



ISLAMABAD: The Save Gaza campaign movement under the auspices of Civil City is staging a sit-in at D Chok in the Federal Capital on Sunday.

India subjecting Kashmiris to worst political, cultural, economic aggression: APHC

ISLAMABAD (APP): The All Parties Hurriyat Conference has said that India has been subjecting the Kashmiris to the worst political, cultural and economic aggression as well as religious violence for demanding their inalienable right to self-determination. APHC spokesman Advocate Abdul Rashid Minhas in a statement issued in Srinagar said the people of Kashmir have been rendering sacrifices for their political rights and would continue their struggle till complete success. Paying tribute to prominent liberation leader Ashfaq Majeed Wani on his martyrdom anniversary, he said the unresolved Kashmir dispute is the root cause of the ongoing killing spree in the territory. He said the lingering Kashmir dispute has snatched the peace of the Kashmiri people who are constantly living in an uncertain situation in the occupied territory. If Indian leadership sincerely wants peace in Jammu and Kashmir, it should find out the solution to the dispute through parleys with Pakistan and the real representatives of the people of Jammu and Kashmir, he said and added that this should reflect the aspirations of the Kashmiri people. The APHC spokesman said the best way to pay homage to the martyrs is that Kashmiris should reaffirm the pledge in this blessed month of Ramadan that they will never allow anyone to compromise on the blood of the martyrs. He said it is the result of the great sacrifices of the martyrs that the Kashmir dispute has become the center of attention at the global level. Advocate Abdul Rashid Minhas said the Indian Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) regime and its sponsored so-called Chairperson of Waqf Board Darakhshan Andrabi in the occupied territory are trying to interfere in the religious affairs of Kashmiri Muslims.

Pakistan's leaders extend Easter greetings to Christian community

ISLAMABAD (INP): Like other parts of the world, Christian community members across Pakistan celebrated Easter on Sunday with prayers to commemorate Christianity's religious occasion. Special prayer ceremonies were arranged in different Churches of the country. Security arrangements were also made around Churches to prevent any untoward incident. The day started with special religious rituals, prayers and an exchange of greetings with messages of goodwill and prosperity. Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister Ali Amin Gandapur, Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah and other dignitaries have felicitated the Christian community on the eve of Easter. In their separate messages, they acknowledged the active and positive role played by the Christian community in the development of Pakistan and expressed their gratitude for their contributions. "Easter brings hope, love, and prosperity. Pakistan is determined to protect the rights of minorities," he acknowledges the fundamental principles of equality and religious freedom enshrined in the constitution. The president said that all the communities enjoyed religious, political, social and economic rights in Pakistan. "The Christian community is a precious asset for Pakistan," he said, adding that Easter was an occasion that brought a message of hope, affection and prosperity, President Secretariat Press Wing said in a press release. Appreciating the Christian community's contributions for the national progress, he further observed that the Christian community had always played their role in the progress and prosperity of the country. The president reaffirmed that Pakistan was committed to protection of the rights of all communities and would ensure all steps for their prosperity. For the country's progress and prosperity, entire nation including minorities would have to collectively work together, he added. In a separate message on Sunday, Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif reaffirmed the resolve to work for the social uplift and integration of all the minorities in Pakistan. "I extend my heartfelt greetings to the Christian community of Pakistan and around the world, on the occasion of Easter," the prime minister said in a message. He said much more than festivity and celebration, Easter was an occasion to reinforce and reflect on the values of love, tolerance and forgiveness as espoused by Prophet Isa (AS) and was a reminder to emulate these in their daily lives to bring harmony and peace in today's strife and conflict-ridden world. On this auspicious occasion, the prime minister also lauded the immense contributions of the Christian community in struggle for the creation of Pakistan and its socio-economic development and firmly believed that they would continue to play their proactive role in the progress and stability of Pakistan. "While we celebrate diversity of faiths as a source of strength and enrichment in our nation, let us join hands towards building a society that is tolerant and cohesive and together defeat the forces of discord that are trying to cause harm to the fabric of our society," PM Office Media Wing

Youth from North Waziristan embark on educational tour of Lahore and Islamabad

ISLAMABAD (APP): The youth of North Waziristan, sponsored by the Pakistan Army, recently embarked on a tour of Lahore and Islamabad to explore recreational and educational sites. This initiative, part of the "Hm Tolo Da Para" (Education for All) program, aims to promote education awareness among the youth of North Waziristan. In Lahore, the youth visited iconic landmarks such as the Wagah Border, Minar-e-Pakistan, Mazar-e-Iqbal, Badshahi Masjid, and Shahi Fort. At the Wagah Border ceremony, the youth immersed themselves in patriotic fervor, echoing slogans of national pride. In Islamabad, they toured the Pakistan Museum of Natural History, Pakistan Monument Museum, Lok Virsa Museum, and Lake View Park. At Lok Virsa and Pakistan Monument, they learned about the sacrifices made during the freedom movement, deepening their appreciation for Pakistan's history. The youth expressed gratitude to the Pakistan Army for the opportunity and expressed eagerness for future visits.



ISLAMABAD: Interior Minister Gilgit-Baltistan Shams Loan and Government Spokesperson Faizullah Firaq are holding a press conference, Special Assistant Zahirullah is also present.

Modi-led fascist Indian govt using brutal tactics to muzzle press in IIOJK

ISLAMABAD (APP): Political experts and analysts have said the Modi-led fascist Indian government is using brutal tactics to muzzle the press in occupied Jammu and Kashmir and compel Kashmiri journalists to become a mouthpiece of occupation forces and the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) regime. According to Kashmir Media Service, the political experts and analysts in their interviews and statements in Srinagar pointed out that though journalists in Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu Kashmir (IIOJK) had been victims of Indian state oppression for a long time, but their victimization increased manifold after the Modi regime illegally revoked the special status of the territory on August 5, 2019. Stating that the Modi government cannot hide its crimes by curbing the press in Kashmir, they urged the international media organizations to come forward and rescue independent journalism in the territory. The political experts and analysts noted that journalists continue to work in the most trying conditions in IIOJK and that a number of journalists have been killed and scores injured since 1989 in the territory. They said the RSS-aligned Indian media's biased reporting on IIOJK is evident from its fabricated, false news stories about the Kashmiris' freedom struggle, they said BJP-influenced Indian media is spreading false information about the real situation in the occupied territory. They said Indian media coverage of Kashmir can be termed a travesty of professional journalism as Indian journalists and TV anchors are narrating what fits the Modi regime's official policy on Kashmir. The political experts and analysts lamented that Indian media was resorting to fake news to divert international attention from blatant human rights violations by Indian troops in the territory.

