succeed.

During regular news briefing in Beijing, in response to a question about a terrorist attack causing casualties of five Chinese citizens in Pakistan, spokesperson foreign ministry Lin Jian said China opposes all forms of terrorism, firmly supports Pakistan in fighting terrorism.

He said China will work with Pakistan with even stronger commitment to do everything possible to protect the safety and security of Chinese personnel, projects and institutions in Pakistan.

CM grieved over martyrdom of Levies officer in Pishin

Independent Report

QUETTA: The Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Sarfraz Ahmed Bugti has expressed grief and sorrow over the martyrdom of an officer of Levies force in Pishin.

In an official statement issued here on Wednesday, the Chief Minister said that the Levies Risaldar embraced martyrdom while performing duty. He paid homage to the martyr Risaldar and prayed for early recovery of those injured in the terrorism incident.



CHAMAN: Acting Governor Balochistan & Speaker Balochistan Assembly Captain (retd) Abdul Khaliq Achakzai visiting new DHQ Hospital

US warns Pakistan of sanctions risk over Iran gas pipeline project

Independent Report

WASHINGTON (INP): The United States has declared that it does not support the Pakistan-Iran gas pipeline project going forward and cautioned Islamabad about the risk of sanctions in doing business with Tehran.

The Pakistan-Iran gas pipeline, known as the Peace Pipeline, is a long-term project between Tehran and Islamabad, and has faced delays and funding challenges for several years.

Pakistan and Iran had signed a five-year trade plan in August 2023 and set a bilateral trade target at \$5 billion. Petroleum Minister Musadik Malik said this week that his country was seeking a US sanctions

waiver for the gas pipeline from Iran.

During his daily news briefing in Washington on Tuesday, State Department spokesman Matthew Miller said "We always advise everyone that doing business with Iran runs the risk of touching upon and coming in contact with our sanctions, and would advise everyone to consider that very carefully."

"We do not support this pipeline going forward," the spokesman added, saying that Donald Lu, the State Department's top official for South and Central Asia, had said as much to a congressional panel last week.

Washington has condemned a suicide bombing

that killed five Chinese nationals working on a dam project in Pakistan, saying no country should have to suffer "acts of terror."

"We condemn the attack on a convoy of PRC [People's Republic of China] engineers in Pakistan," Matthew Miller said and added

"We are deeply saddened by the loss of life and injuries sustained, and share our heartfelt condolences with those affected by the attack. The Pakistani people have suffered greatly at the hands of terrorists, and I'll note that PRC nationals in Pakistan have also been the victims of terrorist attacks, and no country should suffer the acts of terror."

Govt announces to enforce Education emergency in Balochistan

Independent Report

QUETTA: The Government of Balochistan has announced to enforce education policy in the province.

According to an official notification issued here, all district education officers, headmasters and senior teachers would remain present at their duties places all over the province.

Under the education emergency, no one would leave the duty station without the prior intimation.

Levis official killed, 3 injured in Pishin operation against terrorists

Independent Report

QUETTA (APP): An official of the Levies officials was killed and three other personnel suffered critical injuries on Wednesday after the terrorists opened fire at the raiding party of Forces in Pishin district of Balochistan.

"Levis Force Risaldar Hameedullah died instantly while three other personnel of the Levies Force received bullet shots during an operation carried out against the terrorists at Kili Manzari of Pishin district's Harmazai Tehsil, Deputy Commissioner Pishin Juma Dad Mandokhail said.

The operation was launched, on a tip-off

against Dad Mohammad who along with other accomplices was hiding in a house near Inayatullah Khan Pump. Instead, of surrendering to the Law enforcement agencies, the terrorists opened fire at them. As a result, Levy Risaldar died on the spot and three personnel suffered bullet shots.

The official sources said, the terrorists left their black colour saloon car and ran away towards Killa Abdullah District.

Soon after the incident, more contingent of LEAs were called to launch a combing operation against the fleeing terrorists.

Daily Voice of Masses Independent

New terror wave

A string of deadly terrorist attacks over the past few days — with the bombing in KP's Bisham area on Tuesday being the latest atrocity — drives home the grim point that Pakistan is in the midst of a multidimensional terrorist insurgency. From the coast and interior of Balochistan to the rugged mountains of the north, violence is occurring with alarming frequency. While most of the victims thus far have been civil and military security personnel, the Bisham attack targeted Chinese nationals. According to officials, at least six people were killed in what has been termed a suicide bombing — five of them Chinese. The foreigners were en route to the Dasu power project from Islamabad when an explosives-laden car smashed into their vehicle.

Meanwhile in Turbat, Baloch separatist militants attacked the PNS Siddique naval base on Monday night. An FC trooper was martyred in the incident. Last week, security forces had thwarted a terrorist attack, also carried out by Baloch militants, on the Gwadar Port Authority Complex. At the time of writing, no group had claimed responsibility for the Bisham bombing. In the past, both Baloch militants and religiously inspired fighters have targeted Chinese interests in the country. An ISPR statement has identified "certain foreign elements" as being responsible for the latest wave of terrorism, while the Foreign Office has said "enemies of Pakistan-China friendship" are behind the violence. Certainly, both the Bisham and Gwadar attacks appear to be aimed at derailing the Pakistan-China relationship, specifically the economic aspect of it. The fact that Chinese blood has been spilt makes matters more serious. Several past incidents have also resulted in the death of Chinese nationals, such as the 2021 attack in Kohistan, which is close to Bisham, and the 2022 assault on Karachi University's Confucius Institute.

Beijing's reaction has been firm, with the Chinese embassy demanding the Pakistani state take "practical and effective measures" to protect its nationals here. China has come to this country's aid at difficult times, and invested in Pakistan when few others were willing to. Moreover, at a time when Pakistan is trying to woo foreign investors to bring their dollars here in order to breathe some life into a moribund economy, the country cannot afford terrorists attacking foreign workers. Security must immediately be beefed up for all foreigners working in the country, particular Chinese nationals. The civilian and military leadership must work closely together to uproot the terrorist infrastructure without delay.

If malign foreign actors are involved in subterfuge, diplomatic channels need to be used to communicate to them that their facilitation of terrorist violence will be exposed before the international community. For the government, the honeymoon is over, and the time has come for decisive action against militancy.

"Six Judges' Allegations: Yet Challenges in Substantiation..."

