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PESHAWAR: Chief of the Army Staff General Syed Asim Munir attending funeral prayers of soldiers who embraced Shahadat during an intense exchange of fire with terrorists at general area Bagh, Khyber district

Officers to be clear roadmap to implement law & public welfare: CM vows to continue action against terrorists, facilitators without any indiscriminate

Independent Report

QUETTA: The Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Sarfraz Ahmed Bugti has reiterated his government's resolve to continue action against the terrorists and their facilitators in the province without any discrimination.

The Chief Minister exhorted all the security institutions to continue effective action through mutual coordination for elimination of terrorism and establishing peace in the province.

He also directed to the officers to ensure enforcement of law impartially and keep them away from the partial political affairs.

In addition to this, he also directed to the Home Department to expedite action for payment of the financial compensation to

the heirs of martyrs as already decided.

The Chief Minister was chairing a high level meeting on the law and order situation here at the CM's secretariat on Monday.

The Provincial Minister for Home, Mir Ziaullah Langove, Minister Finance, Mir Shoaib Nausherwani, Chief Secretary, Shakeel Qadir Khan, Additional Chief Secretary Home, Zahid Saleem, Inspector General of Police, Abdul Khaliq Sheikh and other concerned high ups.

The Chief Minister on the occasion directed to ensure prevention of crimes in the urban areas through snap checking.

Besides, the Chief Minister adding ordered to ensure prevention of the extortion at the check posts of Levies and Police

all over the province. He warned that stern action would be taken against those officers and persons involved in the extortion.

Similarly, he directed to all administrative officers to take practical steps for improving service delivery and provision of relief to the general public.

The Chief Minister announced to hold conference of all commissioners, deputy commissioners and district police officers.

He said that the officers would be given clear roadmap for implementation on the law and public welfare.

He also vowed to implement the "key performance indicators" to review performance of the administrative officers.



QUETTA: Balochistan Governor Sheikh Jaffar Khan Mandokhail being briefed about the Quetta Development Package.

A convicted person can't acknowledge Govt's diplomatic achievements, initiatives for developments: Tarar

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Information, Broadcasting, National Heritage and Culture Attaullah Tarar on Monday said that a convicted person in prison could not digest and acknowledge multiple achievements of current government on diplomatic front and initiatives for the development of the country.

"Definitely, there is a sinister plan to compare the current situation with that of 1971 but these tactics are doomed to fail; InshaAllah, Pakistan will remain on the map of the world and make march towards progress and prosperity", he said while addressing a press conference.

He said during the tenure of the present elected government, by the grace of Allah Almighty, Paki-

stan had achieved many milestones on the diplomatic front.

"The Prime Minister had a telephonic conversation with the Prime Ministers of Norway and Ireland in the backdrop of their strong stance on Middle East situation", he remarked.

He said Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif had telephonically contacted the prime ministers of Norway and Ireland who had condemned the ongoing atrocities in Gaza and Rafah and

called for immediate ceasefire.

The minister said that PM Shehbaz Sharif informed the two Prime Ministers about Pakistan's position on the situation.

"Pakistan has always raised its voice for the rights of Palestinians," he said adding PM Shehbaz Sharif during his address to UN General Assembly had stated categorically that Pakistan will continue to raise its voice for the cause of Palestinians.

Day of 28th May has immense importance in history of Pak, says Governor Balochistan

Independent Report

QUETTA: The Governor Balochistan, Sheikh Jaffar Mandokhail has stated that the day of 28th May has great importance in history of Pakistan. In a statement issued here on Monday marking the Youm-e-Takbeer, the Governor said that Pakistan had emerged as an Atomic power among the Muslim countries of the world. He said that the defence of Pakistan became undiscoverable after becoming Atomic power.

He said that today Pa-

kistan is very Atomic power and is very much stronger than before.

The Governor said that it is fact that the increased manpower has no meaning against the Atomic power.

He stressed that at the moment, we have to demonstrate internal unity among the country and provinces. We would also have to make pledge to take part in development of the country and would not hesitate from rendering any sacrifice for prosperity and protection of the country.

Budget for fiscal 2024-25 to be presented on June 8 in NA

ISLAMABAD (Online): Budget session of National Assembly (NA) will take place at 5pm evening on June 05.

According to sources the budget for financial year 2024-25 will be presented in NA on June 08. Finance minister Muhammad Aurangzeb will present the budget.

The debate on budget will start on June 10. The approval of budget will be obtained in the last week of June after Eid ul Azha.

Seven soldiers embraced martyrdom, 23 terrorists killed in three separate IBOs: ISPR

PM pays tribute to Pak Army's officers, soldiers for successful operations against terrorists

RAWALPINDI (APP): A Captain among seven soldiers of Pakistan Army embraced martyrdom while gallantly fighting against terrorists in three separate intelligence-based operations (IBOs) that resulted in eliminating 23 terrorists by the security forces.

According to the Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR) news release, the security forces conducted three separate operations from May 26-27 in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Province.

On May 26, an intelligence based operation was conducted in general area Hassan Khel, Peshawar District, where six terrorists were successfully neutral-

ized by the security forces and multiple hideouts were busted. Captain Hussain Jehangir and Havildar Shafiq Ullah also embraced Shahadat on May 26, while fighting gallantly. On May 27, in another operation conducted in Tank District, the Army troops effectively engaged the terrorists' location, as a result of which ten terrorists were killed.

The third engagement occurred in general area Bagh, Khyber District, wherein, the security forces killed seven terrorists, while two terrorists were injured.

However, during the intense exchange of fire, five brave soldiers; Naik

Muhammad Ashfaq Butt (age 32 years; resident of district Kahuta), Lance Naik Syed Danish Afkar (age 30 years; resident of district Poonch), Sepoy Taimoor Malik (age 32 years; resident of district Layyah), Sepoy Nadir Sager (age 22 years; resident of district Bagh) and Sepoy Muahmmad Yasin (age 23 years; resident of district Khushab), having fought gallantly, embraced Shahadat.

Meanwhile Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Monday paid tribute to the officers and soldiers of the Pakistan Army for carrying out successful opera-

tions against the terrorists in Tank, Dera Ismail Khan and Bagh, Khyber district. The prime minister also paid tribute to five soldiers Naek Muhammad Ashfaq Butt, Lance Naek Syed Danish Afkar, Sepoy Taimoor Malik, Sepoy Nadir Sagheer and Sepoy Muhammad Yaseen who embraced martyrdom during the operation in Bagh.

He said the Pakistan Army soldiers took part in the operations against the terrorist elements by putting their lives at risk.

"May Allah Almighty elevate the ranks of the martyrs in the paradise and grant courage to the bereaved family members

to bear this loss with patience," he said in a message issued by the PM House. PM Shehbaz said the entire nation including himself paid tribute to the family members of the martyrs.

He emphasized that the officers and soldiers of Pakistan Armed Forces always preferred the country's integrity and solidarity over their lives.

"We will continue the war till complete elimination of the menace of terrorism from the country," he resolved.

He said the entire nation stood shoulder to shoulder with its armed forces.

PM announces public holiday on Youm-e-Takbeer

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Monday declared a public holiday on May 28 to mark Youm-e-Takbeer, the day when Pakistan's defence became impregnable after nuclear tests in the hills of Chagai, Balochistan in the year 1998.

"Youm-e-Takbeer reminds how the entire Pakistani nation got united on that day to make the country's defence invincible," the prime minister said in a statement issued by the PM House.

On the day in 1998, he said, the nation decided that there would be no compromise on the country's integrity and defence by not yielding to any external pressure.

Both the political and defence forces got united on the day under the National Flag to strengthen the country's defence, he added.

PM Shehbaz said it was the day of renewing pledge that "we will always remain ready to thwart the nefarious designs of both external and internal enemies, who want to endanger the country".

"May 28 is also the day of paying tributes to the steps taken by the then Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif and the Pakistan Army to make the national defence invincible."

"We also pay tribute to Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto for initiating the atomic programme and the scientists who played a key role in continuing it," the prime minister remarked.