DIG Operations pays surprise visit to CIA, Investigation Wing, Khanna PS

ISLAMABAD (INP): CPO/ DIG (Operations), Syed Shehzad Nadeem Bukhari paid a surprise visit to CIA, Investigation Wing and Khanna police station, a public relations officer said. During the visit, CPO/ DIG Operations suspended officer in-charge police station Khanna for poor performance, reviewed the performance of CIA and investigation wing and checked the records, roznamcha, front desk, record room, lockup, investigation officers' rooms and residential barracks, he added. He said that inappropriate behavior toward citizens will not be tolerated under any circumstances. He directed the police officials to utilize all available resources for the facilitation of citizens. Effective steps should be taken immediately for the prevention of serious crimes, apprehension of accused and recovery of stolen goods and efforts should be accelerated for the prevention of car theft and the recovery of stolen vehicles.

CWAs to boost overseas employment opportunities for Pakistanis abroad

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Ministry of Overseas Pakistanis and Human Resource Development (OP&HRD) has given the task to the Community Welfare Attaches (CWAs) stationed abroad to strategically enhance job opportunities for Pakistanis in the international market. An official source told APP that currently, there were 21 CWAs posted abroad by the Government of Pakistan. The main aim of this task was to evaluate and improve the progress of CWAs in identifying and exploring targeted demand for employment prospects for Pakistani nationals through engagements with foreign employers. This involved the formulation, signing, and execution of Letters of Intent (LOIs) and agreements with foreign companies, critical in amplifying the export of Pakistani manpower. It has emphasized the crucial need for close collaboration between CWAs and the Ministry of Overseas Pakistanis and Human Resource Development to spearheading initiatives that fortify global employment prospects for Pakistanis.



ISLAMABAD: Archbishop Shaw performing religious rituals to mark the celebrating the Easter at Fatima Church F-8 in the Federal Capital.

Millions of faithful to observe Itikaaf

ISLAMABAD (APP): Millions of devout Muslims will go into seclusion called 'Itikaaf' after Asr prayer on Sunday. Itikaaf is observed in the last 10 days of the holy month of Ramadan to pray in seclusion for the blessings of Almighty Allah and following the Sunnah of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). From the 21st of Ramadan, men will restrict themselves to mosques, while women separate themselves from others within their homes to devote themselves to prayers. Itikaaf means "devotion to a thing and sticking to it". Mosques have made special arrangements to accommodate men for Itikaaf across the country. Special arrangements were also made by the administration of some mosques and philanthropists to provide Sehri and Iftar for those observing Itikaaf. This year, at least 300 people will observe Itikaaf in the iconic contemporary mosque of Faisal Masjid Islamabad, while in Lahore, hundreds of people will observe Itikaaf in Data Sahib Mosque, Badshahi Mosque and Minhajul Quran Mosque.

20 outlaws arrested; drugs and weapons recovered

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad Capital Police apprehended 20 outlaws including 12 professional beggars from different areas of the city during the last 24 hours and recovered drugs and weapons from their possession, a public relations officer said. He said that, the Islamabad Capital Police has intensified crackdown against the criminal elements in order to eliminate the crime from the city. Following these directions, the Aabpara police team arrested two accused namely Faheem Akram and Aqib Masih and recovered four bottles of liquor and one 30 bore pistol from their possession. The Khanna police team arrested two accused namely Ali Sharjeel and Rizwan Nawaz and recovered 328 gram heroin and one 30 bore pistol from their possession. Similarly, the Phulgran police team arrested an accused namely Ali Raza and recovered 210 gram heroin from his possession. The Bhara Kahu police team arrested an accused namely Wasif and recovered 1060 gram hashish from his possession. Moreover, the Nilore police team arrested an accused namely Khizer involved in illegally selling petrol. Cases have been registered against the nabbed accused and further investigation is underway.

Ayaz, Mustafa Shah extend warm felicitation to Christian community on Easter

ISLAMABAD (APP): Speaker National Assembly Sardar Ayaz Sadiq and Deputy Speaker Syed Ghulam Mustafa Shah have extended warm felicitations to the Christian Members of the Parliament and the Christian community on the occasion of Easter. The Speaker said that the role of non-Muslim communities in the development of Pakistan is an irrefutable reality. Ayaz Sadiq also said that the constitution imparts provision of all basic rights to minorities. Speaker in his message on the eve of Easter urged the parliamentarians and citizens to pro-actively play their part in peace-keeping and in promotion of inter-faith harmony, as these are the pre-requisites for socio-economic prosperity and a progressive society. In addition, he reaffirmed that the rights and privileges of all citizens, irrespective of their religious beliefs, are guaranteed and safe-guarded by the Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan. Moreover, the Speaker stressed on the need for engaging in legislation aimed at enhancing inter-faith harmony, while adopting a non-partisan approach and working beyond party lines for the betterment of all the non-Muslim communities of Pakistan. Furthermore, he praised the Christian community while acknowledging their valuable contributions towards socio-economic progress, since the creation of Pakistan.

Rainfall sweeps across country

ISLAMABAD (APP): New spell of rain has swept across different parts of the country on Sunday, with further rain expected in some regions. As per the meteorological office, the twin cities and Lahore were expected to witness heavy winds and thundershowers throughout the day, reported a private news channel. Additionally, more rain and snowfall are forecasted for various parts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.



ISLAMABAD: A view of traffic jam due to wrongly parked vehicles alongside of a road the Federal Capital.

Crime prevention, protection of citizen lives, property top priority: CPO

ISLAMABAD: The CPO/ DIG Operations Islamabad Syed Shehzad Nadeem Bukhari has categorically directed all police officials to maintain high vigilance in the city to eradicate crimes and ensure an effective crackdown against criminals, a public relations officer said. He said that, CPO/ DIG Operations Islamabad chaired an important meeting regarding crime prevention. The meeting was attended by AIGs, SSPs, Zonal DPOs, SDPOs, and Officers In-Charge of all police stations. During the meeting, the performance of all police stations was reviewed, and officers were directed not to compromise on professionalism. They were given a two-day deadline to improve performance, and another meeting will be held afterwards where penalties will be imposed for any shortcomings. Dolphin Squad, mobile patrol vans, and checkpoints under the supervision of SDPOs will be mobilized. Strict actions will be taken against bribery, misconduct, and mistreatment of citizens. Complaints regarding existing corruption will be addressed. A WhatsApp number has been provided for complaints about corruption, misconduct, and inappropriate behavior. Citizens' complaints will be directly addressed, and action will be taken. Overstepping authority will not be tolerated. Protection of citizens' lives, property, and dignity is paramount. All Officers in-charge police stations will remain present in their police stations. A weekly crime assessment meeting will be held, and penalties will be imposed for any negligence. It was further stated that stringent actions will be taken against kite flying, aerial firing, one-wheeling, and those involved in motorbike thefts. Organized and effective strategies will be implemented to combat crime and apprehend criminals. Associates and facilitators of criminals will also be arrested. Ensure the swift arrest and prosecution of those involved in motorcycle theft cases. Measures will be taken to curb drug trafficking.