By Qamar Bashir

Press Secretary to the President(Rtd); Former Press Minister at Embassy of Pakistan to France; Former MD, SRBC



In a remarkable development, six judges of the Islamabad High Court have penned a letter to the Supreme Judicial Council underscoring deeply troubling allegations of blatant, aggressive, and intimidating interference by the executive branch in both lower and higher judiciary affairs. The accusations range from manipulating bench formations to exerting undue pressure on judges to sway decisions in critical cases. Moreover, there are claims of defiance against judicial directives, orders, and judgments, often enforced through coercive measures such as the use of brute force or intimidation tactics like throwing crackers at residences, abducting close relatives, and covert surveillance. Such allegations, if substantiated, raise profound questions about the sanctity of judicial independence and the rule of law.

The noteworthy aspect of this situation is the decision to make the letter public. With decades of experience in government circles, it's clear that officials, including judges, are obligated to maintain confidentiality in their official correspondence. Various regulations, such as the Efficiency and Discipline Rules for government servants and the Judicial Code of Conduct, emphasize the im-

portance of confidentiality, especially in legal proceedings. The relevant Article V of the Judicial Code of Conduct stresses that judges should avoid engaging in public controversies, particularly political ones, to uphold the integrity of their position.

Typically, matters concerning the Supreme Court are communicated to the public through its public relations department, often pertaining to administrative issues or clarifications on court actions. However, in this instance, the letter addressed to the Supreme Judicial Council on March 25, 2024, was made public the following day, March 26, 2024. This move likely aimed to achieve several objectives.

By revealing allegations of interference by intelligence agencies, the judges aimed to highlight potential threats to judicial integrity. They likely hoped that public scrutiny would compel authorities to address the issue promptly and reinforce the importance of judicial independence. However, making internal correspondence public carries risks, including undermining confidentiality and inviting political or legal repercussions. Depending on how the allegations are perceived, it could also affect public confidence. While transparency is essential for accountability, it must be balanced with protecting the judicial process's integrity and minimizing potential fallout.

Whether the letter was leaked without the consent of the Chairman of the Supreme Judicial Commission, or the six judges who wrote it, re-

mains unclear. However, the gravity of the allegations made by these judges cannot be overstated. Accusing the executive branch of blatant interference in the judiciary, including manipulation of bench formations, intimidation of judges, defiance of judicial directives, and even resorting to acts of violence and threats against judges and their families, constitutes a direct assault on the foundational principles of democracy, rule of law, and judicial independence.

If proven true, these allegations would not only undermine the credibility and integrity of the judicial system but also pose a significant threat to the fundamental principles of justice and separation of powers.

However, both the judges and Supreme Judicial Council know very well that the spying agency operatives are professional trained and proficient to leave no trace of evidence of their alleged interference and intimidations to the judges or their victims or targets. They employ sophisticated protocols including encryption, secure communication channels, anonymous communication platforms, steganography, covert operatives, and deniable operations to ensure their communications and actions remain untraceable and without evidence.

Utilizing advanced encryption methods, secure networks, and anonymous tools, they conceal their identities and activities, making it challenging for outsiders to intercept or attribute their actions. Covert operatives operate discreetly, while deniable

operations provide plausible deniability. This makes proving their involvement in suppressed and intimidating activities exceptionally difficult, necessitating thorough investigation and forensic analysis to uncover any traces of their involvement.

Therefore, handling allegations of interference and intimidation by spying agencies in the absence of concrete evidence presents a significant challenge for the Supreme Judicial Council. However, despite the difficulty in proving such allegations, the Council may still take appropriate steps to address the situation and uphold the integrity of the judiciary. They do so by employing various techniques and methods.

Evidently, in the absence of direct evidence, the Council will have to rely on witness testimonies and corroboration from multiple sources to substantiate the allegations. Witness testimonies, especially from the judges themselves and other individuals who may have been subjected to intimidation or interference, can provide valuable insights into the nature and extent of the alleged actions.

Moreover, given the gravity of the situation, it may be necessary for the Supreme Judicial Council to collaborate with other relevant institutions, such as law enforcement agencies or independent investigative bodies, to ensure a comprehensive and transparent investigation. Any attempts to obstruct or undermine the investigation must be met with swift and decisive action to uphold the rule of law and pro-

tect the judiciary from undue influence or intimidation.

The Council may enlist the help of independent experts or investigative agencies to conduct forensic analysis or investigations into any suspicious activities or incidents reported by the judges. Although direct evidence may be scarce, expert analysis of circumstantial evidence or patterns of behavior may reveal potential links to interference or intimidation tactics.

SJC may provide strong protections for whistleblowers who come forward with information about interference or intimidation. SJC can encourage individuals with knowledge of such actions to step forward and provide valuable testimony. Ensuring confidentiality and protection from retaliation can help overcome barriers to reporting.

In cases where traditional investigative methods may not yield sufficient evidence, the Council could consider establishing a public inquiry or commission with broad powers to investigate the allegations thoroughly. Such inquiries can compel testimony, gather evidence, and make recommendations based on their findings. Given the sensitive nature of the allegations and the challenges in investigating espionage-related activities, the Council may seek assistance and expertise from international organizations or experts with experience in dealing with similar issues.

Regardless of the outcome of the inves-

tigation, the Council can implement measures to enhance judicial integrity and resilience against potential interference in the future. This may include strengthening security protocols, providing training on identifying and responding to intimidation tactics, and promoting a culture of transparency and accountability within the judiciary.

While proving allegations of interference and intimidation by spying agencies may indeed be challenging, the Supreme Judicial Council has a responsibility to thoroughly investigate such claims and take appropriate action to safeguard the independence and integrity of the judiciary. Even in the absence of direct evidence, the Council can still take steps to address the underlying concerns and uphold the principles of justice and the rule of law.

Ultimately, the Supreme Judicial Council's response to these allegations will be a crucial test of the judiciary's independence and its ability to uphold the rule of law in the face of external pressures. It is essential for the Council to demonstrate its commitment to justice, accountability, and the protection of judicial independence by thoroughly investigating these allegations and holding accountable those responsible for any wrongdoing. Failure to do so would not only undermine public trust in the judiciary but also jeopardize the foundations of democracy and the rule of law in Pakistan.