CJCSC, Services Chiefs greet nation on Youm-e-Takbeer

Independent Report

RAWALPINDI: Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee and Services Chiefs on behalf of the Armed Forces of Pakistan, extend warm felicitations to the nation on the 26th anniversary of "Youm-e-Takbeer".

This momentous occasion commemorates the historic achievement of Pakistan's nuclear tests in 1998, which successfully established credible minimum deterrence and restored the balance of power in the region.

The Armed Forces and the nation pay tribute to the unwavering dedication and selfless

sacrifices of all those who contributed to this remarkable feat, achieved against overwhelming odds. The scientists, engineers, and officials who devoted their lives to realizing this dream rightly deserve the gratitude and admiration of the nation and its Armed Forces.

On this important day in Pakistan's history, the Armed Forces of Pakistan reaffirm their unwavering resolve to defend the motherland, protect its sovereignty and territorial integrity, and ensure the nation's security at all times and at any cost, InshaAllah.

Pakistan Zindabad!

CM Bugti congratulates nation on 26th Youm-e-Takbeer

Independent Report

QUETTA: The Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Sarfraz Ahmed Bugti has greeted Pakistani nation on the 26th Youm-e-Takbeer being observed marking the nuclear blasts carried out on May 28, 1998 in Chaghai.

In a statement issued here on Monday, the Chief Minister paid rich tributes to the armed forces and those who remained firm while rendering their remarkable services to make the defence of country invincible.

Mir Sarfraz Ahmed Bugti said that Pakistan's defence is strong and the nuclear capability of Pakistan is for maintaining balance of power in the South Asian region.

The Chief Minister said that Pakistan made it clear to all anti-country forces with the Atomic blasts of May 28 that it has capability of defending it's

frontiers and maintaining it's survival.

He also said that the historic achievement made by our armed forces and atomic scientists is also matter of pride for the nation and coming generations.

The Chief Minister said that Youm-e-Takbeer teaches us lesson of serving selflessly for development, stability and prosperity of Pakistan. It also promotes the spirit among the Pakistanis that they would not hesitate for rendering any sacrifice for defence and safety of the country.

He said that the people of Balochistan are proud of their armed forces. He said that we are proud of that we live in such a country which is the only Islamic atomic power.

Mir Sarfraz Ahmed Bugti prayed for the stability and survival of the country.



QUETTA: Balochistan Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Ahmed Bugti presides over the meeting to review law and order situation and payment of compensation to those martyred in terrorism incidents.

On Youm-e-Takbeer

Gilani emphasises constant efforts to make country's defence impregnable

ISLAMABAD (APP): As the nation observes Youm-e-Takbeer on Tuesday to commemorate the 26th anniversary of Pakistan's nuclear tests, Acting President Syed Yusuf Raza Gilani called for drawing inspiration from that success to make the country's defence impregnable through technological and economic advancements.

The acting president, in his message to the nation, termed the day a pivotal moment in the nation's history and called for a renewed pledge to continue working towards a peaceful and stable world.

He said on that day,

Pakistan successfully demonstrated its nuclear capabilities and joined the ranks of nuclear powers. "Youm-e-Takbeer serves as a testament to our nation's resilience, unwavering determination, and commitment to maintaining regional peace and stability," he added.

He said the journey to becoming a nuclear state was not without its difficulties as the national leadership and scientists braved various challenges to achieve the remarkable feat.

"Today, as we reflect on this journey, we acknowledge the hard work of our scientists and engineers without whom this achieve-

ment would not have been possible. Today, we also recognize the contributions of Shaheed Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto whose efforts led to making Pakistan a nuclear state. We also appreciate Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto's decision as the opposition leader of the time to support Nawaz Sharif for conducting nuclear tests. Indeed, it was the collective determination of our civil and military leadership as well as our scientific acumen, and unwavering dedication to national defence that propelled us forward," Acting President Gilani remarked.

Nawaz Sharif likely to elect PML-N President

LAHORE (INP): The Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz election commission will issue nomination papers for election of the party's new president today.

The five-member election commission of the party being headed by Rana Sanaullah, Iqbal Jhagra, Ishrat Ashraf, Jamal Shah Kakar and Khealdas Kohistani are

other members of the commission. Candidates can get nomination papers upto 5:00 in the evening, a party spokesperson said. "The papers could be submitted from 10:00am to 12:00 noon tomorrow," spokesman said. "Scrutiny of the papers will be held between 1:00 to 2:00pm". "The central general council of the party will elect new president at 4:00pm tomorrow," election commission an-

nounced. Former prime minister Nawaz Sharif could likely to return unopposed as the PML-N president. According to the agenda of the PML-N general council session, it will elect the party's president and approve amendments in the party's constitution. Acting president of the party Shehbaz Sharif and newly elected president will address the session.

Felicitations Resolution on Youm-e-Takbeer approved:

BA adopts motion for formation of special committee for CPEC Project consisting of MPAs

Independent Report

QUETTA: The Balochistan Assembly adopted a motion for formation of a special committee for China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) Project consisting of the members of provincial assembly.

The motion was tabled by Provincial Minister Finance, Mir Shoaib Nausherwani in the session while the Speaker, Captain (Retd) Abdul Khaliq Achakzai was in chair here on Monday.

Similarly, the provincial assembly also adopted the felicitations resolution regarding Youm-e-Takbeer being celebrated today (Tuesday).

The resolution was tabled by the Provincial Minister belonging to PML-N, Sardar Abdul Rehman Khetran.

ther said that Pakistani nation's and Islamic world's head was raised with pride with the nuclear tests.

This achievement was made because of the armed forces of Pakistan, political leadership and scientists. Besides the regional stability, independence and sovereignty of the country was also made possible.

Through the resolution, provincial assembly paid tributes to the then

Prime Minister and current leader of PML-N, Mian Muhammad Nawaz Sharif on the nuclear blasts conducted on May 28, 1998.

In the resolution, it was made pledge not to avoid from rendering any kind of sacrifice for stability, development and defence of the country and foil the internal and external conspiracies to be hatched against the stability of country and institutions.



QUETTA: Provincial Minister for PHE Sardar Abdul Rehman Khetran presenting resolution about Youm-e-Takbeer Day at Balochistan Assembly session.

Daily Voice of Masses Independent

Mercury rising

Should we expect a political heatwave this summer? The climate seems to be rather conducive to it. The two largest parties are once again on the warpath, with a slew of troubling developments precluding any hopes for the long-awaited normalisation of political temperatures.

In Lahore, the chief minister of Punjab has approved the registration of fresh cases against the PTI leadership, this time for "building a hateful narrative against state institutions". It appears that the PML-N government will rely on the odious defamation bill it recently passed in the Punjab Assembly to go after its chief rival. The provincial information minister, speaking on the matter, explained to the media that the Punjab home department had provided information establishing that PTI leaders were "spreading mischief inside and outside jail". She claimed that the party was "spreading hate as part of organised propaganda" to incite the people, destabilise the country and inculcate hatred against its institutions.

Was this anticipated? Unfortunately, yes. Meanwhile, in Islamabad, the PTI has been engaged in a bitter confrontation with the Capital Development Authority, which this week razed part of the party's central secretariat and later sealed the building under an anti-encroachment drive after issuing several warnings. Twenty-six individuals, including a PTI leader, were subsequently booked by Islamabad Police on various charges, including terrorism, allegedly for violently resisting the CDA operation.

Understandably, the party is incensed by its relentless victimisation; disappointingly, it has yet to show any remorse for its own culpability in similar targeting of its opponents in the past. It has also seemed unwilling to mend fences with its opponents, having set strict preconditions for any negotiations that are unlikely to be accepted in the current situation. It seems in no hurry to see matters resolved and appears to be hoping that the crises engulfing the government will eventually bring about its downfall.

These are all worrying reminders that political stability, a prerequisite for the economic stability desperately sought by the inflation-weary citizenry, remains as elusive as ever. With the budget almost upon us and the IMF making it clear it will not consider extending more loans till its painful requisites are met, the months ahead are likely to see civil discontent explode once again as summer electricity bills and new taxation measures land on the largely unsuspecting public. The country seems to be at the end of its tether. At some point, its leaders need to ask themselves: what is the point of fighting if ashes are all that will be left to rule over after they are done? Each of them is equally responsible for the deep pit Pakistan seems to have fallen into. It is time they stopped digging deeper and started thinking about how to get it out.