Drive on Railway safety, prohibited items in full swing

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan Railways awareness campaign was in full swing in order to raise public knowledge of the dangers of trespassing, crossing railroad tracks, and carrying forbidden objects like gas cylinders, guns without a license, cartridges, drugs, and daggers. "The campaign was launched on the directives Secretary Syed Mazhar Ali Shah which will not help the department to control accidents but also win the confidence of the passengers of the rail" an official told APP. The official said, "Pakistan Railways is using all the social media platforms including print, electronic media, twitter, Facebook, poster and pamphlets to create an awareness among the citizens about a safe train journey." He said the department has also asked all the divisional superintendents to ensure checking of luggage of passengers at entry points with scanners, metal detectors and walkthrough gates. He said Pakistan Railways had always given importance to the safety of citizens and its passengers. "It has been directed to discourage and stop those passengers who are carrying prohibited products."



ISLAMABAD: Peoples along with their belongings waiting for a security check at the grand Faisal Mosque on Sunday, to start Itikaaf during the holy month of Ramadan in Federal Capital.

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In limbo

FOLLOWING the Dec 13, 2023, order from the Supreme Court — wherein it had suspended the operation of an earlier judgement declaring military trials for civilians 'illegal' and allowed hearings against May 9 suspects to be completed — more than 100 citizens were consigned to a legal purgatory of sorts.

They were neither to be convicted nor acquitted till the country's top judges made up their minds regarding whether or not military trials for civilians are acceptable under the law. The matter was then shelved for months.

This Monday, a six-member bench of the SC realised, perhaps a tad belatedly, that the decision had also delayed the release of those who were to be handed shorter jail terms by the military courts, as well as those against whom no case was proven.

As a 'remedy', the SC this Thursday allowed the military courts to pronounce reserved verdicts in these specific cases, which would allow nominated suspects to be released before Eid. It was reported that 15 to 20 people would benefit from the order — subject, of course, to the army chief's approval.

However, the approximately 80 civilians still left in military custody would have to wait till the appeals against the SC's military court verdict are decided because it is that decision which will ultimately determine whether or not any of these trials was legally valid.

It bears recalling that the SC had in October last year ruled that military courts had no business prosecuting civilians for rioting and that all May 9 suspects should be tried in criminal courts instead. If the six-member apex court bench hearing the appeals against this judgement upholds it, it could mean that all suspects, including those who are about to be released, may have to undergo a retrial in a criminal court.

The judges who suspended the Supreme Court's October ruling ought to have factored this into account. They should have realised that they were prolonging the suspects' legal battle and, thereafter, taken the appeals up with more urgency. Now, they have allowed the military courts to issue verdicts without determining whether or not the trials are even lawful.

This matter needs to be put to rest. The time the suspects have already spent in custody will not be returned to them. The principle of presumption of innocence exists so that no one faces punishment for a crime till it has been proven in a competent court of law.

It is most unfortunate that the Supreme Court created this situation, which allowed the state to continue depriving civilians of their constitutional liberties without any finding of guilt against them. As some observers have pointed out, in our legal system, the process itself seems to be the punishment. This should not be allowed to continue.

"Beyond Interference: Redefining the Scope of Judicial Protection"

By Qamar Bashir

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



Chief Justice Qazi Faez Esa, nearing the end of his tenure, chose not to address the complaint filed by six serving judges through the Supreme Judicial Council or by convening a full court of the Supreme Court. Instead, he passed it onto the civilian government, which many perceive as being under the complete influence of the powerful establishment. This decision has been viewed as a missed opportunity to restore judicial independence from the alleged overwhelming control exerted by the establishment, which is often equated with the state itself. This control extends to all facets of governance, including the parliament, governments, cabinets, electoral processes, judicial proceedings, and foreign policy decisions, as well as the management of trade, business, investment, agriculture, and livestock.

The Chief Justice's decision to avoid addressing the complaint prompted over 300 members of the legal fraternity to stage a protest before the Supreme Court today (31.03.2024), urging the Court to take responsibility for adjudicating the matter under Article 184(3) of the Constitution. They argued that any government-led commission would lack the necessary independence and authority to properly investigate

the claims.

Analysts, jurists, and lawyers have widely criticized the appointment of Tassaduq Hussain Jilani, who served as the 21st Chief Justice of Pakistan from 2013 to 2014, to head the one-man commission tasked with adjudicating the complaint of six judges. Many have deemed this appointment highly inadequate, inappropriate, and out of context, given Jilani's age—barely two years younger than Pakistan itself. They argue that since the complaint directly implicates the executive branch as the culprit, appointing a commission headed by someone associated with the executive undermines the integrity of the process. It's seen as illogical and unfitting for the accused to be tasked with providing justice to the complainants.

Meanwhile, the PTI, emerging as one of the largest stakeholders, has been particularly affected by judicial decisions allegedly manipulated by the establishment. These decisions have targeted the incarceration of PTI's former chairman and top-tier leadership, resulting in significant upheaval within the party. PTI has not only lost its founding chairman, top and second-tier leadership, but also its iconic symbol and brand name. Currently, it has been absorbed into an irrelevant and sectarian party, Sunni Itehad, thereby alienating sympathizers from other sects. The heavy toll this has taken on PTI appears irreversible at this juncture.

The terms of reference assigned to the commission are notable for their focus on investigating direct involvement of officials in judicial interference and recommending appropriate action against implicated agencies, departments, or state institutions based on evidence uncovered. However, the absence of mention regarding indirect involvement suggests a potential gap in the scope of the inquiry. Additionally, the commission's starting assumption that no interference has occurred places the burden of proof on the six judges, who must substantiate their claims comprehensively with evidence, witnesses, and circumstantial evidence. Failure to do so could lead to the judges facing accusations of lodging false or concocted complaints, adding a significant layer of complexity to the proceedings. Moreover, granting the commission the authority to explore additional matters deemed totally inappropriate.

The analyst and jurists believe that the TORs assigned to the commission lack specificity and urgency in addressing the issue of unlawful interference. While they include provisions for investigating interference and recommending action, they may not adequately address the need for proactive measures to prevent future interference or hold accountable those responsible. Additionally, the assigned TORs may not fully acknowledge the complexity of the issue or provide

clear guidance on how to address challenges such as fixing responsibility in the absence of concrete evidence.

Rejecting the Terms of Reference (TORs), analysts and jurists argue the letter written by the six judges transcends mere complaints or allegations. Instead, it resembles a decision by a six-member high court bench. After conducting investigations, gathering facts, and recording witness testimonies, the bench unequivocally declared the unlawful elements within the country's prime spying agency and the establishment guilty of blatant and brute interference in judicial matters.