Commerce News

Awais Leghari vows to combat electricity theft

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Federal Minister for Power, Sardar Awais Ahmed Leghari, on Wednesday, expressed his unwavering resolve to combat electricity theft across all DISCOS.

Addressing the Chairmen and Chief Executive Officers (CEOs) of Power Distribution Companies (Discos) via video link, he underscored the urgent need to address electricity theft.

During the event, the discussion primarily focused on combating electricity theft, which the Minister described as a form of economic terrorism severely impacting the country's economy. He urged Discos

officials to harness technology and innovation in their endeavors to eradicate power theft, aiming to minimize indiscriminate power outages, particularly affecting consumers who diligently pay their bills.

Leghari called for the removal of all obstacles hindering efforts to prevent electricity theft and warned that employees and officers involved in such illegal activities would face firm and decisive action.

He reiterated that there would be no political interference in the campaign against electricity theft, emphasizing decisions based on merit for a

transparent and impartial approach.

The Minister instructed all Discos to establish modern customer service centers nationwide and appoint competent officers to ensure the timely resolution of customer complaints.

He stressed the importance of kindness towards consumers and emphasized a policy where the "customer is always right."

He mandated the management of Distribution Companies (Discos) to maintain up-to-date financial records diligently and compile detailed information regarding the company's assets.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Power, Sardar Awais Ahmad Khan Leghari addresses the CEOs and Chairmen of DISCOS via video link.

Ahsan discusses cooperation in export-oriented production with Turkish envoy

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Professor Ahsan Iqbal discussed matters related to bilateral interests including cooperation in the field of export-oriented industrial production with the Turkish ambassador to Pakistan, Dr. Mehmet Paçacı.

The discussion took place during a visit by the Turkish envoy to the minister's office, after he congratulated Ahsan Iqbal

on assuming charge of the ministry, a news release said on Wednesday. During the meeting, the minister shared that Pakistan and Türkiye should explore areas where both countries could benefit from each other's strengths, including joint production of export items to third countries, as well as cultural cooperation in arts and media.

He urged the idea of seeking Turkish assistance to set up an industry in

Special Economic Zones (SEZs) for exporting items to Europe. Since labor costs in Pakistan were cheaper than in Türkiye, he said, such a joint venture would benefit both countries.

Pakistan and Türkiye have a long history of warm friendship, and both countries have stood by each other during disasters, such as floods and earthquakes. The minister appreciated the support extended by Türkiye.

Minister stresses tapping growth potential of mineral-rich areas

Independent Report

LAHORE: Punjab Minister for Mines and Minerals Sardar Sher Ali Gorchani renewed the commitment to foster unrestricted progress within the Mines Department, aimed at benefiting the people of Punjab. Acknowledging the challenges that led to significant losses within the department, he emphasized tapping potential for growth and development in the mineral-rich tribal areas of southern Punjab. During a meeting here on Wednesday, he underscored the paramount importance of transparent and equitable processes in leasing mines to harness the abundant

benefits of underground mineral resources. He announced a shift towards a merit-based approach and promised that all leases would be publicly advertised, guaranteeing fairness and accountability. He highlighted the significance of pink salt (Himalayan salt) as a valuable national asset. Efforts to strengthen field offices and expedite recruitment processes are identified as crucial steps to streamline official operations and prevent delays, he said and expressed confidence in achieving this year's revenue generation targets.



Country Lead Digital Transformation GSMA, Saira Faisal called on Minister of State for IT and Telecommunication Shaza Fatima Khawaja in Islamabad.

LCCI advocates for business-friendly taxation system

LAHORE (APP): Lahore Chamber of Commerce and Industry (LCCI) Wednesday expressed reservations over 'Tajir Dost Scheme 2024' under SRO 420 and advocated for business-friendly taxation system to pave way for economic development, besides formulating all the economic policies in consultation with the stakeholders.

LCCI President Kashif Anwar stated this in a conference on 'Economic challenges and their solutions' here at Lahore Chamber where LCCI Senior Vice President

Zafar Mahmood Chaudhry, Vice President Adnan Khalid Butt and a large number of businessmen were also present. Kashif Anwar expressed reservations over the SRO 420 under which 'Tajir Dost Scheme 2024' has been introduced, citing that the businessmen, who are outside the tax net and never filed a tax return, are asked to deposit advance tax every month under this scheme which is not viable as the shopkeepers would have to remain associated with the tax lawyers.

Pakistan's exports to US decrease by 10% in 8 months

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan's export of goods and services to the United States (US) witnessed a decrease of 10.38 per cent during the first eight months of the current fiscal year (2023-24) as compared to the exports of the corresponding period of last year, State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) reported.

The overall exports to US were recorded at US \$3,626.141 million during July-February (2023-24) against exports of US \$4,046.337 million during July-February (2022-23), SBP data revealed.

On a year-to-year

basis, the exports to US came down by 10.97 per cent from \$476.804 million in February 2023, against the exports of \$424.497 million in February 2024.

Meanwhile, on a month-on-month basis, the exports to US also decreased by 6.89 per cent during February 2024 as compared to the exports of \$455.944 million in January 2024, the SBP data revealed.

Overall Pakistan's exports to other countries witnessed an increase of 10.15 per cent in the first five months, from US \$18.643 billion to US \$20.537 billion.

Commerce Minister leads session on future planning

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Commerce, Jam Kamal Khan, conducted an in-house presentation on Wednesday to evaluate the government's future plans within the Ministry of Commerce to attain sustainable economic growth and development.

The presentation focused on key areas of development and strategies to moving forward, besides a comprehensive review was undertaken to ensure alignment with the ministry's objectives, said a press release issued by the Ministry of commerce.

Brazilian Envoy urges Pakistan to join BRICS to become part of global economy

ISLAMABAD (INP): Ambassador of Brazil to Pakistan, Olyntho Vieira has urged Pakistan to join international multilateral forum BRICS for becoming part of the global economy. He said, "Pakistan is a big market in terms of its population which can play an important role in BRICS and promote trade with these countries."

Brazilian Ambassador was speaking during a call on meeting with President Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari and Secretary General UBG, FPCCI Zafar Bakhtawari. Olyntho Vieira said

that the BRICs have an important role in the future global economy and with it,

South-South cooperation will also grow and international multilateralism will be strengthened.