Moving bombs

Mohammad Ali Babakhel

In the post-9/11 scenario, suicide bombing emerged as the deadliest and most popular terrorist strategy adopted by various groups around the world. After 9/11, there was an intensification in both the frequency and innovation of suicide bombings. Among these, the suicide vehicle-borne improvised explosive device (SVBIED) quickly became one of the most lethal weapons deployed. This sophisticated weapon requires significant technical proficiency, which leading militant organisations developed and employed effectively.

The Islamic State's frequent use of SVBIEDs in Iraq and Syria helped the militant group attract global media attention. SVBIEDs served as a powerful force multiplier, enabling numerically inferior militants to deliver tons of explosives to designated targets and overrun larger enemy contingents. IS used SVBIEDs to punch holes in static defences, with follow-up attacks inflicting further damage on defenders.

IS tried to gain an edge over its enemies by tailoring SVBIED designs to specific threats, targets, and environments, with the aim of increasing the likelihood of the vehicle reaching its intended detonation point. For example, the covert SVBIED, the most commonly used type, features a vehicle with an unmodified exterior fitted with an interior explosive payload, driven and detonated at a specific target. The unmodified exterior allows it to blend in with other vehicles, deceiving the police and making it difficult to detect.

An up-armoured SVBIED typically has steel plates welded on

the front exterior, shielding the engine block, windscreen, and tyres. These were used during conflicts in Iraq and Syria. The improvised shielding protected the vehicle, the attacker, and the fitted explosives from incoming fire until the intended point of detonation. After capturing Mosul in 2014, IS seized many military-armoured vehicles, modified them, and used them as SVBIEDs.

A two-man SVBIED is operated by two attackers: one driver and one rooftop gunman. The gunman provides suppressing fire until the vehicle reaches its detonation point. This type of SVBIED was used in attacks against hardened military targets in Iraq and Syria. To target fortified positions, IS designed specific SVBIEDs capable of removing concrete blast barriers to clear the passage.

The militants also use parked SVBIEDs, which resemble SVBIEDs but are parked at a location and detonated remotely. Parked SVBIEDs lack drivers and function as larger, disguised stationary IEDs. Different vehicles provide varying storage capacities to place explosives as needed, effectively targeting and ensuring maximum damage. Usually, SVBIEDs are employed by terrorists against large targets to facilitate forced entry and create significant impact.

To increase the explosion's impact, a few SVBIEDs were designed and used on some occasions by IS with rooftop rocket pods and a firing mechanism that enabled the drivers to suppress fire from the SVBIED's target. In some instances, explosives are mounted on the doors and windshields' interiors to direct as much of the explosive power of the blast forward and to

the sides. The payload arrangement also included crude oil to increase the primary blast effect upon detonation of the main payload and ensure that the remnants at the site were burned, causing more losses.

From 2014 to 2024, a total of 85 suicide attacks, including 26 SVBIEDs, resulted in the deaths of 557 civilians and 143 policemen in KP. The highest number of SVBIED attacks was eight in 2014, followed by four in 2023. Between 2014 and 2024, Peshawar faced the highest number of attacks, with 26 suicide and 11 SVBIED attacks, followed by 14 suicide attacks in North Waziristan and six SVBIED attacks in Bannu. Ground realities suggest that suicide bombing, including SVBIEDs, is primarily an urban or bordering district phenomenon.

To prevent such incidents, Pakistan needs to revise the legal, administrative, and procedural dynamics of vehicle registration, purchase, activation and change of ownership of SIM cards, renting accommodation, and explosives businesses, and record-keeping of travellers. Strict enforcement is required for the regulation of auto workshops. Transparency in vehicle transactions and the prevention of vehicular theft, as well as addressing gaps in the transaction of explosives, will reduce the chances of using vehicles as moving bombs.

Employing sniffer dogs, high-tech explosive detectors, public safety education, target hardening, and redesigning the security architecture of high-profile hotels and commercial buildings, along with adherence to improved security protocols for public transport and trains, will reduce the space for terrorist groups. -- Courtesy Dawn

Boiling point

Huma Yusuf

Another heatwave, another slew of alarming headlines. We are better prepared than we were in 2015, when over 2,500 people lost their lives to soaring temperatures. Public awareness has improved, and emergency measures such as relief camps have been mobilised in urban areas. But Pakistan is still a long way from building the resilience — in all respects, sociopolitical — to infrastructural — that it will need to endure the ravages of climate change, particularly extreme heat.

Concern about extreme heat has largely been driven by economic considerations. The Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research has estimated that global warming will reduce global income by 19 per cent by 2049. The ADB has found that extreme heat results in 650 billion hours of annual labour losses globally (equivalent to 148 million full-time jobs). Of immediate relevance to Pakistan, 2022 research from Dartmouth University found that an annual increase in the temperature of the five hottest days of the year can reduce economic growth by a percentage point.

This economic fallout is driven by decreases in labour productivity and supply as the working poor become unwell, supply chain disruption, and agricultural loss. A recent policy report by LSE's Grantham Institute on the impact of high temperatures on Bangladesh's workforce found that labour productivity and supply would decrease by 46.2pc by 2080 in a world with a three-degree temperature rise.

But extreme heat is not about GDP alone. Evidence is mounting that heatwaves amplify inequality. Women, the rural and urban poor,

marginalised groups and those with less education are more likely to die in heatwaves. These are typically groups with fewer resources, informal housing, erratic energy access and poor healthcare. And we cannot easily ignore this demographic: 1.2bn urban and rural poor will be coping without cooling solutions by 2030.

Women are especially hard hit by extreme heat. According to an FAO report published in March, female-headed households lose 8pc of their income due to heat stress; in the case of female farm labour — a key working constituency in Pakistan — each day of extreme high temperatures reduces the value of crops produced by women by 3pc as compared to men. This is because when the mercury rises, women focus more on unpaid domestic work — sourcing water, caring for heat-affected dependents, and cooking under prohibitive conditions. The physical toll of extreme heat on women, particularly pregnant ones, is also more adverse.

Worse, high temperatures also correlate with an increase in gender-based violence. A 2023 study by JAMA Psychiatry based on research in Pakistan, India and Nepal found that a one degree Celsius increase in the average annual temperature linked to a 6.3pc increase in incidents of physical and sexual abuse. Again, this is no surprise: when temperatures rise, crops fail, daily wage earners struggle to work, health suffers, and the financial pressures resulting from these realities kick in just as families are trapped indoors to escape the sun.

Extreme heat means extreme stress, driving not only domestic violence but also poor mental health. Research from the US, for example,

shows that higher temperatures coincide with an increase in hospital visits for anxiety, self-harm and substance abuse.

Children are also susceptible to extreme heat — and it's not just about dehydration. Frequent heatwaves can have a long-term effect on a child's educational attainment. Half of our country's school-going population has lost a week of learning to the current heatwave. Globally, according to the FAO, higher temperatures also result in 49 more minutes of child labour per week as children pick up chores that women cannot attend to while they manage the extra domestic burden of hot days.

Given this, heat cannot only be considered through an economic lens, with bottom line considerations of worker productivity driving climate-adaptation efforts. We have to see extreme heat as an amplifier of social inequality and marginalisation, and extreme heat on women, particularly pregnant ones, is also more adverse. We have to see extreme heat as an amplifier of social inequality and marginalisation, and extreme heat on women, particularly pregnant ones, is also more adverse. We have to see extreme heat as an amplifier of social inequality and marginalisation, and extreme heat on women, particularly pregnant ones, is also more adverse.

Early evidence shows that heatwaves alter voter preferences, with ballots going to those with proactive plans for building agricultural resilience and planning irrigation. If money couldn't get us to plan better for extreme heat, maybe politics will? -- Courtesy Dawn

Commerce News

ECC approves Rs 4272 million TSGs

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Economic Coordination Committee (ECC) of the cabinet here on Monday approved Technical Supplementary Grants (TSGs) of Rs 4,272.422 million for various divisions and ministries.