The bench highlighted that the unlawful elements within the establishment use coercive tactics, including intimidation, blackmail, and eavesdropping, to influence bench formations and court decisions aligning with their political and administrative agendas. Furthermore, by openly defying or frustrating court orders that contradict their objectives, the unlawful elements within the establishment undermines the judiciary's independence. The bench sought guidance from the Supreme Judicial Council on defensive measures to safeguard against such unlawful interference and ensure the judiciary's autonomy to dispense justice impartially and transparently.

Analysts and jurists criticize the use of the phrase "interference of the executive". They argue that the type of interference faced by the judiciary transcends

constitutional boundaries and legal frameworks. Rather than being categorized as executive interference, it should be characterized as unlawful coercion perpetrated by rogue elements within state institutions. These elements employ illicit means to manipulate and intimidate the judiciary, undermining its independence and impartiality. Therefore, it cannot be legally termed as executive. As such, they should not be regarded as lawful actors but as unlawful elements seeking to subvert the rule of law through coercion and intimidation tactics.

Henceforth, the Terms of Reference (TORs) for the Commission should reflect a proactive approach, beginning with the acknowledgment that unlawful interference with the judiciary has already been substantiated. The Commission should then focus on recommending measures to safeguard the judiciary from undue, unlawful, and blatant interference perpetrated by rogue elements within state security institutions.

Secondly, the Commission should provide practical and actionable recommendations regarding how the lower and higher judiciary can respond effectively to such unlawful interference. These recommendations should empower the judiciary to maintain its independence and integrity in the face of external pressures.

Thirdly, the Commission must address the challenge of fixing responsibility on unlawful elements within the state security apparatus, even in the absence of concrete evidence and witnesses. Given the sophisticated techniques employed by these elements to conceal their activities, the Commission should explore innovative strategies for holding them accountable.

Fourthly, the Commission should propose the enactment of new legislation and regulations aimed at establishing dedicated security forces tasked with protecting the lower and higher judiciary from unlawful interference, whether originating from within state institutions or external non-state actors.

Lastly, the Commission should recommend mechanisms to ensure the implementation of court decisions and prevent their violation or frustration through selective administrative, legal, or illegal means. These measures should reinforce the rule of law and uphold the authority of judicial decisions in the face of external pressures.

The proposed Terms of Reference (TORs) present a comprehensive and proactive approach to addressing the issue of unlawful interference with the judiciary. They prioritize acknowledging the existing problem and recommending concrete measures to safeguard judicial independence and integrity. By focusing on empowering the judiciary to respond effectively, holding accountable those responsible for interference, and proposing legislative reforms, the proposed TORs offer a robust framework for addressing the challenges at hand.

Reply to Letter by 6 judges

Senator Samina Mumtaz Zehri

The letter by six judges of Islamabad High Court has opened up a new Pandora's box in the pursuit of judicial independence in Pakistan by adopting a weird approach leaving a common consensus astray. Through paragraph eleven of the letter, honorable judges ascribe "undermining independence of the judiciary" to the "interference of intelligence operatives with judicial functions". The very claim of these judges has sparked an ongoing controversy in understanding factors impeding judicial independence in actual.

Back in the year 2021, Ex-Chief Justice Islamabad High Court Justice Athar Minallah had admitted in his public statement that the judiciary had failed to come up to the nation's expectations and one couldn't claim with confidence that the institution was independent. Recalling factors affecting judicial independence he said, "Successive constitutional breakdowns and adoption of the doctrine of revolutionary legality and the doctrine of necessity, besides betraying the vision of Quaid-i-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah, have impeded the process to establish an order where the principles of freedom, equality, tolerance, social justice and democracy are fully observed".

Furthermore, the doctrine of independence of judiciary was seriously impacted when alarming revelations were unearthed about the backlog of millions of pending cases in our courts. The Law and Justice Commission of Pakistan, in its Bi-Annual Report of Judicial Statistics for the period from July to

December 2023, revealed that 82% of the pending cases (1.86 million) were at the district judiciary level and the remaining 18% (0.39 million cases) were at the upper tier, including the Supreme Court, Federal Shariat Court, and high courts. The nature of pending cases raises eyebrows about the independence of judiciary also because they include non-political cases. According to report civil cases constitute 81% of the cases pending in the high courts, while criminal cases account for 19%. On the other hand, at the level of the district judiciary, civil cases constitute 64% of the pending cases, while the remaining 36% comprise criminal cases. That means judiciary especially superior courts have been giving weightage to political cases in speedy manner for a long time due to the overriding concerns of judges for their respective political interests. A report "Study of informal justice system in Pakistan" estimated that Pakistani courts need "15 years" to try the backlog of pending cases and there will be a condition that in those "15 years" no new case should be instituted in the courts. Normally Pakistani courts take "25 years" to decide a case and "5 years" more to execute the decree.

Counting on factors marring judicial independence in Pakistan, one can easily comprehend how poor service delivery and corruption has been rampant in our courts. National Corruption Perception Survey 2023 released by Transparency International Pakistan (TIP) clearly shows the judiciary among the top three most corrupt institutions in Pakistan. Corruption in judiciary is rampant at various levels. Former Supreme Court judge Maqbool Baqar had aptly asserted that "the judiciary is no exception when it comes to corruption, and shortcomings in the key pillar of the state has a "direct linkage" to the process of inducting judges. According to Justice Baqar, "The inductions in the judiciary have not been up to the mark [right from] our independence. There was nepotism, favoritism and sacrifice of merit soon after we inherited the Government [of India] Act 1935 after the creation of Pakistan".

This is quite unfortunate that judiciary in our historical context or since pre-partition times has not been independent. Pakistan's judicial system was modeled after that of the United Kingdom. For financial and administrative matters, the judiciary was not independent of the executive at the time. During the civilian government period, relations between the executive and judiciary remained strained (1988-1999). The First Judge's case, also known as the Al-jihad confidence case, is regarded as a watershed moment of judicial independence. Martial law orders issued in 2002 threatened judicial independence once more.

It is pertinent to mention how efforts to restore judicial independence were initiated by parliamentary forum. Through historic Eighteenth Amendment Bill, 2010, changes were made to the conventional structure. To ensure judicial independence, the Judicial Commission and Parliamentary Committee, two legislative bodies, were formed to nominate judges to the superior

Constitutional courts. However, when the Supreme Court ruled in different decisions that the Parliamentary Committee must provide reasons for rejecting the Judicial Commission's recommendation for a judge's elevation, these constitutional bodies failed to achieve their goals. Otherwise, it would be regarded as irrational and haphazard. Although the Supreme Court of Pakistan has settled several legal issues, the power balance between the Judicial Commission and the Parliamentary Committee is still debatable.