He said that Pakistan was the largest market in terms of population in the Islamic world, which was important because of its geo-Strategic location and there was a need to strengthen the trade relations between Brazil and Pakistan.

The Envoy said that Pakistan and Brazil have vast trade and cooperation opportunities in technology and fruits.

China has over 850 million 5G users

ISLAMABAD (APP): Data from the China's Ministry of Industry and Information Technology (MIIT) shows that, as of the end of February China's largest wireless carriers, have a total of 1.746 billion mobile phone users, of which 851 million use 5G, China Media Group reported.

The cumulative traffic of China's mobile internet reached 48.76 billion gigabytes in the last 12 months, which translates to a 16.6 percent year on year increase.

The communication industry was stable in the first two months of this year, and the total volume of telecommunications of business maintained double-digit growth.



LAHORE: Provincial Minister for Minerals Sardar Sher Gorchani presides over the meeting of the department.

CM stresses for modern house infrastructure in urban peripheries

PESHAWAR (APP): Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister Ali Amin Khan Gandapur Wednesday said that housing infrastructure development in accordance with the contemporary requirements especially at the urban periphery is much needed.

He was addressing an important meeting regarding housing sector development held here at Chief Minister's House, with Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Ali Amin Khan Gandapur in the chair.

Important matters related to public and private-sectors new housing schemes came under discussion.

Provincial Minister Arshad Aiyub and Fazal Hakeem, Tehsil Chairman Mathra Inaam Ullah Khan, Administrative Secretaries of concerned department, Commissioner Peshawar, Deputy Commissioner Peshawar and other relevant officials attended the meeting.

He said that his government, alongside taking other priority initiatives, was also committed for infrastructure and urban development, promoting investment and ease of doing business in the province. "Incumbent provincial government will not only encourage private-sector investment in the province but will also

extend its all-out support to investors interested in investment here". He remarked and directed the quarters concerned to take pragmatic steps for attracting and facilitating private-sector investment in the province.

Necessary amendments in the relevant legal framework be proposed for simplifying the entire process of investment so that maximum private investment could be attracted towards province, he directed.

He said that the all these efforts would bring about positive change in the lifestyle of people by promoting conducive environment.



GILGIT: Secretary Home Gilgit-Baltistan Ali Asghar and Inspector General of Police Gilgit-Baltistan Afzal Mehmood Butt briefs members of the Women's Caucus of Gilgit-Baltistan Assembly regarding Falak Noor case.

Minister for eliminating corruption, ensuring merit in govt offices

Independent Report
PESHAWAR: Provincial Food Minister Zahir Shah Toru on Wednesday categorically said that the establishment of a just system based on justice and elimination of corruption is our priority.

"Solving people's problems is most important for us, so the officers should go to the field to solve people's problems".

He was addressing a meeting of officers of all provincial and federal

departments in the conference room of Deputy Commissioner Mardan along with the elected members of the provincial assembly from Mardan district. Besides Deputy Commissioner Mardan Muhammad Fayaz Khan Sherpao, provincial assembly members Abdul Salam Afridi, Itikhar Ali Mashwani, Tufail Anjum, Amir Farzand Khan, Tariq Mehmood Ariani, Zarshad Khan and ADC Samiur Rehman attended the meeting.

2nd meeting of KP cabinet on March 28

PESHAWAR (APP): The second meeting of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa cabinet would be held on March 28 at 8:30 p.m. at the Chief Minister house, said a notification of the Establishment and Administration department.

The meeting would be chaired by the CM Ali Amin Gandapur while the cabinet members including 15 ministers, five advisors and three special assistants along with all the administrative secretaries have been requested to attend the meeting.

ATC extends interim bail of PTI founder in 3 cases till March 28

LAHORE (APP): An anti-terrorism court (ATC) on Wednesday extended the interim bail of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) founder in three cases related to attacks on Jinnah House, Askari Tower, and the torching of Shadmans Police station until March 28.

The court directed jail authorities to ensure the attendance of PTI founder through a video link on the next hearing.



LAHORE: Members of civil society are protesting against Israel's aggression on Palestine.

PHC directs KP Assembly speakers to administer oath to members on reserved seats

PESHAWAR (APP): The Peshawar High Court (PHC) on Wednesday directed Speaker Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Assembly to administer oath to the members on reserved seats and allow them to sign the roll of members in terms of articles, 65, 255 of the constitution.

In short decision, written by Justice S.M Attique Shah, the speaker was also directed to allow and facilitate the members in casting their votes in the upcoming

senate election scheduled for April 02, 2024. Earlier, the PHC reserved its decision on the petitions of oath taking of the members elected on reserved seats in the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Assembly.

A two-member bench comprising Justice S.M. Attique Shah and Justice Shakeel Ahmed heard the petitions of the elected members of People's Party, PML-N and JUIF on reserved seats.

JKLF strongly condemns attack in Bisham

MIRPUR (APP): The US-based acting Chairman of Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front (JKLF-Yasin Malik) Raja Muzaffar on Wednesday vehemently denounced the recent suicide attack in Bisham that resulted in the tragic deaths of at least six individuals, including five Chinese workers.

In a press statement issued from Dallas, Muzaffar expressed profound shock and sorrow, extending solidarity to both China and Pakistan in the wake of the appalling acts of terrorism and violence.

"It is deeply concerning and condemnable that Chinese and Pakistani individuals in Pakistan have been targeted by acts of terrorism. The people of Jammu and Kashmir State stand in solidarity with the victims and their families," emphasized Muzaffar, underscoring the urgent need for collective condemnation and unity against such attacks.

18th IATF meeting held at ANF Headquarters

RAWALPINDI (APP): 18th Inter Agency Task Force (IATF) meeting on the increasing trend of drugs in educational institutions and anti-narcotics measures was held here at Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) Headquarters.

The meeting was held under the chairmanship of Major General, Abdul Moed, Director General of ANF, in which senior officers of federal and provincial law enforcement agencies, intelligence setup and related government departments participated.

The purpose of the meeting was to review the supply of drugs in educational institutions and the measures taken by the management of the

institutions to combat it. A comprehensive briefing was given on the agenda by the representatives of the agencies and the departments concerned, in which the root causes of the problem and the gaps in the implementation of the policy were highlighted, while at the same time, the ways forward were also discussed. ANF presented a comprehensive plan for drug-free educational institutions which was discussed in the meeting. All the stakeholders agreed that concerted efforts should be made and a collective campaign should be launched to deal with the issue.