According to press release issued by finance ministry, Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue Muhammad Aurangzeb chaired the meeting.

The cabinet

committee approved Rs 2.363 million for the payment of troops costs / subsistence allowance for the Ministry of Interior and Rs 200 million for Intelligence Bureau Division.

Likewise, the ECC also approved Rs 19.373 million for the Ministry of Law & Justice and Rs 4,050.686 for Strategic Plans Division / SUPARCO to meet the requirements of the project titled "Pakistan Multi-

Mission Communication Satellite System".

Furthermore, the proposal of the Ministry of Industries & Production to allow SNGPL based plants to operate for a period of 6 months starting from March 31, 2024 till September 20, 2024 was approved by the committee, to ensure smooth supply of urea fertilizer for Kharif season.

According to the statement, the meeting was attended by the Minister

for Commerce, Jam Kamal Khan; Minister for Power, Sardar Awais Ahmad Khan Leghari; Minister for Petroleum, Musadik Masood Malik; Minister for Industries & Production, Rana Tanveer Hussain; Minister for Economic Affairs, Ahmad Khan Cheema; Minister of State for Finance & Revenue, Ali Pervez Malik; Governor SBP, Chairman SECP, Federal Secretaries, and other senior officials of the relevant ministries.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Finance & Revenue Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb presiding over a meeting of Economic Coordination Committee (ECC).



Federal Minister for Finance & Revenue Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb called on by the Ambassador of USA to Pakistan H.E. Mr. Donald Blome in Islamabad

Pak, Netherlands negotiate on economy, trade for eyeing new investment opportunities

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan and Netherlands on Monday discussed the opportunities for economic and trade ties and also eye new investment opportunities for increasing the bilateral economic ties.

Netherlands Ambassador to Pakistan, Henny Fokel De Vries called on Minister for Commerce Jam Kamal Khan. Both discussed to deepen the trade relations, said a press release issued.

The Ambassador appreciated the role of Minister of Commerce in coordinating and support for resolving the issues of Dutch

companies. Minister Jam Kamal Khan requested to renew the technical programs like CBI and PUM for benefits of SMEs in Pakistan.

He also extended an invitation to the Dutch Minister for Trade to visit Pakistan along with a business delegation as many Dutch companies are operating in Pakistan.

The minister highlighted Pakistan's significant potential in various sectors, including renewable energy, services, agriculture, IT, human resources, fisheries, and textiles.

China's industrial profits swing back to growth in April

ANKARA (AA/APP): China's industrial profit posted an increase in April, reversing a decline in March, according to data from the National Bureau of Statistics on Monday.

Profits at China's industrial companies rose 4% at an annualized pace in April, compared with March's 3.5% decrease which ended seven consecutive months of rises. April's uptick was led by the government's stimulus measures which came into effect to boost the economy and a recovery in exports.

In January-April, industrial profit went up by 4.3% from a year ago to 2.09 trillion yuan (\$289 billion).

Rs 300 bln interest free loans to be given to farmers: Saqib Ateel

MULTAN (APP): Secretary Agriculture south Punjab Saqib Ateel said that interest free loans worth Rs 300 billion would be given to farmers in order to enhance agricultural productivity.

He said this in the "Meet the Press" event of the local Press Club, here on Monday. The secretary agriculture south Punjab stated that overall Rs 400 billion would be spent under the Transforming Agriculture Punjab project.

The loans will be given with collaboration of Bank of the Punjab, he informed. About 0.5 million farmers will obtain these loans, he hinted. He also maintained that 7,000 tubewells would be energized through the solar system. Huge amounts will also be spent on brick-lining of the 7300 water courses. Similarly, services of the 500 agri-graduates will be hired for promotion of the agriculture sector, said Saqib.

Pak economic downfall, Indian development started in 1990s: Shahid Rasheed

ISLAMABAD (INP): Former President of the Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI), Dr. Shahid Rasheed Butt has said that the journey of Pakistan's economic downfall and Indian development started in the early 1990s.

In a statement issued here on Monday, he said India went almost bankrupt in 1991 and borrowed against the entire country's gold to start a serious economic development effort.

However, Pakistan, which was much better than India in many respects by then, began a downward journey as politicians were more interested in corruption and hiding stolen funds than economic development.

Shahid Rasheed Butt said that good laws were made in India to promote industry, agriculture, and services sectors and to lure investments, while in Pakistan, legislation was enacted to protect the stolen funds.

Speakers for dedicated track, trace system to bring informal sector into tax net

ISLAMABAD (APP): The speakers at a pre-budget consultative session Monday urged the government to ensure a dedicated track and trace system to bring the retailers and businesses from the informal sectors into the tax net to generate revenue from untaxed sectors.

The Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI) organized the consultative discussion titled "Pre-Budget Seminar: Tax Reforms in

Agriculture, Retail and Real Estate Sectors".

Dr. Abid Qayyum Suleri, Executive Director, SDPI underlined that it was imperative to unearth the bottlenecks in paying taxes. He added that these sectors were willing to pay taxes and it was necessary to consider their suggestions in the policy-making processes.

Ahsan Zafar Bakhawari, President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce, and Industry (ICCI) said the retail sector

was paying taxes in the country, but it was crucial to integrate the retailers who were not part of the system.

He urged the government to develop a proper track and trace system that could identify the non-tax paying retailers who were doing billions of rupees annual business but did not pay taxes.

He said that products should not be supplied to retailers who lack NTN or national tax numbers.

Gold rates up by Rs 800 per tola

ISLAMABAD (APP): The per tola price of 24 karat gold increased by Rs 800 and was sold at Rs 240,800 on Monday compared to its sale at Rs 240,000 on the last trading day.

The price of 10 grams of 24 karat gold also increased by Rs 686 to Rs 205,761 whereas the price of 10 grams 22 karat gold went up to Rs 189,243 from Rs 188,615, the All Sindh Sarafa Jewellers Association reported.

CDNS collects Rs 1.5tln targets in fresh bond

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Central Directorate of National Savings (CDNS) has attained a target of Rs1.515 trillion in fresh bonds and achieved 85 percent of the annual target in the current fiscal year, from July 1 to May 26th.

The National Savings has set an annual target of Rs 1.742 trillion for the year 2023-24, in which it is encouraging that 85 percent of the target has been achieved, and it is hoped that

National Savings will surpass its annual target this FY 2023-24, the senior official of CDNS told APP on Monday.

The CDNS surpassed the annual target and achieved the target of Rs 1.6 trillion in fresh bonds in the current fiscal year, he said.

He said this was an Rs 200 billion additional target than the target of Rs 1300 billion for the previous financial year 2021-22.

Youm-e-Takbeer: A proud day for nation

Youm-e-Takbeer: the day PAEC made the nation proud



By Muhammad Aftab Alam

May 28 has a special significance in the life of every Pakistani. On this day, the scientists, engineers and technicians of PAEC achieved the unachievable and delivered what they had promised in the form of five nuclear blasts at Chaghi in Balochistan, making the nation's defense unconquerable. Besides some known names who contributed in this herculean task through unmatched contributions for the country's security, there were numerous unsung heroes who worked day and night towards achieving this unbelievable mission by a developing country.

PAEC has so far established nineteen (19) Atomic Energy Cancer Hospitals (AECHs) located in all provinces and major cities of the country while the 20th cancer hospital at Muzaffarabad, AJ&K, is under construction. These hospitals are helping the government in catering to the healthcare needs of cancer-affected patients in the country by providing diagnostic and therapeutic facilities. PAEC-managed cancer hospitals provide diagnostic and therapeutic facilities to patients at subsidized rates by dint of support from Patient Welfare Society (PWS) of the hospitals and Pakistan Bait-ul-Mal (PBM).

In the field of international cooperation and promotion of the culture of sharing and learning from fellow scientists' research, PAEC started conducting annual meetings of researchers and scientists in Pakistan. A brainchild of the Nobel Laureate of Pakistani origin, Dr. Abdul Salam, the idea of holding the annual

at CERN and International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). Pakistan became Associate Member State of CERN on July 31, 2015, the only Asian country to attain this position at that time. Pakistan ratified the status agreement with CERN on August 26, 2015.