The purpose of underlining some of the potential factors confining judicial independence is to expose the fragility of the claim propounded by the 6 judges of IHC in their letter. The claim that intelligence operatives interfere in judicial functions affecting judicial independence is in fact a two-edged sword. The very claim is damaging the prestige of judiciary and our state agencies on one hand while benefitting the so called political narrative of a political party that has already been targeting agencies and state institutions for its political collapse.

The letter written by six honorable judges of IHC alleging ISI interference has left irrevocable damages on the prestige of this institution that is called one of the vital organs of the state. The resonance of this damage is manifested through global media forums especially those patronized by anti-Pakistan factions and lobbyists abroad who through their bombardment of printed and social media content have been exaggerating the conten-

tions of this controversial letter in a manner that is showing a row between the two otherwise prestigious state institutions. The letter has become a source of malicious propaganda against our own security institutions worldwide fueling the so called effort of anti-state actors to malign our security institutions that keep on counteracting our external and internal enemies through their non-stop sacrifices.

A question also arises why Armed Forces and its institutions are always brought into controversies and become an object of blame game. The answer is very simple. Today, our country is passing through a political transition where Populism is taking its roots. The symbol of Populism is Imran Khan. And his followers everywhere through their institutions or at individual level have been trying their level best to get him off scot-free even at the cost of defaming the prestige of other institutions.

The contents of the letter have actually jeopardized the very image of judiciary also among the eyes of common masses also who have to spend years in waiting for justice from these courts but are suddenly taken aback to know that the judges are actually prioritizing dispensation of justice in political cases most of the time. The issue of millions of pending cases in the high courts and even in Supreme Court of the country has already made the role of judiciary a compromised and controversial one in dealing with its exclusive mandate of dispensation of justice and upholding core human

rights enshrined in the constitution of Pakistan. Why these honorable judges have never written a letter on the issue of backlog of millions of court cases of common people pending for years or even for decades? Is a burning question indeed!

Theoretically, looking from a Consequentialist's perspective, according to which "the results of the action that are looked at, not necessarily the means to produce the action", the results produced by the action of writing a letter by six IHC judges are damaging rather than restorative and reformative for the cause of independence of judiciary. Rather than adopting a serious approach to bring grass root level and much awaited judicial reforms, working in collaboration with parliamentary forums constituted under the 18th amendment for judges' elevation, taking emergency measures to dispose of millions of pending cases of a common people, implementing strict mechanism to uproot corruption in every tier of judiciary, depoliticizing judiciary and making every effort to restore the image of judiciary at national and global levels, these 6 judges have adopted a path to give vent to their feelings that has in turn supported the anti-state narrative of PTI and its followers inside as well as outside Pakistan besides defaming the working of our agencies and state institutions who at this very moment are the only means to safeguard our dear homeland from internal and external enemies that are apprehending the very existence of Pakistan.

CM Punjab promises ensuring freedom of worship to minorities

Distributes Rs50m among 10,000 Christian families on Easter

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif has emphasized the importance of ensuring freedom of worship and providing complete protection to all citizens, regardless of their religious beliefs.



SUKKUR: Shiite Muslims mourners to Hazrat Ali Al-Murtaza (R.A) are holding mourning procession in connection of Youm-e-Ali (R.A), the day of martyrdom 21st Ramadan-ul-Mubarak, in Sukkur.

Governor, CM KP congratulate Christian community on Easter

PESHAWAR (APP): Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Haji Ghulam Ali Sunday congratulates the Christian community across the country, especially Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, on the festival of Easter here.

Easter is the name of the spirit of love and mutual respect, Governor Haji Ghulam Ali said in a message issued on Sunday. The Christian community has an important role in the development and prosperity of the country, especially Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Haji Ghulam Ali added.

Advisor says:

BRT to give role in promoting tourism

Independent Report PESHAWAR: The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government on Sunday decided to give role to Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) to promote tourism as well, wherein the task is being assigned to the KP Culture and Tourism Authority (KPCTA) in this regard.

Similarly BRT service is being seriously considered to be expanded to the divisional headquarters and major cities of the province, including Abbottabad and Dera Ismail Khan.

This modern urban transport system will have certain new features too. The huge resources thus required for this purpose will be arranged through the sponsors so that there is no burden on the provincial exchequer or

commitment to safeguarding their rights. She extended heartfelt greetings to the entire Christian community on behalf of PML-N Quaid Muhammad Nawaz Sharif. The CM expressed pride in attending a convent school from the age of four until 10th grade. She attributed her personal growth and development not only to her parents but also to the teachers and the staff at that school. Maryam Nawaz credited her achievement as the first

female chief minister of any province in the nation's history to her teachers also. She highlighted the importance of discipline and cleanliness instilled in her by the school, stating that it played a pivotal role in her life after her parents. She shared that her father, Nawaz Sharif, had always emphasized the importance of minority rights. She expressed appreciation for the first Sikh minister and congratulated him on his appointment.



PESHAWAR: Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Haji Ghulam Ali and Mayor Peshawar Haji Zubair Ali addressing the ration distributing ceremony amongst the Eunuchs.

Health minister takes notice of measles spread in KP

Independent Report PESHAWAR: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) Health Minister Syed Qasim Ali Shah took notice of the spreading situation of measles in the province here on Sunday.

The minister has sought a report from the Director Expanded Program on Immunization (EPI), who currently aims to vaccinate approximately six million children aged 0-11 months against nine target diseases including Childhood Tuberculosis, Poliomyelitis, Diphtheria, Pertussis, Tetanus, Hepatitis B, Haemophilus Influenzae Type b, Pneumonia, and Measles.

Measles has become an epidemic in our society and people should get their children vaccinated as soon as possible, said the minister. He said that measures will be taken on

an emergency basis to control measles. He issued orders to establish isolation wards in MTIs as soon as possible. He said that the working hours of vaccine centers should be increased to prevent measles. He also directed the concerned quarters to remove the vaccinators from MSK disposal and place them under District Health Officer (DHO). The minister issued instructions to form an immediate provincial breakout committee with Director EPI Dr. Arif along with the relevant officials giving an emergency briefing to the minister about measles. Under the Bird Dose Initiative, vaccine centers have been established in hospitals along with the labor room and more than 100,000 newborns have been vaccinated in these centers.

Governor KP invited eunuchs to Governor House, distributed ration

PESHAWAR (APP): Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Haji Ghulam Ali Sunday invited transgender women to Governor House and handed over Ramadan Ration packages to more than three hundred transgender women.

It is for the first time that the Governor KP Haji Ghulam Ali invited us and gave hospitality to us, the lower classes of the province and city, a Transgender told media men, soon after visiting the Governor House.