Meeting to discuss reforms in Health Dept soon: Qasim Shah

Independent Report
PESHAWAR: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Minister for Health Syed Qasim Ali Shah held a meeting with a delegation from UNICEF at his office here on Wednesday.

The delegation, led by the Chief of UNICEF Peshawar Office, Radoslaw Rzehak was comprising of Dr. Inamullah, Health Specialist, Aien Khan Afridi, Nutrition Specialist, and Dr. Kamran Qureshi, Immunisation Officer.

During the meeting, the provincial minister expressed the need to form a team of health donors to ensure that reforms in the Health Department adhere to international standards.

He also mentioned that a meeting with

donors and implementing partners with the Health Department would be convened soon to discuss future reforms in health and ongoing changes within the department. He emphasized that the doors of his office were always open for donors and partners.

The delegation briefed the minister about ongoing projects in the province under UNICEF's cooperation.

They briefed him about the support provided to the Health Department so far.

It was informed that UNICEF is currently running two major health and nutrition programs in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

LG&CD dept, SNG agree to prepare new models of solid waste management in Punjab

LAHORE (APP): Local Government and Community Development (LG&CD) Department and the British agency Sub-National Governance (SNG) have agreed to employ SNG program in preparing new models of solid waste management in Punjab. In this regard, the annual working of the ongoing projects under collaboration of local government and sub-national governance was reviewed in the meeting chaired by Special Secretary LG&CD Asia Gul here on Wednesday.

Matt Clancy, Annual Review Lead from British High Commission Islamabad, Governance Advisor Naveed Aziz, Economist Tufail Khan and Program Officer Amala Najeeb also participated.

During the meeting, it was decided to increase cooperation in more fields based on the annual performance. The team

lead of British High Commission presented the agenda regarding the annual performance of SNG.

Special Secretary Asia Gul pledged that revenue generation plans will be prepared for other local governments on the pattern of Rahim Yar Khan. She emphasized that there is a need to take substantial measures regarding the self-reliance of local governments.

The parties also agreed to seek technical assistance on local government collection rights rules, budget and other regulations.

Special Secretary directed that two members from the SNG should be included in the Technical Working Group. She expressed satisfaction that the financial management system has been successfully implemented in local governments with the technical support of SNG.

International News

18 Gazans die trying to collect airdropped aid

Monitoring Desk
GAZA STRIP: Twelve people drowned and at least six were killed in stampedes trying to recover aid airdropped into Gaza, local authorities said on Tuesday.

The deaths occurred in the north of the besieged territory on Monday, with people rushing to collect packages dropped from planes along Gaza's Mediterranean coast.

The UN humanitarian office called on Tuesday for Israel to revoke a ban on food deliveries to northern Gaza from the UN Palestinian refugee agency UNRWA, saying people there were facing a "cruel death by famine".

Israel had earlier said it would stop working with

UNRWA in Gaza, accusing the aid agency of perpetuating conflict. The agency said Israel told it that it would no longer approve its food convoys to north Gaza. Four such requests were denied since March 21, it said.

"The decision must be revoked," United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) spokesperson Jens Laerke told a UN briefing in Geneva. "You cannot claim to adhere to these international provisions of law when you block UNRWA food convoys."

A UN-backed report this month said famine was imminent and likely to occur by May in northern Gaza. James Elder, spokesperson for the UN children's

agency Unicef in Gaza, described seeing "paper thin" children in a hospital in northern Gaza and incubators full of underweight babies from malnourished mothers.

"Tens of thousands of people crowd the streets," he told the same briefing, describing his latest visit to the north on Monday. "They make that universal signal of hand to mouth desperately asking and seeking for food."

"Life-saving aid is being obstructed. Lives are being lost. I saw children whose malnutrition state was so severe, skeletal," he said. Other aid agencies also deliver food parcels to northern Gaza, although UNRWA is the biggest provider.



Palestinians gather on a beach as they collect aid dropped by an airplane, amid the ongoing Israeli bombardment of the northern Gaza Strip.

Russia blames Ukraine, US for Moscow attack

Monitoring Desk
MOSCOW: The director of Russia's most powerful security agency said on Tuesday that he believed Ukraine, along with the United States and Britain, were involved in the attack on a concert hall just outside Moscow that killed at least 139 people.

Ukraine, which has repeatedly denied any link with Friday's attack, dismissed the Russian accusations as lies. Britain said they were "utter nonsense".

"We believe that the action was prepared by both the Islamist radicals themselves and was facilitated by Western special services," Alexander Bortnikov, director of the Federal Security Service (FSB), said on television.

"The special services of Ukraine are directly related to this," Bortnikov said, adding Kyiv had

helped prepare radicals at an unidentified location in the Middle East.

When asked by Russian reporters if Ukraine and its allies, the United States and Britain, were involved in the attack on the concert hall, Bortnikov said: "We think that's the case. In any case, we are now talking about the texture that we have. This is general information."

Bortnikov, 72, who has served as head of the FSB since 2008, said Russia had yet to identify those who specifically ordered the deadliest attack inside Russia for two decades, but said that retaliatory measures would be taken. He offered no specific evidence for the claims, which hardliners in Moscow could use to justify an escalation of the war in Ukraine and to explain how Russian security services failed to prevent the attack.



Sri Lanka's Prime Minister Dinesh Gunawardena and China's Premier Li Qiang during bilateral talks in Beijing.

Sri Lanka PM says China to develop strategic infrastructure

Monitoring Desk
BEIJING: Sri Lanka's prime minister said on Wednesday that China has pledged to develop the island nation's strategic deep sea port and the capital's airport after talks with his counterpart in Beijing.

Prime Minister Dinesh Gunawardena said China — the island's biggest bilateral creditor — would "assist" Sri Lanka's restructuring of external debt, a key condition to maintaining a \$2.9 billion IMF bailout. Beijing's position on debt restructuring has not been made public, but Sri Lankan officials have said China was reluctant to take a haircut on its loans but could extend the tenure and adjust interest rates.

Sri Lanka in 2022 ran out of foreign exchange to finance essential imports and declared a sovereign default on its \$46 billion foreign debt.