In the use of nuclear energy for generating electricity, PAEC is currently operating six nuclear power plants (NPPs), including Karachi Nuclear Power Plants Unit-2 & Unit-3 commonly known as K-2 and K-3 in Karachi; and C-1, C-2, C-3, C-4 NPPs in Chashma, Mianwali. These plants are collectively producing over 3500 megawatts (MWs) of electricity.

Advantages of nuclear power generated electricity include low per unit cost of generation, all-year-round availability, and no emissions of greenhouse gases, besides being critically important from energy-security point of view.

As a responsible nuclear state, a founding member of the IAEA and

Four PAEC agriculture research centers have been established in the three provinces of Pakistan having a major share of the cultivatable land in the country. Nuclear Institute of Agriculture (NIA) in Tando Jam, established in 1962 was the first such institute followed by Nuclear Institute for Agriculture and Biology (NIAB), in Faisalabad; Nuclear Institute for Food and Agriculture (NIFA), in Peshawar and National Institute for Biotechnology & Genetic Engineering (NIBGE), in Faisalabad.

So far, these PAEC-run agriculture centers have developed and evolved more than one hundred and fifty (150) crop varieties for Pakistan. For utilization of marginal lands, PAEC has developed technology for the utilization of salt-affected lands and this technology is being provided not only to the local farmers but also at international level.

These centers also have a fair share in human resource development through training courses, workshops and internships. These courses equally benefit researchers, students and academia from various research organizations and universities. NIAB and NIBGE in Faisalabad are also affiliated with Pakistan Institute of Engineering and Applied Sciences (PIEAS) - the leading university of the country, for award of MPhil and PhD degrees in Biology and Biotechnology.

Taking a big step towards agriculture industrialization and commercialization, PAEC recently organized a huddle of agricultural scientists, agriculturists and business leaders in the field of agriculture. The Agriculture symposium cum exhibition was organized at NIAB and NIBGE institutes in Faisalabad.

Titled "Cultivate Innovation to Harvest Business Growth", the two-day event was sponsored by Support Industries and Technologies (SITECH), in line with Government's Green Pakistan Initiative. Its ultimate aim was to commercialize and popularize the latest technical advancements in the field of agriculture and biotechnology.

Leading agricultural experts and researchers from seed companies, progressive farmers, corporate sectors, researchers, academia from agri and biotech fields and representatives from government, Fongrow Coy and FFC also participated. The participants appreciated the event and they hoped that organizers will provide more such opportunities of establishing linkages among agricultural researchers, farmers and allied departments as well as businesses, in future.

Although PAEC is striving to prove a catalyst in all key areas of national development, May 28 will always remain a feather in its cap as it made Pakistanis hold their heads high with pride. - The writer is a PR practitioner. He can be reached at joumalistinmaking@gmail.com



Nuclear Technologyan imperative for national defense and development

By Saima Durrani

The famous lines of US president John F Kennedy uttered half a century ago "Ask not what your country can do for you-ask what you can do for your country" may seem bit cliched now but the devotional pledge and undercurrents of selfless service embodied in his statement can still inspire anyone anywhere in the world eager to serve one's motherland.

This notion of selfless service should resonate rather well with us who are still striving to achieve the cherished dream of seeing a prosperous Pakistan among the comity of nations.

Pakistan today faces formidable social, economic, and security challenges. Many nations have faced similar challenges in history and successfully turned them into opportunities through dedicated commitment of self less hard working individuals. Once effectively addressed, our challenges likewise offer unprecedented opportunities for transformational progress.

And if this dedication is coupled with capability in science and technology, the real engine for economic growth, we have the recipe for success at our hands. Science and technology (S&T) are fundamental for social and economic progress in developing countries as they have been central in the progress and development of virtually all the nations of the world. Nuclear technology, a top notch specialty in its own domain offers a wide array of applications leading to the development push we all aspire. Moreover, in today's geo-political scenario, the strategic and defense portfolio of any country is measured up against its potential economic viability. And it is the growth of this nexus of strong economy and defense which can guarantee a prosperous country.

It was no mere coincidence that despite initial problems, as early as 1956, an S&T set up the Pakistan Atomic Energy Commission PAEC was established by the farsighted leaders to make use of the international trend of atoms for peace initiative of American president Eisenhower. This organization not only provided the scientific thrust intended for national development in agriculture, human health, energy & industry but also delivered when asked to make the motherland's defense impregnable.

The Commission now holds sway over utilization of nuclear technology for a wide array of national development initiatives. Incidentally these initiatives are also key tools used to support the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Out of the 17 SDGs of UN agenda, PAEC contributes to 11 of them

through its dedicated setup of laboratories and institutes.

As nuclear technology is the most innovative way to improve agriculture practices, PAEC never lagged behind in this arena and recruited its first biologist way back in 1958 which was followed by the establishment of Radiobiology Division in early 60's at Atomic Energy Centre, Lahore.

Subsequently, first full fledged Atomic Energy Agriculture Research Center was established in 1962 at Tandojam which was followed by Nuclear Institute for Agriculture and Biology (NIAB) in 1972 at Faisalabad, Nuclear Institute for Food and Agriculture (NIFA) at Peshawar in 1982 and National Institute of Biotechnology and Genetic Engineering (NIBGE) in 1994.

The Commission took lead in utilizing nuclear technology to improve productivity by developing new crop varieties, pest control technologies, plant nutri-

and genetically modified organisms.

Likewise, at Pakistan Radiation Services (PARAS), a subsidiary of PAEC, a 10 MeV, 20 kW E-Beam plant caters for sterilization of healthcare products manufacturing as well as fulfilling the requirements of export food items to Australia, America, New Zealand, and other European countries.

In the human health domain, PAEC has been providing services in cancer care through use of radiation since 1960s. PAEC's 60 years' experience of designing, executing and operating cancer hospitals has resulted in 19 Atomic Energy Cancer Hospitals (AECHs) throughout Pakistan. One more hospital is under construction at Muzaffarabad, AJK. Patients receive high quality diagnostic and treatment facilities here.

AECHs are equipped with latest SPECT-CT Gamma Cameras, PET-CT Scanners, Cyclotrons, Radioisotope therapy and

C-2, C-3, & C-4) of cumulative 1,330 Mwe capacity are located at the Chashma Nuclear Power Generating Station (CNPGS). Ground breaking for another similar plant named C-5 at Chashma has also taken place.

Two NPPs (i.e., K-2 & K-3) of the total 2,200 Mwe capacity are operating near paradise point of mega polis Karachi. K-2 is operating commercially since May, 2021 and K-3 since April, 2022. During the year 2023, these six nuclear power plants supplied 22,372 million kWh to NTDC system.

An elaborate and diversified engineering set up of PAEC successfully caters to design, manufacturing & testing of mechanical equipment for medium and heavy industries in accordance with the International Codes and Standards especially for Power Plants, Chemical and Petrochemical Plants and other Industrial Projects for itself and the national industry. These setups are well equipped with modern engineering manufacturing and fabrication facilities geared toward attaining excellence.

A set up of PAEC, viz Heavy mechanical complex-3, HMC-3 is one of the largest industrial projects in the heavy engineering sector of Pakistan. One of PAEC entity National Centre for Non-Destructive Testing (NCNDT) is providing, inspection, testing, training, calibration, qualification, certification, condition assessment and root cause analysis services to PAEC and national industry to meet the requirements in accordance with local and international standards.

International collaboration is highly valued by PAEC and this aspect is covered mainly through technical cooperation with International Atomic Energy Agency IAEA, European Organization for Nuclear Research CERN and other such organizations and also the scientific discourses of International Nathiagali Summer College INSC which help its manpower both personnel as well as students of its Human Resource Development institutes to engage with the latest technologies and add to their technical acumen.

Even this cursory summary of the scope and achievements of the organization presented here makes it clear that PAEC is uniquely placed to cater to national needs of both socio-economic development and strategic edge. Whereas this special occasion of Youm-e-Takbeer calls for renewing the self less dedication of PAEC personnel to remain motivated and strive to excel in both domains of national development in future as well, it also reiterates the critical support needed from all relevant stakeholders if we pledge to serve our nation and see it prosper.