Governor Haji Ghulam Ali welcomed hundreds of eunuchs from across the city to the Governor House. Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Mayor

Peshawar Haji Zubair Ali. Technical education is very important for transgenders, the Governor said. Transgender will be made employable. allocation of quota in government recruitment is the need of the hour and they have the right, Governor Haji Ghulam Ali in his address at the ration distribution ceremony to eunuchs.

Haji Ghulam Ali was heartbroken to hear the problems of eunuchs. Some legitimate issues are necessary for the federal and provincial governments, Haji Ghulam Ali said. Among the important issues are burial and funeral prayers in the graveyard, Haji Ghulam Ali said.

CM takes notice of rape in hospital

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif took notice of an incident of alleged rape of a midwife by two persons in Mianwali Mother and Child Hospital.

The CM sought a report in this regard from the IG Police. She said that a comprehensive investigation of the incident should be conducted and the perpetrators should be dealt with iron hands.

PPP to hold ZA Bhutto death anniversary public meeting after Eid: Nisar

KARACHI (APP): Khuda Bux on April 14 after Eid.

He asked the party's district and Taluka organizations to organize Quran Khwani and prayer ceremonies in respective areas on April 4 due to the Holy month of Ramadan while public meeting will be organized at Garhi Khuda Bux after Eid-ul-Fitr. The provincial president of Pakistan People's Party Nisar Ahmed Khuroo said in a statement that the public meeting in connection with ZA Bhutto's martyrdom day will be held at Garhi

PPP workers and leaders will pay tribute to their party's founder chairman and former Prime Minister Shaheed Zulfikar Ali Bhutto and other martyrs on April 4 but the major public meeting will be organized on April 14 at Garhi Khuda Bux.



MULTAN: Members of Saraikistan Nowjawan Tehreek are holding protest demonstration against closure of Burn Unit since four days.

'Suthra Punjab' programme to be accomplished in phases: Minister Zeeshan

LAHORE (APP): Local Government Minister Punjab Zeeshan Rafique has said Chief Minister's 'Suthra Punjab' programme will be carried forward and accomplished in a phased manner.

"After outsourcing the sanitation system of both villages and cities, we will in the next step to make the solid waste our source by making it usable," he said and added that the Punjab government was going to introduce a model of recycling the bulk of waste by ensuring its segregation.

He was addressing a press conference regarding 'Suthra Punjab' programme at DGPR here on Sunday. He said that Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif announced the biggest cleaning programme in the history of the province

soon after taking oath of her office. "Despite holy month of Ramadan, the government machinery honestly tried to implement the Chief Minister's vision. This programme was just a start and the first phase of a comprehensive sanitation plan," he added. The Local Government minister said the 'Suthra Punjab' programme was quite successful, but we will learn lessons from the challenges faced during the cleaning campaign and move forward. "Punjab's population of more than 127 million creates 57,500 tonnes of waste every day. We are able to dispose of only eighteen thousand 438 tons of garbage. This means that the load of forty-nine thousand tons of waste is increasing every day," he pointed out.



LAHORE: A charity organization distributing ration to people at Darughewala of the Provincial Capital.

Pakistanis - a tolerant, compassionate nation

PESHAWAR (APP): Despite engineered waves of extremism or sectarian and communal divides maliciously propagated by its arch enemies, Pakistanis still adhere to its noble norms creating a society living in different regions and speaking different languages.

From the shores of Karachi and Gwadar to plains in Punjab and Sindh and hilly terrains of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Kashmir and Gilgit-Baltistan, Pakistanis are woven into congenial brotherhood despite a few trying to malign the motherland through planted extremism.

The holy month of Ramadan is a true manifestation of this sentiment wherein people like Iqbal Khan, a 28-year-old electrician, with a smile and exudes the high spirit of sharing edibles is seen seeking solace by doling out dates and pakora among fasting Muslims as well as non-Muslims before Aftar at Peshawar cantonment.

enjoy inner satisfaction from this act like Iqbal Khan.

"The soothing moment of distributing Aftar items reminds me of my late father like whom I also enjoy this practice like a true Muslim and Pakistani," remarked Iqbal Khan. "I strongly believe in brotherhood, interfaith harmony and tolerance in society."

"This act of winning others' hearts and minds brings us closer and develops a tolerant society based on warmth, empathy and mutual coexistence," he added. Professor Dr Abdul Ghafoor, former Director Sheikh Zayed Islamic Centre Peshawar sees this coherence as a fruit of religion Islam that laid great



KARACHI: Peoples are at the Faizan-e-Madina Mosque for Itikaf held during the last ten days of fasting month of Ramadan in Provincial Capital.

SHO among 3 suspended over custodial death

FAISALABAD (APP): City Police Officer (CPO) Captain (Retired) Muhammad Ali Zia has suspended three policemen including the Station House Officer (SHO) of Samanabad police station on the charges of negligence in the death of a robbery accused in police custody.

A police spokesman said here on Sunday that people had apprehended Khalid Mukhtar, a resident of Pir Mehal, during a robbery bid two days ago and severely tortured him.

Arrangements for Aitkaf in top 100 mosques

LAHORE (APP): Under the supervision of the Punjab Auqaf Department, arrangements for social seclusion (Aitkaf) are being made in the province's top 100 endowed mosques, including Jamia Masjid Data Darbar and historically significant mosques.

In Jamia Masjid Data Darbar, the city of seclusion has been divided into four sectors for over

two thousand seclusion seekers. The process of setting up cabins named after Baba Ghousia, Baba Farid, Baba Bahoo, and Baba Ahmad Raza has begun in the designated sectors. More than 500 citizens will be secluding in the historical and globally renowned Badshahi Mosque. Special arrangements are being made for the security of those secluding at both locations in Lahore.

"This fatwa provides an umbrella to protect the country from all forms of terrorism, extremism, hatred and violence against fellow Pakistanis," he said. "This is our national narrative and also rules out self-proclaimed acts of violent extremism in the name of religion as such nefarious acts are prohibited by our Shariah and weaken our country."



HYDERABAD: Activists of Awami Workers Party (AWP) are holding protest rally for recovery of missing girl Priya Kumari, at Hyderabad press club.

Kyrgyzstan keen on joint ventures with Pak businessmen, investors

LAHORE (APP): Kyrgyzstan has offered a basket of incentives to fully facilitate Pakistani entrepreneurs and investors in joint ventures. Ms Asel Begmatova, Head of External Relations Department of Kyrgyz Ministry of Economy and Commerce, presented these offers to Pak trade delegation led by Meher Kashif Younis, honorary Consul of Kyrgyzstan in Pakistan. The delegation is on a two-week visit to Kyrgyzstan to study the scope of further strengthening bilateral trade and promotion of exports. Kyrgyzstan Trade House (KTH) President Dr Shahid Hassan was also present, according to Meher's spokesman here Sunday. Briefing the Pakistani delegation, Ms Begmatova said that joint ventures would not only cater to Kyrgyz needs but also generate profits of investors with sovereign guarantees. She added, "Our welcoming stance towards Pakistani entrepreneurs and investors signifies a mutual desire to strengthen economic ties and foster bilateral cooperation by providing ample support and assistance. Kyrgyzstan aims to create an environment conducive to investment and business collaboration."