In Beijing, Dutch PM raises cyberespionage with China's Xi

Monitoring Desk
BEIJING: Dutch Prime Minister Mark Rutte said he had discussed an incident of cyberespionage the Netherlands has blamed on the Chinese state during talks with President Xi Jinping on Wednesday.

Chinese state-backed cyber spies gained access to a Dutch military network last year, the intelligence agency MIVD said last month, calling it part of a trend of Chinese political espionage against the Netherlands and its allies.

It was the first time

the Dutch publicly attributed cyberespionage to China, as national security tensions grow between the two countries. They are also in a confrontation over restrictions of exports of high-tech semiconductor equipment made by Dutch giant ASML to China.

Beijing routinely denies allegations of cyberespionage and says it opposes all forms of cyberattacks.

US and British officials on Monday filed charges, imposed sanctions and accused Beijing.

Ukraine's president replaces a top security official

Monitoring Desk
KYIV: Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelenskyy has replaced one of the country's top security officials in a reshuffle that comes as the war has dragged into a third year.

Zelenskyy dismissed Oleksii Danilov, who served as secretary of the National Security and Defense Council, thanking him for his service in a video address late Tuesday.

Indonesia's losing candidates urge court to disqualify president-elect

Monitoring Desk
JAKARTA: Indonesia's losing presidential candidates laid out their court challenge on Wednesday to last month's election, accusing the state of interference and urging a poll re-run and disqualification of the winner, Prabowo Subianto.

Former governors Anies Baswedan and Ganjar Pranowo said the resounding victory of Defence Minister Prabowo was helped by pressure on regional officials from a partisan administration and President Joko Widodo, with social aid used as a tool to ensure just one outcome. Anies said the election showed the world's third-largest democracy was at risk of sliding back towards its authoritarian past, and warned it could set a bad precedent.

"This practice will be perceived as normal, a habit," he told the Constitutional Court. The outgoing administration of Jokowi, as the president is widely known, has rejected accusations of election interference. Prabowo received nearly 60% of the votes, helped by the tacit backing of hugely popular former rival Jokowi.

He promised to maintain his predecessor's agenda of refurbishing infrastructure, adding jobs and developing downstream industries to better exploit Indonesia's vast mineral resources. Anies received a quarter of the vote and the third-placed Ganjar Pranowo took 16%. Challenges to election outcomes are typical in Indonesia and the court is expected to hand down its decision on April 22. Anies' team urged the court to disqualify Prabowo from the ballot, as a beneficiary of unfair practices, asking it to order Jokowi to keep neutral in any re-run of the election.

Over 63,000 people dead or missing on migration routes

Monitoring Desk
GENEVA: At least 63,285 people have perished or disappeared on migration routes around the world between 2014 and 2023, with most deaths caused by drowning, the UN migration agency said on Tuesday. A report published by the International Organization for Migration (IOM) on its Missing Migrants Project showed that the majority of deaths and disappearances — 28,854 — occurred in the

7 Lebanese and an Israeli killed in an exchange of fire along the Lebanon-Israel border

Monitoring Desk
HEBBARIYE: An Israeli airstrike on a paramedics center linked to a Lebanese Sunni Muslim group in south Lebanon killed seven of its members early Wednesday and triggered a rocket attack from Lebanon that killed one person in northern Israel, officials said. The strike on the village of Hebbariye came after a day of airstrikes and rocket attacks between Israel's military and Lebanon's Hezbollah group.

PM reaffirms Pakistan's firm support to global efforts for peace, stability

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Wednesday reiterated Pakistan's firm support to global efforts for peace and stability without compromising on the security of its people, sovereignty and territorial integrity. Addressing an Ifar dinner hosted in honour of the members of the diplomatic corps at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the prime minister said "as a peace loving nation, Pakistan desires peace with all and enmity with none". He reaffirmed that his government would follow this message of the found-

ing fathers of the country. They had a development oriented agenda to turn around the economic trajectory, he said, adding the government would strive to bring reforms, forge global partnership for shared development and attract foreign investment. He said that country's foreign robust policy continued to support global efforts for peace and stability. The prime minister further reiterated Pakistan's firm support to Palestinians in their just and inalienable right to self determination and stressed the need for making sincere efforts to immediately implement a recently United Nations

Security Council's adopted resolution for a ceasefire. He said that Pakistan reaffirmed its support to global efforts for immediate ceasefire. About the holy month of Ramadan, he said that this month signified more than fasting and gave a message of sacrifice, discipline and warm hospitality, respect for all and embodied a spirit of compassion. He said besides, the month gave a powerful message of harmony, peace and tolerance, adding these qualities were required most in a world grappled with diverse challenges and divides.



QUETTA: A representative delegation of doctors organizations meeting with Chief Minister Balochistan Mir Sarfaraz Ahmed Bugti.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Planning, Development & Special Initiatives, Professor Ahsan Iqbal chairs the first Steering Committee meeting to implement 5Es development framework.

Steering Committee on 5Es Framework holds maiden meeting

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Professor Ahsan Iqbal on Wednesday chaired the first meeting of the Steering Committee on the 5Es framework for effective implementation of the multi-pronged strategy to turnaround Pakistan and put it on a sustained growth trajectory. The Committee decided to hold a One-Day "consultative workshop" after Eid-ul-Fitr in which officials from all the ministries and relevant stakeholders would be invited for deliberations to implement the framework, a news release said. Among others, the meeting was attended by senior officials of federal and provincial ministries and divisions. The 5Es framework is

centred on five key pillars including Exports, E-Pakistan, Environment and Climate Change, Energy and Infrastructure, Equity and Empowerment. The National Economic Council (NEC) approved the framework last year in June, following which the Planning Ministry expedited its implementation, the formation of a Steering Committee. "Engagement with all ministries which has been started on the directions of Planning Minister Ahsan Iqbal," it added. In the one-day workshop, all the stakeholders and experts from various fields including academia and industry will be invited and their proposals to be considered before finalizing the action plan to implement the 5Es framework.