PAEC currently operates six nuclear power plants at two sites generating 10 percent of electricity through nuclear of the country's total and almost a quarter of its low-carbon electricity. Nuclear power generation is economically competitive in the power market of Pakistan. Among these six, four NPPs (C-1,

unable to convince them not to carry out the nuclear test (Daily Dawn, June 6, 2004, Sharif Government refused to receive USN-delegation). Seventeen days before the nuclear devices were detonated, were very difficult, for the PM, Ministers and Army Chief to sustain external pressure not to detonate especially from USA. On 27 May a day before tests US President called the PM about five times not to carry out tests and used carrot and stick (Sartaj Aziz, Between Dreams and Realities, p194). In the decision making process, the government also sought the views of retired defence and eco-



Apart from defense, PAEC is also the torchbearer in ensuring sustainable development for the country in all spheres of life by using nuclear science and technology for peaceful purposes. International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), in line with its 'Atoms for Peace and Development' mandate, supports countries in their efforts to reach the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) set out in the United Nations (UN) 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Many countries use nuclear science and technology to contribute to and meet their development objectives in areas including energy, human health, food production, water management and environmental protection.

Being member of the Board of Governors of the IAEA, Pakistan has been utilizing nuclear technology for peaceful purposes since the inception of PAEC, which has contributed immensely in achieving the SDGs.

meeting of topnotch researchers and scientists of the world in Pakistan was adopted by the then Chairman Muneer Ahmed Khan and his successor Dr. Ishfaq Ahmad and all successive chairmen of PAEC.

International Nathiagali Summer College (INSC) on Physics and Contemporary Needs' has been organized every year since 1976, mostly at the scenic hill resort of Nathiagali. So far, 7 Nobel laureates and 41000 scientists, out of which 1000 were foreigners, from 72 countries have participated in the annual springs of scientists in Pakistan to exchange valuable knowledge with their local colleagues and science students.

Owing to the untiring efforts of PAEC scientists, engineers, technicians and researchers, Pakistan is proudly an Associate Member of European Organization for Nuclear Research (CERN) and scientists from the country are actively participating in various research activities

an emerging player in the field of nuclear power generation, Pakistan takes pride in ensuring impeccable security arrangements at all of its nuclear power plants. Stringent entry protocols in the form of controlled access of personnel and retina identification for entry at the power plants are some of the measures that help ensure authorized access only.

As per international best practices in the field of nuclear power, Emergency Preparedness Measures are well in place for timely intervention at these power plants. The safety and security are the two highlights of nuclear power plants operating in the country.

PAEC has taken the lead in utilizing nuclear technology to improve productivity of agriculture sector through the introduction of new crop varieties, pest control technologies, plant nutrition, water management, animal health and productivity and food decontamination and preser-

ship or was it thrust upon it by the military. The DCC meeting was held on 13 May chaired by the PM, attended by Foreign Minister, Finance Minister, Interior Minister, Chairman JCSC, and Services Chiefs. In addition Dr. A Q Khan and Dr. Samar Mubarakmand attended as reps of KRL and PAEC respectively. A lot of deliberations had taken place to decide appropriate response. The opportunity provided by India to become nuclear state and the economic challenges were pondered thoroughly. The meeting was like a war cabinet taking the decision in a crisis mode where the DCC members were evaluating all the implications of testing, under tremendous economic and international pressures. It was virtually an undeclared emergency situation. Armed forces were alerted for extra safe guards of the

Comprehensively deliberated decision for Youme-e-Takbeer

By Dr Anjum Sarfraz

India surprised the world on 11 May 1998 by conducting three nuclear underground explosions and two on 13 May. The PM of India very proudly announced that we have become sixth nuclear weapon state and should be treated by the world as such. At the same time, Indian stance towards Pakistan became aggressive. The senior Indian hierarchy started giving provocative statements. The Indian Home Minister L.K Advani made a statement of Indian intention to cross the LoC under the pretext of hot pursuit. The Corps Cdr in Indian Illegally Occupied Kashmir (IIOJK) held an unprecedented news conference and advocated his plans to attack Azad Kashmir across the LoC. As a declared nuclear state and almost negligible international reaction, India was

clearly placed in a better position than Pakistan.

The PM, Nawaz Sharif, was on official visit to Kazakhstan. He talked to Gen Jehangir Karamat, Chairman JCSC and COAS, it was decided to hold a meeting of Defence Committee of Cabinet (DCC) upon his arrival. However, according to Naeem Salik, (The Genesis of South Asia Nuclear Deterrence: Pakistan's Perspective p141) Gen Karamat's account of the event is little different. The PM called General and told him to start preparations for the test. He suggested the PM to return to Pakistan as soon as possible, and then the decision would be taken after deliberation in DCC, the institution designed to deliberate and take such decisions. It is relevant to clarify speculation about whether the decision was taken by political leader-

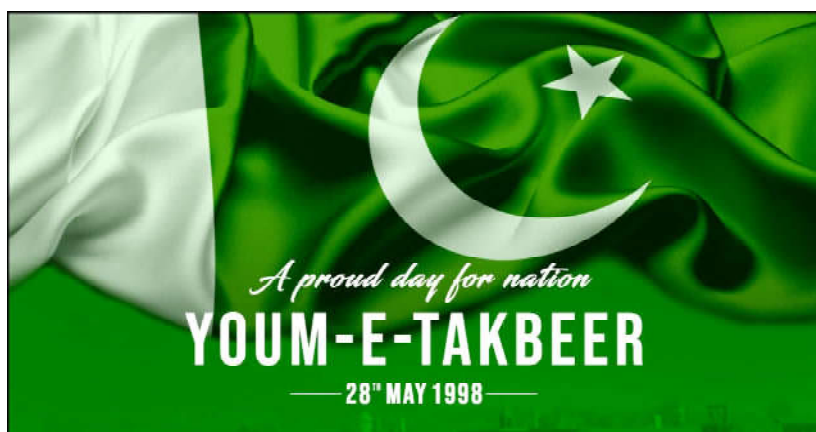
sensitive areas. The test tunnels prepared at Ras Koh have to be provided extra security which was entrusted to Corps Cdr at Quetta, Navy augmented the sea patrol and PAF flew Combat Air Patrol (CAP). On political front all the opposition parties were for the nuclear detonation. A unanimous resolution was passed in Senate for an effective response to the Indian tests. In accordance with Gohar Ayub, the Foreign Minister (Testing Times, p35), General Jehangir Karamat, views were, we could match India, but the decision to do so would have to be political. Dr Samar informed the DCC that PAEC will take 10 days to conduct the tests. Later when Dr. Ishfaq, Chairman PAEC returned from abroad, gave the positive reply about the preparations. The cabinet meeting was called on 14 May, which sup-

ported the option of going for nuclear. Also Finance Minister was tasked to evaluate the effect of sanctions and for development of contingency plan in consultation with the concerned ministries and state bank. It was proposed conversion of foreign currency accounts into Rupee at official exchange rate (About \$ 7bn). Banks to offer attractive rates on these rupee accounts. The PM gave the 'final go ahead' on 18 May to Chairman PAEC to carry out tests. All parties conference was called on 24 May by PM to inform about the decision of detonation which was unanimously supported (CISS

Insight Special Issue on Youme e Takbeer p27-30).

The President of USA Bill Clinton had telephoned the PM, a few times and offered lucrative economic packages. At the same time he elucidated the difficulties to be faced as economic sanctions. In addition President of USA, sent a delegation headed by Mr. Strobe Talbot, the then Deputy Secretary of State, and General Anthony Zinni, head of US Central Command to persuade Pakistan not to respond. The delegation was initially declined but later allowed to visit Pakistan. It met several times the PM, his Ministers, Gen Jehangir Karamat but was

unable to convince them not to carry out the nuclear test (Daily Dawn, June 6, 2004, Sharif Government refused to receive USN-delegation). Seventeen days before the nuclear devices were detonated, were very difficult, for the PM, Ministers and Army Chief to sustain external pressure not to detonate especially from USA. On 27 May a day before tests US President called the PM about five times not to carry out tests and used carrot and stick (Sartaj Aziz, Between Dreams and Realities, p194). In the decision making process, the government also sought the views of retired defence and eco-





QUETTA: Balochistan Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Ahmed Bugti talking to journalists during his visit to Quetta Press Club. President Quetta Press Club Abdul Khaliq Rind and President Balochistan Union of Journalists Khalil Ahmed are also present.