The emphasis on joint ventures underscores the importance of partnerships that leverage the strengths and resources of both nations, she remarked, citing that collaborative efforts between Pakistani and Kyrgyz businesses hold the potential to tap into diverse markets, capitalize on comparative advantages, and drive economic growth. "Our assurance of facilitating investments in areas of choice reflects Kyrgyzstan's recognition of the importance of encouraging investors especially from Pakistan to take full advantage of ample opportunities that align with their interests and expertise," she maintained. By offering flexibility and support, Kyrgyzstan seeks to attract diverse investments that contribute to the country's development while also benefiting investors, she added.

Ms Begmatova said the emphasis on garnering profits underscores the pragmatic approach to attract investments that yield tangible returns. By prioritizing profitability, Kyrgyzstan aims to create sustainable partnerships that endure beyond short-term gains and foster long-term economic prosperity.

Other Kyrgyz officials Takirov Urmat, Director Centre for Development and Promotion of Exports, Ministry of Economy and Commerce, Tilek Zhumaliev, Head of the Export Promotion Department, Export Center Asel Turgunbaeva, an expert of the department.



CHINIOT: Farmer busy spraying pesticides in a field at Lahore road.

GM SNGPL directs to ensure gas pressure stability during sehr, iftar times

ISLAMABAD (APP): General Manager of SNGPL Islamabad, Adnan Khan has issued directives to ensure stable gas pressure during Sehr and Iftar time.

In this regard, a dedicated "Control Room" has been established, said Sui Northern Gas Pipelines (SNGPL) spokesperson, Shahid Akram.

As part of these efforts, officers have been deployed for pressure monitoring in the federal capital and the surrounding areas. Additionally, specialized teams have been mobilized to swiftly address individual and communal complaints from consumers, ensuring that any issues are promptly resolved.

These proactive measures aim to enhance consumer satisfaction and facilitate a smooth and hassle-free experience for consumers during the holy month of Ramadan.

PIAF says GDP drops to 1% as LSM shows -0.52% growth in Q2

LAHORE (INP): The Pakistan Industrial and Traders Associations Front (PIAF) has pointed out that the GDP growth has stood at one percent in the second quarter of the current fiscal year, as the LSM has registered a negative 0.52 percent growth, leading to drop in overall the GDP growth of the country.

In a statement issued here on Sunday, PIAF Chairman Faheemur Rehman Saigol said that the decline in LSM may have been due to a massive slash in the credit to the private sector, as the credit to the private sector during July-Jan 2024 plummeted 41 percent to Rs180.7 billion from Rs393.6 billion for the same period a year before mainly due to high markup rate.

He said that business friendly policies must be adopted as other neighboring countries of the region are giving to trade and industry. The amount specified in trade policy should be utilised for the promotion of exports by giving incentives to the trade and industry and by exploring new markets, he suggested. The PIAF chairman said that the high cost of doing business has proved to be dangerous for Pakistan's industry, discouraging investment both in capacity and capability, calling for lessening the burden of heavy taxes on the power sector.

Additionally, a continuous decline in remittance indicates that the government may not have been able to stem the decline. Remittance declined by 1.2 percent during July-February 2024 to \$18.1 billion from \$18.3 billion in the same period a year before. Foreign direct investment (FDI) witnessed month-on-month an increase of 15.7 percent of \$ 131.2 million in February 2024 as against an outflow of \$ 173 million.



HYDERABAD: Workers busy in packing vermicelli as per increased demand of customers to be used at upcoming Eid-ul-Fitr festival.

FBR collects Rs6,710 billion, revenues grew by 30% in 9 months

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) had collected Rs6,710 billion revenues during first 09 months of current financial year as against the set targets of Rs6,707 billion.

During the period from July-March, 2023-24, the FBR had collected Rs6,710 billion against as compared to the set targets of Rs6,707 billion for the first nine months, said a press release issued here Sunday.

Meanwhile, the FBR had also cleared refunds amounting to Rs369 billion were as compared to Rs254 billion issued during the same period last year, it added. FBR continues to register 30% growth in revenue collection as compared to the first nine months of previous financial year.

Excise dept seals 1500 properties of defaulters in March

MULTAN (APP): The excise department started sealing of properties of defaulters and around 1500 properties were sealed for not paying pending dues during March. Senior Taxation Officer/Admin, Khalid Hussain Qasoori, talking to APP here on Sunday said that the final warning notices were served to the defaulters first and then the sealing of properties was started to ensure collection of pending dues from them. He said that the warning notices were served to about 17000 domestic and commercial property tax defaulters.



HYDERABAD: Women busy in Eid shopping at Resham Bazaar during upcoming Eid-ul-Fitr celebrations.

Pak, Canada reiterate to explore economic prospects, skillful manpower

LAHORE (INP): The Pakistan and Canada have reaffirmed their commitment to remain constructively engaged to further reinforce bilateral relations, as there were a number of sectors that had a huge potential for cooperation, especially the export of skillful manpower to improve the national economy.

These views were discussed in a tripartite meeting of the All Pakistan Business Forum (APBF), Punjab Board of Investment & Trade (PBIT) and Member Parliament of the House of Commons of Canada Ms. Salma Zahid, held here on Sunday, to discuss various trade opportunities between Pakistan and Canada with major focus on export of skilled labour force from Pakistan.

Salma Zahid, who was also the Member Standing Committee of Immigration and Citizenship of Canada, has recently been awarded with the Pakistan civil award of 'Sitara-e-Quaid-e-Azam' for her remarkable services to enhance bilateral relations between the two countries.

The Member Parliament of the Canadian House of Commons emphasized Pakistan's deep appreciation for its relationship with Canada and its commitment to fostering enduring and multifaceted bilateral relations. She stressed the importance of increasing trade between the two nations and called for closer collaboration among business communities. Promoting bilateral cooperation across public, commercial, and parliamentary spheres was highlighted as pivotal to strengthening the Pakistan-Canada partnership.

Ms. Salma Zahid expressed gratitude to APBF and PBIT for inviting her and said that Canada and Pakistan have all the resources for business collaboration and export of skilled workforce.

She pledged to return with different new ideas of JVs, collaborations and export of demand base skilled workforce to boost the bilateral trade ties.

ICCI delegation visits Embassy of Libya

ISLAMABAD (APP): President Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari along with a delegation of businessmen on Sunday visited the Embassy of Libya.

They met with the Libyan ambassador and discussed matters relating to promoting bilateral trade and investment opportunities between both countries, according to a press release.