NAB organizes seminar on "role of students in eradication of corruption"

Independent Report GWADAR: NAB Sub Office Gwadar organized a seminar at University of Gwadar in connection with anti-corruption awareness campaign on the topic "Role of Students in Eradication of Corruption". A large number of university professors, students attended the event. Vice Chancellor of the University Mr. Razaq Sabir, Incharge NAB's Sub Office Gwadar Dr. Muhammad Rashad and Mr. Irshad Bulaidi Director ORIC University of Gwadar addressed the students on the topic. Vice Chancellor Mr. Razaq Sabir in his opening remarks welcomed the NAB's team and highlighted

the purpose of seminar and importance of the topic for the students. Dr. Muhammad Rashad in his lecture, stressed the students to play their role against corruption. He said that corruption is an evil which effects every aspect of the society including investment, quality, merit, social and ethical behavior and systems. He further highlighted importance of youth /students in eradication of this evil. Students being future leadership can play an important role in controlling corruption by using technology, whistleblowing and forming social groups.



GWADAR: Director NAB Dr. Muhammad Arshad addressing a seminar at University of Gwadar organized NAB Sub-office.

Missing rent collection mechanism causing bln of rupees' losses annually to QMC

QUETTA (APP): The Quetta Metropolitan Corporation (QMC) has been losing billions of rupees a year due to improper legislation and a lack of a mechanism for collecting rent for government-leased shops and properties situated in prime locations of the Quetta. "Quetta Metropolitan Corporation collects rent from its as many as 900 shops and 63 leased properties located in the prime locations of the provincial capital on a monthly basis for just between Rs 25 and Rs 30," Muhammad Hamza Shafiqat, Administrator Quetta said. Talking to APP, he said that old legislation coupled with incompetence and corruption has exacerbated the financial crisis of the

Quetta metropolitan Corporation. With its 900 stores and 63 buildings, the Corporation may bring in Rs 300 million a month in revenue. Conversely, he expressed regret that only a small amount, measured in thousands, is gathered. Due to their inability to simplify and bring amendment in the revenue generation method, QMC is now liable for Rs 1.05 billion. He was afraid that the amount would double the following year if it wasn't paid to the contractors and other parties. Expressing his regret over the apathy of the government-leased properties, he said there are 20 shops and leased properties that did not pay a single penny

PTI nominates Marwat for PAC chairmanship

PESHAWAR (INP): Ali Muhammad Khan, a prominent leader of the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI), has announced the nomination of Sher Fazl Marwat for the chairmanship of the Public Accounts Committee (PAC). Emphasizing the significance of the PAC chairmanship as an opposition privilege, Khan asserted that it is not within the government's authority to dictate who leads the committee. He dismissed any notion of factionalism within PTI, stating that despite internal discussions and differences.

PHC rules in favour of PPP, PMLN on reserved seats

PESHAWAR: The Peshawar High Court on Wednesday ruled in favour of the PMLN and other opposition parties in the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province over the issue of reserved seats. PTI-led government in KP was trying to block the oath of some of the opposition members elected on reserved seats. Consequently, PPP, PMLN and JUIF filed petitions with the PHC. The PHC - which earlier this month dismissed PTI's petition against the ECP decision to allot dozens of reserved seats to PMLN, JUIF, and PPP - granted the petitions by PPP and PMLN and JUIF in its short order. The court told the speaker to administer the oath to the MPAs elected on reserved seats.

Fatima flays attack on Chinese residents in Besham

QUETTA (APP): Leader of Pakistan Muslim League-N (PML-N)'s Women's Wing, Fatima Khan strongly condemned the terrorist attack on Chinese residents in Besham area of Shangha. In statement issued here, she said that such heinous acts could not weaken the determination of the Pakistani nation to fight against terrorism, saying that terrorist elements were targeting innocent citizens for the pleasure of their foreign masters and to thwart the ongoing projects for the development and prosperity of Pakistan with the cooperation of Pakistan and China. She said that the terrorist elements would not succeed in their nefarious design, saying that the suicide attack on the citizens.

SC restrains FIA from arrests of journalists

ISLAMABAD (INP): The Supreme Court on Wednesday restrained the FIA from arrests of journalists till the next hearing of the case. "Is it the violation of the law?", Chief Justice of Pakistan asked. "This notice has been under section 160 of the Criminal Procedure Code, it is a notice prior to registration of the FIR," CJP said. "This notice can be served to me tomorrow, why you presume that they will register the FIR. At a time, an officer after comes under heavy pressure from above, issues notice but not registers an FIR, or arrest the person. In this notice they could also summon someone as a witness," CJP said. "When you show us something illegal that we can declare it void, we will

not declare a legal act as null and void," chief justice said. "It is necessary to provide complete details of the case with the notice," Barrister Salahuddin argued. "I will be informed of the reason first, if I am being summoned to the police station," he said. "You are saying the FIR has been compulsory before being summoned. The officer may call you for verification of facts before registration of the FIR," chief justice said. Justice Naeem Akhtar Afghan said that registration of the FIR comes first and summon after it. "Do you want notice under section 157, instead of section 160," he asked. "The notice can be served after registration of the FIR," Barrister Salahuddin said.

Non provision of copies of forms case: EC is bound to provide forms as per law: IHC

ISLAMABAD (Online): During the hearing of petitions against Election Commission (EC) on non provision of attested copies by it, the EC authorities told the court that EC has issued directives to concerned ROs and provincial election commissioners too. Upon it the court while expressing sorrow remarked if contempt of court petitions have come on such small matter then it is matter of regret. The Chief Justice (CJ) IHC Aamer Farooq took up for hearing petitions filed by Shoaib Shaheen and Suleman Akram Raja Wednesday. Junior counsels of Shoaib Shaheen and Suleman Akram Raja appeared in the court. EC authorities also appeared in the court and told the court that the EC has issued directives to the respective ROs and provincial election commissioners. The CJ IHC remarked obtaining attested copies of the forms is basic right of petitioners.

Zero tolerance policy on absence of doctors, medical staff: Poor people to be provided relief by improving health services in Balochistan, says Sarfraz Bugti

Independent Report QUETTA: The Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Sarfraz Ahmed Bugti has assured that the poor people would be provided relief by improving health services in the province. In this regard, positive suggestions of the doctors and stakeholders would be welcomed. He was speaking to the delegation of Pakistan Medical Association and Young Doctors Association who called on him here on Wednesday. During the course of meeting, the problems being faced by the doctors in

health sector and suggestions about provision of better healthcare facilities were discussed. There was consensus on adopting zero tolerance policy on absence of doctors and medical staff in the hospitals and other health establishments. Moreover, different aspects of public-private partnership were also discussed for improving health service in the hospitals. It was decided to outsource the services for improving cleanliness situation in the hospitals. Speaking on the occasion, Chief Minister said

that steps would be taken for making the healthcare system functional together with consultation. He said that action would be taken against the absentee doctors and those having dual jobs. While on the other hand, the dutiful doctors would be encouraged, he said adding that district officers and medical superintendents would be posted on merit. He asserted that the duration of posting of the doctors and officers would be protected so that they may perform their duties accordingly.