Joint plan chalked out to sort out power pilferage, load-shedding, recovery issues in KP: Awais

KP, Federal govt agree to cooperate for eliminating load shedding, reducing electricity line losses: Gandapur

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Power Division Sardar Awais Ahmad Khan Leghari on Monday said a comprehensive plan has been devised in collaboration with Chief Minister Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa to sort out issues related to power pilferage, load-shedding and recovery from the defaulters. Addressing a joint press conference along with Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi and CM KP Ali Amin Gandapur here, Awais Leghari said the plan would be finalized by tomorrow, adding the model which was devised for KP would also be replicated in the other provinces.

He said line losses and power theft issues in the country would be addressed jointly.

Lauding the Interior Minister for playing a key

role in this regard, he said the federal and provincial departments would jointly work to sort out issues pertaining to load-shedding, power theft and recovery. The power load-shedding could be over-powered through elimination of power pilferage, he said.

The minister said PTI, PML-N and allied parties jointly took a step to revive the country's economy. Praising the CM KP, he said that today all political parties have recognized the Pakistan's agenda. Under the plan, parliamentarians and general public would be involved to create awareness among the masses about elimination of power theft and payment of outstanding dues.

Meanwhile Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minis-

ter Ali Amin Khan Gandapur Monday said that the federal and provincial governments have agreed to eliminate load shedding, recover electricity dues, and reduce line losses from the province aiming to provide relief to the people of the province.

Speaking to the media, Chief Minister Ali Amin Khan Gandapur, accompanied by Minister for Energy Sarfaraz Awais Khan Leghari and Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi, he said that a formal agreement between the federal government and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa would be signed soon.

Gandapur mentioned that ongoing discussions with the Federation concerning load shedding in KP have led us to meet and resolve the issue.



QUETTA: Senator Dostain Domki meeting with Balochistan Governor Sheikh Jaffar Khan Mandokhail.

Religious leaders unite to combat interfaith disharmony following Sargodha blasphemy incident

SARGODHA (APP): Religious scholars and leaders from various schools of thought, in the wake of a recent blasphemous incident in Sargodha, on Monday came together under the auspices of Pakistan Ulama Council (PUC) to pledge a united front against attempts to incite interfaith disharmony in the country. The incident, which has stirred tensions within the community, is being seen by many as a deliberate effort by certain elements to destabilize Pakistan by exploiting religious sentiments.

Key religious figures expressed their firm commitment to countering any attempts to sow discord among different religious communities in Pakistan. They emphasized that unity and mutual understanding were essential to safeguarding national stability and preventing violence.

Addressing a press conference accompanied with Ulema and Mashaykh here at Deputy Commissioner Office, PUC Chairman Hafiz Muhammad Tahir Mehmood Ashrafi said the incident in question involved allegations of blasphemy, a highly sensitive and incendiary topic in Pakistan, which had historically led to significant social unrest.

However, in this instance, the swift and measured response from local law enforcement agencies played a crucial role in preventing the situation from escalating, he said adding that their prompt action was lauded by religious leaders, who recognized the importance of maintaining peace and order in such volatile situations. Ashrafi stated, "We will not allow anyone to destabilize our country through interfaith disharmony."



QUETTA: Activists of Balochistan Labour Federation hold protest rally.

Over 70,000 intending pilgrims actively using 'Pak Hajj App'

MAKKAH AL-MUKARRAMAH (APP): The innovative approach adopted to bring together all the wings and departments of the Pakistan Hajj Mission under the DG Facilitation Cell and Complaint Management System seems to be effectively working in the overall Hajj operation for 2024.

The 'Pak Hajj App', through which online monitoring of all Hajj-related activities is performed, has received an overwhelming response in a short span of time, with over 70,000 active intending Pakistani Hajj pilgrims registered so far.

Through this online service, the Ministry of Religious Affairs has received more than 20,000 complaints, which have been resolved and disposed of in an efficient manner.

The Pak Hajj App provides all the required information, including personal details of Hujjaj, group information, Mehram details, helper information, additional facilities, Hajj dues, nominee information, bank account details, and training schedules. Commenting on the role of the DG Facilitation Cell and Complaint Management System, its in-charge Muhammad Ahmed Usmani told APP that it was established this year for improved coordination among all wings and departments of the Pakistan Hajj Mission to extend maximum facilities to intending Pakistani pilgrims.

"It is greatly helping in the timely redressal of complaints of pilgrims and their proper guidance to minimize any inconvenience to them," he said.

Chief Minister chairs review meeting on FY budget 2024-25: Education, health and better service delivery to be top priorities in next FY budget, states Sarfraz Bugti

CM directs to spend available resources on collective public welfare projects after reviewing the unbeneficial ongoing development projects

Independent Report

QUETTA: The Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Sarfraz Ahmed Bugti has categorically stated that the education, health and better service delivery would be among top priorities in the next financial year's budget for 2024-25.

He directed the concerned authorities to keep in view the collective interests of the people of Balochistan instead of the interests of individual as well as liking and disliking in the upcoming budget.

The Chief Minister was chairing a meeting held to review the next financial year budget of the project, here on Monday.

Those who were in

attendance at the meeting were included the Provincial Minister for Finance, Mir Shoaib Nausherwani, Minister for Planning and Development, Mir Zahoor Ahmed Buledi, Additional Chief Secretary Development, Hafiz Abdul Basit, Secretary Finance, Babar Khan, Chairman Balochistan Revenue Authority, Noorul Haq Baloch, Principal Secretary to Chief Minister, Imran Zarkoon, Special Secretary Asfandyar Baloch besides other concerned high ups of the Finance and Planning and Development departments.

Addressing the meeting, Chief Minister directed to complete DAC of all the

projects within a month.

He also directed to spend the available resources on collective public welfare projects after reviewing the unbeneficial ongoing projects. Besides, unnecessary vacancies should be converted in the vacancies having much importance, he added.

He said that major surgery is needed in the PSDP to make the development projects compatible with the public requirements.

He stressed that there is a need to keep public interests in view irrespective of the political opportunism as it is very necessary to benefit from the fruits of budget.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Finance & Revenue Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb called on by Abdul Rehman Al Raheem Al Nooriyani, Chairman Eaisalat Int'l Pakistan accompanied by Hatem Bamatraf, CEO & President PTCL/Ufone.

Pakistan calls for Gaza ceasefire, relief for besieged Palestinians at Islamic convention in a US city

WASHINGTON (APP): Pakistan's Ambassador to the United States, Masood Khan, has called for an immediate ceasefire in Gaza and a surge in urgently needed humanitarian assistance for the suffering Palestinians in the war-torn enclave who, he said, were being pushed from one location to another in search of safety.

Addressing the 49th Convention organized by Muslim bodies — ICNA and MAS—in Baltimore, Maryland, he urged the United States to demonstrate leadership in ensuring the implementation of two-state solution to resolve the deadly Middle East crisis. The annual three-day convention is being attended by thousands of Muslims from across the

United States and other parts of the world.

Israel's deadly war in Gaza, now in its eighth month, has killed nearly 36,000 Palestinians, mostly women and children. Around 80% of the population's 2.3 million people have fled their homes, severe hunger is widespread and U.N. officials say parts of the territory are experiencing famine. Ambassador Masood Khan also paid tribute to the South African government for its "singular contribution" to uphold international humanitarian law—obviously referring to the genocide case that Pretoria brought against Israel at the International Court of Justice (ICJ).