They discussed ways and means for further strengthening the existing bilateral relations between Libya and Pakistan and further cementing them for the mutual benefit of the people of both countries.

Speaking on the occasion, Libyans Envoy stressed the need to enhance and promote private sector cooperation in different fields, besides strengthening business to business and people to people contacts.

The ambassador said that there was a broader scope of cooperation between both the countries in fields of science and technology and other sectors of economic development and social prosperity.



QUETTA: People are busy in Eid shopping ahead of Eid-ul-Fitr during the Holy Month of Ramadan-ul-Mubarak, at Qandhari Bazar in Quetta.

Iranian gas holds key importance to resolve energy crisis: Hanif

ISLAMABAD (INP): Chairman of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Shadbad, Dr Muhammad Hanif Mughal on Sunday said that Pakistan has not found a solution to its energy crisis during the last few decades and cannot resolve the energy problem without importing gas from Iran.

In a statement issued here, he said that opposition from the United States to the Iran-Pakistan gas pipeline project and threats of penalties were both deplorable.

Dr Hanif Mughal said that it would be in Pakistan's best interest to strengthen its relations with Iran and overcome different challenges by joining hands.

He said that if gas was not imported from Iran, there may be a fine of eighteen billion dollars, which Pakistan cannot pay in the current economic situation.

KP gov contacts FBR to discuss arrears

PESHAWAR (APP): Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Finance Adviser Muzamil Aslam Sunday contacted Chairman Federal Board of Revenue of Pakistan (FBR) on the telephone to discuss arrears of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Revenue Authority on Sunday.

Muzamil Aslam said that the telephonic conversation has been made for arrears of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Revenue Authority.

A delegation meeting with FBR on the understanding of cross input tax adjustment would be made soon, he added.

Bilal Yasin says: Efforts on to ensure availability of quality food items at fixed rates

LAHORE: Punjab Food Minister Bilal Yasin has said that public representatives are in the field to ensure the availability of quality food items at low prices to people.

He said this while presiding over a meeting in the Punjab Assembly Committee Room on Sunday, said a handout. The meeting was briefed about food prices, supply chain, and actions taken against hoarders and adulteration across the province. The meeting was also briefed about the upcoming wheat crop situation and the department's preparations.

The food minister said that there was a plenty of wheat in the market, so flour and bread should be available to the public at fixed rates.

The minister directed the administration to ensure their presence in markets across the province to keep a close eye on demand and supply and ensure availability of high quality commodities.

Bilal Yasin said that providing all possible relief to the people was the first priority of the government. He also visited different Ramadan bazaars in the provincial capital and reviewed the prices and quality of essential commodities.

He heard the problems of the people of the constituency and issued orders for immediate solution.

Later, Bilal Yasin reviewed the cleanliness campaign in different areas of the constituency. During a visit to shops, he asked the administration to improve the price control mechanism and asked that the price control magistrates should perform their duties honestly.



FAISALABAD: Workers cutting iron boilers on Maqbool Road, in the city.

PM Ramadan Relief package: USC achieves 80pc sale target across region

MULTAN (APP): Utility Stores Corporation (USC) achieved about 80 percent sale target so far across the region under PM Ramadan Relief Package.

Regional Manager USC Multan Region, Chaudhary Sajjad Hussain, while talking to APP here on Sunday said that the PM Ramadan Relief package 2024 was underway successfully across the region as 2,58,247 customers visited the USC stores so far to avail the government subsidy during holy month. He said that the incumbent government was providing targeted subsidy on various commodities to masses to alleviate the financial burden of the one million people across the region. He informed that they had collected Rs 680 million out of Rs 820 million total sale target set for Multan region.

He said that flour was available at six mobile stores, seven static stores and 72 regular stores across the region to facilitate the citizens. Mr Sajjad informed that the maximum people were taking benefit from the PM Ramadan Relief package as incumbent government enhanced PMT score upto 60. Mr Sajjad said that subsidy was being offered on 19 essential items including flour, sugar, ghee, cooking oil, rice, pulses, tea leaves, beverages and various other items.

DISCOs should address electricity theft, line losses: Anjum Nisar

ISLAMABAD (INP): Former President of Federal of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FPCCI) and Chairman Businessmen Panel (BMP) Mian Anjum Nisar emphasizing the urgent need to address line losses and electricity theft, has cited its detrimental effects on the national economy and stressed the need for overhauling the power sector through some drastic measures as the total cost of inefficiencies in the power sector is constantly escalating.

In a statement issued on Sunday, he encouraged the DISCOs to leverage technology and innovation in their efforts to eradicate power theft, as the objective should be to curtail indiscriminate power outages, especially to consumers who diligently pay their bills. Mian Anjum Nisar asked the government that that all obstacles hindering efforts to prevent electricity theft must be removed.



FAISALABAD: Peoples shopping at a vegetable stall at Ramadan Sasta bazaar established by the city government on Jhang Road in the city.

Undeterred resolve – only way to end economic woes

ISLAMABAD (APP): Given its location, landscape, environment, weather, shores and fertile land, Pakistan had always been the most potential and business-friendly destination offering volumes of dividends to investors and businessmen.

Although fluctuating policies of the past landed this potential state into serious economic crunch with putting it back on track becoming a gigantic task, yet it can be vibrant again if consistent, holistic and result oriented approach is adopted.

Even today, the numbers of brotherly countries are waiting for a nod to invest billions of dollars in different sectors of Pakistan economy and the newly formed government has already tightened belts for a tough ride ahead.

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and his team is also aware that they would be confronting a myriad of daunting economic hurdles, ranging from soaring inflationary pressures and staggering external debt burden to diminished exchange reserves and fluctuating currency values.

As the economic panorama, shrouded in uncertainty and volatility, necessitates adept navigation and resolute action to guide nation towards stability, the government diligently articulated its resolve to fight out this challenge.

At the head PML-N led new coalition government, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif soon after assuming office, issued directives to pertinent authorities for formulating proposals to reduce government expenditures and undertaking a comprehensive overhaul of country's economic framework. Responding to this exigency, the new government employs immediate measures for bolstering revenues and curbing escalating fiscal deficit with the Prime Minister also mandating commencement of digitization and automation process within the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR).

"Reducing inflationary burden on people is one of the most pressing challenges for the government. It would have to go for immediate solutions to ease inflationary burden," said Dr Usman Chohan, Advisor on Economic Affairs at Centre for Aerospace and Security Studies (CASS).

He said the situation would be more exigent in an environment where on one hand the people would be expecting to bring down inflation while International Monetary Fund (IMF), in a likely follow-up program, pressurizing the government to extract more from public in terms of revenue collecting and electricity price initiatives.

Identifying global economic slowdown as a significant contributor to Pakistan's financial woes,