LHC orders to remove name of PTI leader Dar from PNIL

LAHORE (Online): Lahore High Court (LHC) has directed to remove name of PTI leader Usman Dar from PNIL besides allowing him to go to Saudi Arabia to perform Umrah. The protective bail of Usman Dar has been approved for seven days in GHQ attack case. The petition seeking removal of name of Usman Dar from PNIL list came up for hearing before LHC. Justice Shams Mahmood Mirza heard the petition The court accepted PTI leader plea. Usman Dar was allowed to go to perform Umrah.

IMF demands trace system to curb tax evasion in Pakistan

ISLAMABAD (INP): The International Monetary Fund (IMF) has urged the current government to implement an automatic track and trace system, emphasizing the need to seal units not included in the system. According to media reports, sources within the Ministry of Finance revealed that the IMF has expressed dissatisfaction with the track and trace system managed by the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR). The IMF has demanded the

full application of the FBR's track and trace system across all sectors. Specifically, the IMF has insisted on the installation of an automatic track and trace system in the manufacturing sector, with a stern directive to seal units not integrated into the system. Highlighting concerns over rampant tax evasion, the IMF pointed out the lack of effective measures in key sectors such as cigarettes, sugar, fertilizer, and cement.

Secretary Health suspends 2 lady medical officers, nurses on absence from duty

Independent Report QUETTA: The Secretary Health Department paid surprise visit to the Mufti Mehmood Hospital Kuchlak on Wednesday. During the surprise visit, two lady medical officers and even number of staff nurses were found absent from their duties in the

hospital. The Secretary Health suspended all the absentee lady medical officers and staff nurses. It was found that additional pharmacists have been posted in the Mufti Mehmood Hospital, thus it was decided to transfer them in hospitals of other districts.



QUETTA: MNA Nawabzada Jamal Khan Raisani enquiring about health of a patient during his visit to Urology department of Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed Al-Nahayan Medical Complex.

Ishaq Dar, Jordanian FM discuss Gaza situation; call for unimpeded aid supply

ISLAMABAD (APP): Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar on Wednesday received a telephone call from Ayman Safadi, the Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister of Jordan. In the conversation, they discussed the situation in Gaza and condemned the Israeli brutalities. Foreign Minister Dar wrote on his X timeline. The two leaders also called for unimpeded provision of aid into Gaza. "I look forward to working closely with Jordanian foreign minister in transforming our bilateral relations with Jordan into multi-tiered partnership."

tribute to the brave security forces for foiling the cowardly terrorist attacks on Gwadar and Turbat. She said that Besham's suicide attack was also the hand of the same cowardly enemies who were targeting innocent and innocent people with such cowardly acts. Senator Samina Mumtaz Zehri said Pakistan and China are brother countries and the entire nation is mourning the death of Chinese citizens. We as a nation strongly condemn the Bisham incident and those responsible for the incident and their facilitators will be sent to hell soon, she said.

Samina condemns incident of Besham

QUETTA (APP)-Senator Samina Mumtaz Zehri on Wednesday strongly condemned the killing of 6 innocent people including Chinese citizens in Besham area of Shangha. In her statement issued here, she said that the incident was a conspiracy to weaken Pakistan-China friendship. Expressing grief and anger over the incident, she said that the recent terrorist incidents in the country were a systematic conspiracy to destabilize the country, which would not be allowed to succeed under any circumstances. We are an equal participant in the grief of the Chinese brothers, she said adding that the entire nation paid

SC issues written order regarding hearing on army courts' case

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Supreme Court of Pakistan on Wednesday issued a written order about hearing on review appeals against termination of civilians' trial in army courts with regard to the riots of May 9. It said that the attorney general of Pakistan has been directed to present the details of 103 accused arrested in May 9, incidents' case. It said that a suggestion is raised that the decisions to the extent of the people who proved innocent should be announced. The court said that the matter pertaining to the fundamental rights of arrested accused was before it as delay would affect their rights. The court also instructed the attorney general and respondents to assist it that how a private petitioner and provinces could become party in this case. It said that the respondents have also prayed for live streaming of this case and sought permission for the families of accused to arrive court.



QUETTA: Balochistan National Party (BNP) Leaders, Sajid Tarin Advocate, Ahmed Nawaz Baloch, Musa Baloch and others addressing a press conference, at Quetta press club.

Step afoot to provide facilities to consumers of QESCO: CEO Shafqat

QUETTA (APP): Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Quetta Electric Supply Company (QESCO), Engineer Shafqat Ali on Wednesday said that the QESCO was taking practical steps to provide maximum facilities to its consumers in Balochistan. Talking to APP here Wednesday, he said that action was being taken against electricity thieves and electricity was being cut off for defaulters saying that QESCO's employees were not only fulfilling their professional responsibilities by providing uninterrupted electricity to the fasting people in the blessed month of Ramadan so that people were also getting help in doing worship in a good way. He said that in the light of the instructions of the Government of Pakistan and the Ministry of Energy Power Division, the transmission of electricity was reviewed from the monitor-

ing cells established in the head office and all circles during the hours of Sehri and Ifitari time. He also appreciated QESCO teams for trying to provide the best facilities to the customers. The CEO Engineer Shafqat Ali said that support has also been provided to users to get new connections saying that QESCO has always put the interests of consumers first, along with additional measures to minimize losses and ensure consumer protection. He said that in all cases power supply and has enabled prompt redressal of grievances despite the teams of the QESCO were conducting indiscriminate operations against defaulters and electricity thieves across the province. About 4263 written requests have been sent to various police stations for legal action against electricity thieves in respective areas of Balochistan including Pashin, Lorelai, Sibi, Khuzdar and Makran.



QUETTA: Provincial Secretary Health Abdullah Khan presiding over online meeting to review performance of Medical Superintendents of hospitals of different districts.