"You deserve admiration of entire international

community. The comity of nations respects you as a standard-bearer for the Palestinian people's right to self-determination", he told the gathering where a special award was presented to a representative of South Africa for backing the Palestinian cause. Earlier, Dr. Mohsin Ansari, President of the Islamic Circle of North America (ICNA), said that South Africa "stood up, raised its voice for the Palestinians, went to ICJ and showed the world what courage, justice and truth means." Ismail Esau, Charge d'Affaires at the South African Embassy in Washington, who received the award, highlighted the suffering of Palestinians under occupation and the ongoing military operations.



QUETTA: Provincial Minister for Education Rahil Hameed Durrani, Secretary Education Hafiz Muhammad Tahir, Vice Chancellor UoB Professor Dr. Zahoor Ahmed Bazai, Pro-VC Professor Dr. Muhammad Alam Tareen talking to leaders of Joint Action Committee Professor Dr. Kaleemullah Bareach, Shah Ali Bugti, Nazeer Ahmed Lehri regarding Financial issues and non payment of Pay and Pension to Employees of University of Balochistan.

Opposition voices solidarity with Tribal jirga

ISLAMABAD (Online): The senior leadership of the Opposition in the National Assembly voiced solidarity with the tribal elders and vowed to raise their concerns on the floor of the House. A delegation of the tribal elders from the South Waziristan comprising Wazir and Mehsud tribes called on the senior leadership of the Opposition bench including Omar Ayub Khan, Asad Qaiser, Mehmood Khan Achakzai and others at Parliament House on Monday.

The tribal elders apprised the Opposition leaders on the objectives of their demonstrations and highlighted the problems arising from lack of compensation for the damages by the Federal Government, 'One Document Regime' and the subsequent closure of Angoor Ada border. The participants of the meeting jointly passed a resolution underlining the redress of grievances and joint effort to demonstrate for the constitutional rights of the people of ex-FATA. The Opposition Leader endorsed their demands and vowed to raise their grievances on the floor of the

House and advocate for their rights outside the Assembly. The leadership of the Tehreek-e-Tahaffuz-e-Ayeeen-e-Pakistan vowed to support the demonstration of the residents of Waziristan.

They collectively demanded for compensations to address the damages inflicted by military operations in the region and urged the Federal government to honour its commitments made to the people of the tribal areas. They highlighted the destruction of homes, displacement of families, loss of livelihoods, and the overall disruption of socio-economic infrastructure as key areas requiring compensations. They urged the Federal government to approve Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Government's demand for compensation and demanded allocation in this regard in the upcoming budget. It was regretted that despite promises, only tokens are issued to the residents of the region and no compensation has been made since last eight years. They submitted that the tribes on both sides of the border have familial ties and restricting their movement.

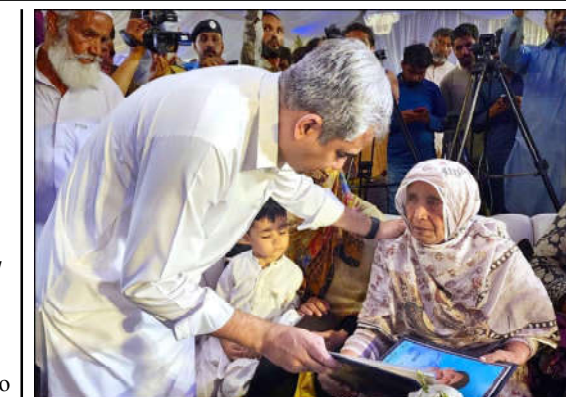
USC reduces ghee price by Rs 18 per kg

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Utility Stores Corporation (USC) on Monday announced a reduction of Rs 18 per kilogram in the price of subsidized ghee with immediate effect.

According to the USC spokesperson, the corporation has reduced the price of ghee by Rs 18 for registered families of Benazir Income Support Program PMT 40.

PCG seize Indian gutka, foreign cigarettes from coach

KARACHI (APP): The Pakistan Coast Guards (PCG) on intelligence information intercepted a passenger coach traveling from Quetta to Karachi at Uthal, Balochistan, and recovered a significant quantity of Indian Gutka and foreign brand cigarettes. A PCG spokesperson reported on Monday that during a routine road check in the Uthal area of Balochistan, 4,650 packets of Indian Gutka and 85 sticks of foreign brand cigarettes were found on the passenger coach.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Interior Mohsin Naqvi presenting allotment letter of home to the mother of a martyr.

Governor calls for paying special attention on constructing new roads, improving civic system in Quetta city, outskirts

Independent Report

QUETTA: The Governor Balochistan, Sheikh Jaffar Khan Mandokhail has underlined the need pay wholehearted attention on construction of new roads and improvement of the civic system in the Quetta city.

He also stressed the need to pay special heed towards construction of new roads as well as resolve the issues related to education, health and cleanliness in the outskirts of Quetta besides restoration of beauty of the city.

The Governor was speaking to the Secretary Communication and Works, Lal Jan Jaffar, Commissioner Quetta, Muhammad Hamza Shafqaat and Project Director of Quetta development Package, Rafiq Baloch here at the Governor House on Monday.

The Governor was briefed about the under construction roads as well as the sewerage and sanitation system in the Quetta city and adjoining areas.

The Governor said that Quetta is provincial capital and as such is the face of Balochistan.

However, new problems are creating due to influx in the population.

The Governor said that it is necessary to resolve the issues being faced by the people so that they may get relief from them. He also stressed that the poor and middle class people should benefit from the development projects.

The Governor assured his every possible cooperation to provide basic facilities to the citizens and resolve the issues being faced by them.

Naqvi laid the foundation stone of housing project for police martyrs families

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Interior Mohsin Naqvi on Monday laid the foundation stone of Mubeen Cottages Project for the families of martyrs of Islamabad Police.

Mohsin Naqvi's good initiative for the families of police martyrs resolved the long-standing issue of accommodation for the families of 64 martyrs of Islamabad Police after 43 years.

5 marble houses will be constructed in Chak Segu Rawalpindi's NPF sego forms for families of 64 martyrs.

Mohsin Naqvi distributed allotment letters of plots to the families of police martyrs.

He went to the seat of an elderly woman and gave her the allotment letter words of comfort.

It is our responsibility to take care of the families of martyrs, said Mohsin Naqvi adding this work is not a favor to the families of the martyrs. It was their right.

He said that this work cannot pay even a single drop of blood of martyrs.

IG Islamabad Ali Nasir Rizvi briefed about the project to the minister and guests, MD National Police Foundation, Chairman CDA and Chief Commissioner Islamabad. The families of RPO Rawalpindi and Shahada Police were present on the occasion.



QUETTA: Provincial Minister for PHE Sardar Abdul Rehman Khetrnan meeting with Provincial Home Minister Mir Ziaullah Lango.

Qaiser inaugurates renovated KPT Staff College

KARACHI (APP): Federal Minister for Maritime Affairs, Qaiser Ahmed Sheikh along with Chairman KPT Syedain Raza Zaidi inaugurated the renovated KPT Staff College, which was established in 1979 and had not undergone proper renovations until now.

Additionally, the minister distributed cash awards and certificates of appreciation to students and teachers of KPT Schools in recognition of their outstanding performance in the SSC exams.

Qaiser Ahmed Sheikh praised the KPT for its dedication to train officers in line with international standards. He lauded the organization's proactive approach in preparing its personnel to meet the requirements in maritime industry. The minister emphasized that KPT serves as Pakistan's gateway and has consistently delivering

outstanding performance. He further said that KPT has the potential for improvement and expressed confidence in achieving maximum benefits through collaborative efforts. During his address, Chairman KPT, expressed contentment with the renovation of the KPT Staff College and performance of KPT schools. He praised the relevant general managers and their teams for relentless efforts in achieving this milestone.

Chairman KPT underscored KPT's historical commitment to serving the nation and the people of Karachi through various CSR initiatives. These include funding 6 schools for underprivileged students, operating a hospital for workers and nearby residents, maintaining a Fire Station with modern equipment available round the clock for Karachi.



HUB: Pakistan Coast Guard Officials are exposing huge quantity of recovered Chew Tobacco and foreign cigarettes seized during routine check of passenger buses on Uthal Coast Guard Check Post, to media persons during a press conference.